

Official Publication of the Tennessee Press Association

The Tennessee Press

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No. 2

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McNeely says military experience helped prepare him to serve as new TPA president

MIKE TOWLE
Tennessee Press Association
August 1, 2022

Being a newspaper reporter on the front lines of journalism can be tricky, risky business. Okay, try sticking a camera into a small hole filled with C4 explosives seeking that priceless shot that will make the next edition's front page – provided you don't get blown up in the process.

That's the opportunity/predicament Jack McNeely faced 25-plus years ago when he was a young military journalist yearning to be the best he could be.

It was a "a hole in the back of a bunker that housed unearthed mines," McNeely says, recalling one of his most memorable missions from 14 years in the West Virginia Army National Guard. That stint included active-duty assignments on occasion, such as in war-torn Bosnia, where he got his



shot of, well, a lifetime. "I wanted a cover shot of a pile of mines and C-4 explosives in the foreground and American demolition troops

attaching the cord through the bunker's opening. I got the picture, and the cover."

Double time, soldier, ahead to

Submitted
Jack McNeely, TPA's new president for 2022-23, at his office in an undated photo.

the present day: McNeely now has 12 months (actually 11) ahead of him as president of the Tennessee Press Association, a responsibility he inherits from Rick Thomason, Kingsport Times News, Six Rivers Media. Thomason will ceremoniously hand the TPA president's gavel to McNeely during the 2022 TPA State Press Contests awards luncheon Aug. 26, at the Sheraton Music City Hotel in Nashville.

Although this is the first time McNeely has served as TPA president, it is his second stint as top volunteer officer of a statewide press organization. At one time he served as president of the Alabama Press Foundation. He previously had a hand in helping to run the

See **MCNEELY** Page 4

June's Tri-State Press Convention in Memphis drew 200-plus from Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi



Photo by Anthony Warren/
Mississippi Press Association

David Plazas, The Tennessean, Nashville, and Alison Gerber, Chattanooga Times Free Press, at the Tri-State Press Convention in Memphis. Carol Daniels, TPA executive director, says it best in her page 3 column, addressing TPA members: "Though it took a bit of getting accustomed to being around a crowd of people again, it was SO good to see you without a computer screen in between us. It was invigorating! See photos on pages 6, 7 and 12.

Hurry now to reserve your spot(s) for the Aug. 26 TPA State Press Contests Awards Luncheon in Nashville



Archive

Pictured above are first-place winners from the 2021 TPA State Press Contests, when the COVID-19 masking advisory was still in effect. Presumably, there won't need to be any mask mandates for this year's SPC Awards Luncheon set for Aug. 26 in Nashville. Sixty-seven of TPA's 133 members submitted a total of 1,130 entries to the contests this year. In addition to the presentation of the awards, the presidential gavel will be presented to Jack McNeely, TPA's 2022-22 president. Turn to page 3 for more details of this year's awards luncheon.

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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; or email editor@tnpress.com. The deadline for the October 2022 issue is September 6, 2022.

Awards luncheon celebrates state journalists

"The way positive reinforcement is carried out is more important than the amount."
- B.F. Skinner

I'm a huge believer in the power of positive reinforcement.

On Friday, Aug. 26, the Tennessee Press Association will dish out a big serving of just that as it recognizes the state's journalists and support staff for their efforts, creativity and professionalism during the State Press Awards luncheon in Franklin.

Whether you are a news reporter holding county commissioners fiscally accountable, a sports reporter roaming the sidelines on a brisk Friday night, a photojournalist documenting the aftermath of a deadly tornado, a page designer capturing the attention of a passing reader, a press operator ensuring a quality print job, a digital media specialist recording a podcast, we appreciate you!

I began my newspaper career as a sportswriter in the southern coalfields of West Virginia. During the 1990s I transitioned to news and editing. I looked forward to the recognition of my hard work and that of my team during the Mountain State's annual Better Newspaper Contest awards ban-



YOUR PRESIDING REPORTER

JACK MCNEELY

quet. I trust that my employees today appreciate the recognition just as much.

The TPA represents 133 printed newspapers and roughly 3,700 employees throughout the Volunteer State. With a total weekly print circulation of 1.8 million statewide, and millions of unique online users, our voice today is louder than ever.

Whether you work for one of our smallest newspapers or one of our largest, your contribution is priceless. The awards you receive Aug. 26 are a small token of our appreciation.

Unfortunately, only half our member newspapers (67) participated this year, submitting 1,130 entries to be judged by our peers in the Hoosier State. I understand revenues are down and some organizations are forced to pull their purse strings tighter as we navigate a lingering pandemic, rising inflation, and ongoing supply

chain issues.

I am also certain that some of the state's best work, produced by our unrepresented newspaper staffs, are going unrecognized this year. I want to take this time to applaud you for your efforts. The flame that burns in each of you for community journalism is brighter than a plaque on the wall or a certificate in a frame. Keep up the fight.

For those of you who are fortunate enough to join us at the State Press Awards luncheon, I look forward to greeting and congratulating each of you. I also challenge you to continue the work of the Fourth Estate.

Some say the Fourth Estate has lost its luster. Polls show that Americans have lost faith in the media. That is horse manure. Perhaps the mainstream media with its apparent political slants is blemished. But not us. We continue to carry the torch that our forefathers bestowed upon us, to watch over our communities like a beacon in the night.

And for that, I applaud you.

Jack McNeely is TPA president for 2022-23. He is the publisher of the Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, and the Cleveland Daily Banner.

Second Tribune store opens at BNA

SUBMITTED
The Tennessee Tribune
July 7, 2022

Rosetta Miller-Perry, founder and publisher of The Tennessee Tribune, in conjunction with Nashville International Airport (BNA), Skypoint Hospitality and Chau Consulting announce the opening of the second Tennessee Tribune Store.



Miller-Perry

With the first store opening approximately nine months ago in November, 2021, Miller-Perry brought in her 88th birthday in July with the launch of another property. These types of accolades are highly uncommon for business gurus her age and are certainly beyond impressive. Her first foray into



Submitted

The Tennessee Tribune, Nashville, in July opened its second store in less than 12 months at Nashville International Airport.

the airport concessions category demonstrated the spending power of diverse suppliers as the historical artisans, authors, and entrepreneurs claimed 19% market share against industry giants such as Coke, Pepsi, Frito Lay and

more. The first store located in the Southwest Hub at the Nashville airport between Terminal C and D boasted the top seller as a diverse supplier, Guidance Whiskey and

See **STORE** Page 5

TPS's \$15K donation to TPAF goes a long way

I hope by the time you get to read this column that we are having just our regular summer sweltering heat, because as I sat down to write it was hot, hot, hot. I hope you and your teams avoided any meltdowns!

It was so nice seeing you at the Tri-State Convention in June in Memphis. It had been way too long since I had seen many of you in person. Though it took a bit of getting accustomed to being around a crowd of people again, it was SO good to see you without a computer screen in between us. It was invigorating!

The convention was a great success, with Tennessee teaming up with Arkansas and Mississippi, which allowed us to have several great speakers, sessions and entertainment that we might not have been able to get at our individual conferences. Please continue to give us your feedback as we plan for our next conventions.

We continue to celebrate this 75th anniversary of the launch of the Tennessee Press Service. As part of the celebration, TPS had a contest for members and paid for 10 registration fees for the



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CAROL DANIELS

Tri-State Convention. During this year, we will have other ways to celebrate TPS@75, so watch for our announcements!

In June, the Tennessee Press Association Foundation conducted a Zoom meeting to discuss annual grant requests. The TPAF board was able to grant requests to the Legal Hotline, Tennessee Coalition for Open Government, TN History for Kids, Local Legal Initiative, Tennessee Bar Association Reports Workshop, Lipscomb University Tennessee High School Association, and funding for students to attend the winter convention. Knowing there were so many great opportunities to fund, TPS decided to donate \$15,000 to the Foundation this year in support of the people and organizations who work so hard to advance the press and press freedom.

These grants are good for our

communities and benefit our member papers in one way or another.

- The Legal Hotline has been a resource that member papers have been utilizing for years. Richard Hollow has answered thousands of questions over the years and has a wealth of knowledge about our industry. Not only does Richard answer YOUR questions, he is a valued resource to the TPA/TPS team.

- Tennessee Coalition for Open Government lobbies our General Assembly and works with me and our TPA lobbyists to ensure our industry has access to public records and meetings, and that our communities can hold their government accountable.

- TN History for Kids gives our members three columns per month on important and interesting stories from Tennessee's past to publish in your newspapers. That helps ensure that our readers are well versed in TN history.

- The Local Legal Initiative is another resource that members can use to help gain access to public records and information. This group works nationwide ensuring our industry has legal

representation when needed to hold our government and public officials accountable to the people.

- The Reports workshop is an annual weekend event where reporters and editors can learn more about covering government, courts and pending legislation.

- The High School Association helps high schools across the state establish and maintain high school newspapers.

- And you have all seen college students in attendance at the winter convention. TPAF has been helping fund their attendance for many years. That not only gives these students access to interesting sessions, to usually include an address from the governor, but also an opportunity to meet and interact with you, future employers.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the TPA State Press Contests Award luncheon later this month.

Stay cool,

Carol

Carol Daniels is executive director of Tennessee Press Association.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

August 2022

25-27: 2022 National Native Media Conference, Native American Journalists Association in partnership with the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University, Tempe, Ariz.

26: 2022 University of Tennessee System – Tennessee Press Association State Press Contests Awards Luncheon, 11:45 a.m. Central, Sheraton Music City Hotel, Nashville.

31: Deadline for 2022 nominations for the Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame.

September 2022

8: Free webinar: What's New With Google Tools, www.onlinemediacampus.com. Contact info@tnpress.com for the code.

9: Deadline for submissions to the 2022 Tennessee Newspaper Directory Cover Photo Contest. The contest is open to all employees of TPA member newspapers.

October 2022

6-8: 2022 National Newspaper Association (NNA) Convention, Hyatt Regency, San Francisco, Cal.

12-14: E&P and 360 Media Alliance News Media Business Summit, Sheraton Hotel Downton, Harrisburg, Pa.

14-15: America's Newspapers Family and Independent Owners Conference, The Roosevelt Hotel, New Orleans, La., held in conjunction with the event listed directly below.

16-18: America's Newspapers Annual Meeting and Senior Leadership Conference, The Roosevelt Hotel, New Orleans, La.

26-30: Fall National College Media Association Convention in conjunction with Associated Collegiate Press, Grand Hyatt Washington, Washington D.C.

April 2023

26-28: 2023 Niche Media Conference and CEO & Sales Leadership Summit, New Orleans, La.

NEWS & MOVES

TPA awards luncheon set for Aug. 26

Newspapers across Tennessee will be presented with the 2022 University of Tennessee System – Tennessee Press Association State Press Contests Awards at a luncheon to be held on Friday, Aug. 26, at the Sheraton Music City Hotel in Nashville, near the airport. The event will begin at 11:45 a.m. CDT.

Sixty-seven of TPA's 133 members submitted a total of 1,130 entries to the contests this year.

In addition to the presentation of the awards, the presidential gavel will be presented to Jack McNeely, TPA's 2022-22 president. McNeely is publisher of the Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, and the Cleveland Daily Banner.

Registration details for the Awards Luncheon are available online at www.tnpress.com. The registration fee is \$65 per person. The hotel will charge TPA attend-

ees \$10 per vehicle for event parking. The Sheraton Music City is located at 777 McGavock Pike. To make a reservation, please contact the hotel at (888) 627-7060.

*Staff Reports
June 15, 2022*

Submit entries for 2022 TPA Directory Cover Photo Contest

TPA members are encouraged to submit a scenic photo for the 2022 Tennessee Newspaper Directory Cover Photo Contest. Entries are being accepted through September 9. Photos should reflect scenic Tennessee through landscapes, architecture, wildlife and/or nature photography. The prize is \$200 and photo credit in the 2023 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 January 2023.

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. A maximum of two entries by one photographer may be submitted.

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 Services Manager Robyn Gentile at rgentile@tnpress.com with the file name, name of the photographer, newspaper, contact phone number and some information

about the subject/location photographed.

*Staff Reports
June 15, 2022*

Call for new TN Newspaper Hall of Fame nominations by Aug. 31

The Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame has selected two individuals for posthumous induction. They are the late Sam D. Kennedy, who owned several Tennessee newspapers, and the late William C. (Bill) Simonton, Jr., who was managing editor of The Covington Leader. Both were former TPA presidents.

These honorees were selected from among the nominations received in 2020. An induction ceremony will be planned for 2023.

The Hall of Fame is calling for 2022 nominations. The deadline

See **NEWS & MOVES** Page 9

A key question that you should often be asking: 'Okay, so what's next?'

Gregory talked to me about a lesson he learned in his early days of selling advertising. "In one of my first presentations, the prospect rejected my ideas for a new campaign. Back at the office, my ad manager must have noticed the stunned look on my face. When I told her what happened, she didn't want to know the gruesome details. She just asked, 'Okay, so what's next?'"

"That turned out to be great advice. I sat there and gave myself a good talking-to. Nothing could change the fact that my sales presentation had fallen flat. But what I could change was my approach to that reality. Instead of giving up on that new business prospect, I dove back into my notes, reflected on our conversation during



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JOHN FOUST

my presentation, and developed another campaign proposal. The new ideas were accepted, and I'm happy to say that company became a consistent advertiser.

"What I learned is that it's important to look ahead," Gregory said. "Think beyond what is happening right now and be ready to change directions."

Gregory's story reminds me of an old Bob Hope line in a movie I

saw on TV: "All I've gotta do now is figure out what I'm gonna do now." If we look beyond the double-talk of that gag, we'll see some real truth. Our biggest challenge is often figuring out what to do next.

In fact, I believe one of the most important business questions we can ask is, "What's next?" These two little words represent a deliberate focus on the future. This is especially true in a profession such as marketing, which demands constant evaluation and adjustment. Considering the current situation as a new starting point, what's the next step? If we expect to make any progress at all, there should always be another step.

Let's say you make a big sale. I heartily recommend that you

celebrate your success and share the glory with your teammates. But after the high fives at the goal line, it's not a good idea to camp out for a long time in the end zone. Things will not stay like that forever. The game goes on. There's a next step.

What if consumers don't respond to the current offer being made in an advertiser's ads? Do you keep running the offer again and again, hoping that something will change on its own? Or do you analyze the plan and make some adjustments?

If you're a manager who notices that morale in your department is sagging, what can you do to make things better? (Please don't say, "team-building activity.") Do you hope the situation will go away

"when the economy improves?" Or do you take the initiative with a little inter-department research to get to know your team as individuals? Let them help you determine the next step.

It's not complicated. It's simply a matter of evaluating the current situation and asking yourself, "What's next?" Keep answering that question and you're on your way.

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MCNEELY from Page 1

Kentucky Press Association as one of its board members. Tennessee marks his third state in which he has jumped into the bunker of a state press entity, which certainly ranks as some sort of distinction in community journalism.

McNeely has gone from seeing the world while in uniform to covering small slices of the world for readers in locales ranging from the southern coalfields of West Virginia (the daily Logan Banner) to north-eastern Kentucky (Morehead News Group) to southwestern Georgia (The Americus-Times Record) to Jasper, Alabama (Daily Mountain Eagle) and to other points, eventual destination Tennessee. From 2016-21 McNeely led the Herald-Citizen in Cookeville before moving on last year to Cleveland, Tenn., where he juggles newsprint and digital bytes as senior vice president and group publisher of the Cleveland Daily Banner, the Herald-Citizen, the Daily Mountain Eagle and The Daily Tribune News in Cartersville, Ga.

Along the way, McNeely managed to marry his high school sweetheart and now wife of 34 years, Nora, whom he first kissed his senior year of high school (she was a junior) while dancing to Journey's "Faithfully" at a high school dance on Oct. 26, 1984 – right after the senior captain's football team had lost in triple overtime.

"I almost didn't go to the dance," McNeely admits.

The McNeelys have two grown daughters: Shaina, who lives in



Both photo submitted

Jack and Nora McNeely (in the middle) are diehard WVA Mountaineers fans and are joined by the school's Mountaineers mascot (right) and another WVA fan (left) at one of the school's football games.

the Chattanooga area and works in the logistics industry, and Brandi, owner of a master's degree in social work and now providing counseling to women fighting addiction in Charleston, W.Va.

"I am so very proud of my girls," McNeely says. "I would be remiss if I did not say more about Nora. She's been my rock; my biggest cheerleader and my biggest critic during my 36-year career. I would not be standing here today as the president of the TPA without her support. And I love her for that."

McNeely's first job in newspapers was as a sportswriter, starting in 1986, for his hometown newspaper, The Coal Valley News, a weekly. However, working in a media field where ink is sold by the barrel wasn't his first choice.

"My career in print journalism almost didn't happen," McNeely said. "After testing higher than average in the military entrance ASFAB test, I initially chose broadcast journalism as my MOS (military occupational specialty). But I failed the voice audition. This hick from the hollers of West Virginia could not pronounce the word 'wheelbarrow' well enough."

During his 14 years in the Army Guard, McNeely rose to the rank of staff sergeant (E-6) and was afforded the opportunity to travel the world. In addition to his active-duty deployment to Bosnia, his globe-trotting spots included stopovers in Panama, Tokyo, Okinawa, and Paraguay.

"While in Panama one summer," McNeely said, "a buddy and



McNeely takes a selfie with daughters Shaina (left) and Brandi (right).

I drove the length of the Panama Canal. It's always been a bit of McNeely trivia, that I drove from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean in one day.

"I enjoyed my time in the Guard, especially the deployment in Bosnia. It provided that final leadership training necessary to catapult me forward in my newspaper career. I will forever be indebted to the military training and experiences."

As McNeely embarks on his one-year stint as TPA president, his reign comes at a time when many newspapers, big and small, face sticky challenges such as readership retention, keener-than-ever competition for advertising dollars, and readerships much more picky (and prickly) about how they get their news.

"Our biggest challenge is perception as we try feverishly to

remain relevant," McNeely said. "It takes teamwork, from the local newspaper to the Tennessee Press Association. All other media have forecasted our demise for decades. But we are still here, albeit, in different forms."

"Newspapers today are facing a kaleidoscope of issues. Workforce shortages. Newsprint delays. COVID restrictions. Escalating production costs. All while managing constricting revenue streams. A good friend of mine and fellow Tennessee publisher, Keith Ponder, once told me, 'Be where you are.' That message can be interpreted in so many ways. Today it means that newspapers and staffs must be hyper vigilant and focused on local news and how we disseminate that local news."

"The reality today demands that we reach our readers where they want to consume our product, both online and in print."

Plan now to recognize first responders in your area

Are you looking for a project that can energize your news staffs, generate new advertising revenue and underscore the value of a local newspaper to potential new subscribers?

Mark Oct. 28 on your calendars: National First Responders Day.

Full disclosure on two fronts.

First, highlighting the accomplishments of first responders is not my original idea. I picked it up while presenting recently at a Management Boot Camp sponsored by the Texas Center for Community Journalism.

Second, I am not a fan of most proclamations. They are a dime a dozen and largely an opportunity for some official – most often the mayor – to get his or her name and photo in the local newspaper. The local affiliate typically submits a press release from the parent state or national organization – verbatim – inserting its name in a half-dozen spots.

However, proclamations can be worthwhile and substantive with local content. Think of the past two years and the performance of first responders during the



COMMUNITY NEWSROOM SUCCESS

JIM PUMARLO

pandemic and social unrest in the course of everyday routines. This collective group of individuals from firefighters and police to paramedics and EMTs is worthy of recognition.

Best yet, this project can involve all aspects of your operations from newsroom to advertising to circulation.

First step: Have a brainstorming session to explore and identify content. Go beyond your newsroom to include your entire newspaper family, which likely represents a cross-section of the town. Broaden the discussion by including key individuals in your community.

Here's one list of story ideas to jump-start the discussion:

- What has been the experience of first-responders in the past

couple of years in terms of the nature of calls? Have circumstances changed dramatically?

- Has special training been implemented?
- Are staffs experiencing stress and other issues in physical, emotional and mental health?
- What is the impact on first responders' family lives, relationships with friends and co-workers? Who is their support circle?

- Are there particular heart-warming stories to share?

- What are some of their more challenging stories to share?

- Communities across the country are reporting difficulties in hiring police officers. What is the local landscape for recruiting across the range of first responders?

- Does your community rely on full-time or part-time first responders? For part-time responders, how do employers and employees manage the responsibilities?

- Profile first responders and their families.

This is but one quick list. Think of stories specific to your community. The project may be spread over a few editions or packaged in

a special section. Either way, it's an opportunity to generate advertising revenue beyond the normal channels.

The service of first responders should spark numerous avenues to salute their performance, especially if responders have been exemplary in specific responses. If your community has part-time responders, pay particular attention to their full-time employers and pitch the chance for them to recognize their employees.

Lastly, include the circulation department. New U.S. Postal Service regulations allow newspapers to increase their in-county sampling to 50 percent of their in-county subscriptions. Newspapers previously were limited to 10 percent. Take advantage and sample nonsubscribers with your special coverage. Showcase the contributions of first-responders in your local communities and underscore the value of your local newspaper.

To bring the salute full circle, why not stage a community event to honor first-responders. Several public and private organizations

and companies will likely jump at the occasion to co-sponsor an event. You have plenty of time to design the tribute and pin down the logistics.

Even those newspapers stretched thin with resources often have some lull in the summer. This is the perfect time to plan and produce a special project that will likely introduce many new names and faces that are ordinarily not found in your newspaper. The initiative has the potential of being a win-win for your newspaper and your community.

Jim Pumarlo is former editor of the Red Wing (Minn.) Republican Eagle. He 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 and welcomes comments and questions at jim@pumarlo.com.

STORE from Page 2

the vendor that sold the most units, a small minority-owned popcorn company, Kernels Nashville. According to Bill Freeman (business owner, Airport board member and community advocate), "Mrs. Miller-Perry's intentional goal of bringing in diverse suppliers contributes to BNAs commitment to diversity, and inclusion as the retail establishment provides travelers with a truly unique shopping experience."

Store occupies more than 1,200 square feet, offers pre-screening access

The second Tribune store is more than 1,200 square feet and located pre-security near United, Frontier, US Airways, American, Delta and a host of other popular airlines. With the easy access, open entrances and accessible café style seating, this location is a true compliment to BNA's vision of becoming a world class airport for global travelers. Travelers that have become frequent shoppers

in the first store will be pleased to see their favorite offerings, literary works and local suppliers also available in the second store. Local pastor and community leader Howard Jones says, "Mrs. Miller-Perry continues to make an economic impact in the city as she provides travelers with unique wares from Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and exposes travelers to up and coming diverse brands."

2nd store opening meant expansion opportunity

The opening of the second location also provided an opportunity for further expansion into the local community, the greater metro area and State of Tennessee by introducing new vendors into the Tennessee Tribune stores. The new location welcomes Ashley and Robert Gaddy, the owner of Donk's restaurant with their Big Daddy's Sweet Mississippi Sauce; Ms. Janet Walsh, of Tea and Company with her ginger-flavored beverage that you mix into a 16-ounce bottle of water; as well as Sister

Tribe Cosmetics with their earth tone cosmetics. Further offerings include Ms. Celeste Black owner of the Miriam B skin care line; and Shanalya Sweat, who owns "A Few Wood Men" the eclectic line of wooden watches and accessories and sauces and seasonings such as Smoking Butts White Hot Sauce. Travelers will also get to experience the world famous Goo Goo Clusters and the tasty wares of Goodlettsville-based Brittle Brothers peanut brittle in jalapeno, bacon and other delicious flavors.

As of June 30, 2022, BNA had a record-breaking year regarding travelers with an uptick of 7% compared to three years ago. They soared with over 18.4 million passengers recorded at the end of the 2022 fiscal year and served over 840,000 departing passengers, making BNA the airport with the largest number of screened passengers in a single month.

For more information about The Tennessee Tribune Store, contact Chaux Consulting at ChauxConsulting@gmail.com or the Tennessee Tribune office directly at (615) 321-3268.

Six Rivers Media launches Bristol Now

**SUBMITTED
Six Rivers Media
May 16, 2022**

Six Rivers Media recently completed putting together its newspaper trio within the Tri-Cities by launching the company's latest news source, Bristol Now.

The company launched its new online and weekly print publication, Bristol Now, on June 29. The paper features daily news online as well as a weekly print product each Wednesday.

"For years, Six Rivers Media management has been asked, 'When are you coming to Bristol?'" said Rick Thomason, Six Rivers Media president and publisher of the Kingsport Times News. "After much consideration, then much more planning, we can now proudly answer that question — June 29, 2022! Bristol

Now (debuts as) a free distribution newspaper and accompanying website."

Six Rivers Media has appointed longtime Bristol editor and journalist Susan Cameron as the first-ever editor of Bristol Now.



Cameron

"With a content team led by veteran Bristol-based journalist Susan Cameron, Bristol Now will each week give readers their best in-depth look at what's news, what's important and what's entertaining for the week ahead in the Bristols — Two Cities. One Source," Thomason said.

Cameron previously served for more than 38 years as a journalist and the city editor at the Bristol Herald Courier in Bristol, Va.

"I'm really excited to continue

See **BRISTOL NOW** Page 8

2022 TRI-STATE PRESS CONVENTION, MEMPHIS, JUNE 23-25 (PHOTOS BY MIKE TOWLE, TPA [MT] AND ANTHONY WARREN, MISSISSIPPI PA [AW])



Some of the convention attendees during the luncheon on Friday. (Carol Daniels/TPA)



Michael Williams (left), The Paris Post-Intelligencer, catches up on newspaper industry gossip with Adam Johnson and Allyse Lamon of Holler Media, Jamestown. (MT)



Victor Parkins, The Mirror-Exchange, Milan, joined by his daughter Holland Parkins, The Lexington Progress, and his sister, Scarlet Elliott, also of The Mirror-Exchange. (MT)



Karanja Ajanaku, Tri-State Defender, Memphis, made it to the Tri-State Press Convention. (MT)



Mark Russell, The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, and Alison Gerber, Chattanooga Times Free Press. (MT)



Newly elected TPA second vice president Darrell Richardson, The Daily Times, Alcoa, and his wife, Angela, at Friday's luncheon. (MT)



Kerri Bartlett, Columbia Daily Herald, listens to Friday's keynote speaker Rex Nelson. (MT)



Two of TPA's more recent past presidents: Rick Thomason, Kingsport Times News, and Chris Vass, Chattanooga Times Free Press (AW)

2022 TRI-STATE PRESS CONVENTION, MEMPHIS, JUNE 23-25 (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)



More than 200 attendees, most representing their respective state press associations (Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee) turned out for the 3-day Tri-State Press Convention in Memphis. (AW)



To say that the Stax Music Academy Alumni Band rocked the house at Friday night's Tri-State BBQ and Blues Dinner Party in the Sheraton Memphis would be an understatement. (MT)



Ashley Benkarski, Tennessee Tribune, Nashville, and Lindsay Pride, Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, enjoyed Tri-State's Friday luncheon. (AW)



Daniel Richardson, Magic Valley Publishing, Huntingdon, and his wife, Lena, brought the whole family - nappers and all. (MT)



Paul McAdoo, TN Local Legal Initiative attorney, Nashville, gave a presentation on the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. (AW)



Rex Nelson, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock, delivered a lively keynote address, "From Disaster to Opportunity," on Friday. (MT)



Calvin Anderson, Tri-State Defender, Memphis, at a Saturday round table discussion. (AW)



Kelly Freudensprung, The Saline Courier, Benton, Ark. on Saturday led a round table discussion on Sales & Promotions Best Ideas. (MT)

OBITUARIES

Richard Evans

Richard Allen Evans, 57, of Knoxville, went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, July 24, 2022.

Mr. Evans was a former editor of The Claiborne Progress

Richard was born June 3, 1965, in Pineville, Ky., to Boyd and Doris Evans. He graduated from Lone Jack High School in 1983. He graduated from Cumberland College in 1988 with History and Political Science degrees where he also played football.

Richard married Joy Stonecipher on January 24, 2004 and



Evans

they have two girls, Mollie and Serenity.

Richard was a faithful member of Walridge Baptist Church for many years where he taught many classes, was the director of their youth camp, loved singing in church, and served in several other capacities.

He was a Kentucky Colonel, an honor bestowed by the Governor of Kentucky in recognition of an

individual's noteworthy accomplishments and outstanding service to community, state, and nation.

A longtime journalist, Richard completed his first novel in 2015, completing three others soon after and was in the process of writing several other books. He was a true proponent of community journalism, writing for several newspapers throughout his career. He had a passion for covering high school sports.

A friend shared "He never wanted a kid to feel bad about something he wrote. . . . He just

wanted to cover the game and if there's something good, then tell it."

Friends also shared that Richard was "one of the best people I have ever known. He was always a friendly and thought-provoking man." You could always count on him for a great laugh or an engaging discussion on any topic. "People don't realize what a special person you really are, and I for one am super thankful for you and your friendship."

Left to cherish his memory are his loving wife Joy Evans, children Mollie Miller and Serenity

Hobock, sister Karen Thacker, brothers Eddie Evans (Carol) and Greg Evans, mother-in-law Brenda Stonecipher, sisters-in-law Gay Schrell (Bo) and Merry Jarnagin, several special nieces, nephews, and many close friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting donations be made to the American Cancer Society or St. Jude's Children's Hospital. Condolences are welcome at weaverfuneralservices.com Weaver Funeral Home 5815 Western Ave. Knoxville, Tenn. 37921

Knoxville News Sentinel
July 29, 2022

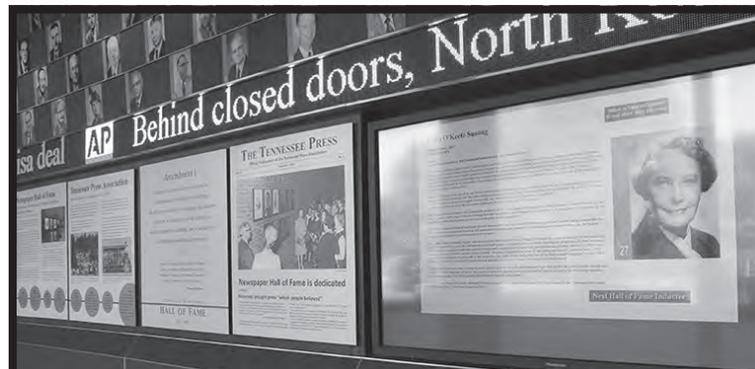
BRISTOL NOW from Page 5

telling Bristol's stories," Cameron told the Times News. "I've done it for a long time. I'm anxious to get back to it. I have a lot of institutional knowledge about Bristol. . . . I've seen the development of the town. I feel like I have a knowledge of the city's strengths and weaknesses, but also what the town is about and what is

important to it."

Bristol Now is the newest Six Rivers Media news organization. The venture completes a trio for the company, offering a print and online news source in each of the Tri-Cities — in Kingsport, Johnson City, and now, in Bristol.

"Geographically, Bristol fits right in with what we do in the Tri-Cities," said Allen Rau, the vice president of Six Rivers Media. "There



Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame call for nominations for possible 2023 induction

All nominees must be deceased two or more years prior to the nomination. The nomination form is available at tnpress.com/hall-of-fame/ or contact rgentile@tnpress.com.

DEADLINE: Aug. 31

TWO BRISTOLS. ONE SOURCE.

A PRODUCT OF SIX RIVERS MEDIA

have always been talks about having a presence in Bristol."

Bristol Now is the sixth newspaper owned by Six Rivers Media, along with the Kingsport Times News, the Johnson City Press, the Herald and Tribune in Jonesborough, the Erwin Record and the Tomahawk in Mountain City.

Mike Fishman named Lakeway president

SUBMITTED
The Herald Chronicle, Winchester
June 14, 2022

R. Michael Fishman has been named president of Lakeway Publishers, Inc., the Herald Chronicle's owner.

Fishman has served as editor/publisher of the company's flagship paper, the Citizen Tribune, and as Lakeway Publishers' secretary/treasurer since 2007. He succeeds his father, R. Jack Fishman, who is stepping aside as president but will continue in his role as chairman of the board.

"We are very fortunate to make this announcement," Jack Fishman said. "I'm confident that Mike's experience will continue to be of assistance to all of our communities' growth and development.

"His dedication in providing news and advertising on a fair and accurate basis to the commu-



Mike Fishman

nities we serve is essential and critical to help maintain the freedoms that are so important to our country."

Mike Fishman said the work he has done will continue.

"I am honored to have this opportunity to serve," Fishman said. "I am part of a hard-working team. It's just what we do. We are devoted to the principles of good community journalism; we work hard. We support our communities. We strive to keep our communities well and accurately informed."

Fishman began his formal employment with Lakeway Publishers in 1988 after graduating from East Tennessee State University with a B.A. in business administration, but he grew up working in many areas within the Citizen Tribune, which was founded the same year he was born, 1966.

Fishman is a past president of the Tennessee Press Association, a board member for America's Newspapers, vice president for the National Newspaper Association Foundation, and currently serves on the Tennessee Press Service Board of Directors.

"I've watched my father give his life to the community and our broader communities, and that is what we do within our organization," Mike Fishman said.



Tennessee Press Service
Advertising Placement Snapshot

	ROP:	Networks:
July 2022	\$86,511	\$22,010
Year* as of July 31	\$887,893	\$162,864

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

NEWS & MOVES from Page 3

is August 31. If selections are made from these nominations, they would also be inducted as part of the 2023 ceremony.

Nomination criteria:

All honorees (1) must have made an outstanding contribution to Tennessee Newspaper journalism or, through Tennessee journalism, to newspaper journalism generally or (2) must have made an extraordinary contribution to their communities and region, or the state, through newspaper journalism.

The historical integrity of the program requires all nominees be deceased two years, before being considered for selection.

If you would like to submit a nomination, please visit www.tnpress.com/hall-of-fame/ for more information or contact Robyn Gentile, TPA member services manager for more information at rgentile@tnpress.com.

*Staff reports
July 29, 2022*

Allen Rau named Six Rivers CEO

Six Rivers Media, a local media organization, has named Allen Rau as the CEO. Rau steps into the footprints of his father, David Rau, the former publisher of the Kingsport Times News and CEO of the family-owned business.

Both are co-owners of SRM, the parent organization of the Johnson City Press, Kingsport Times-News, Bristol Now, Jonesbor-



Rau

ough Herald & Tribune, Erwin Record and the Mountain City Tomahawk news organizations.

"I can't explain how grateful I am for this opportunity. I grew up locally and live

here and believe strongly in the potential of the region. It aligns well with the direction of this company," Allen Rau said.

"It's a challenging time for newspapers but the opportunity to change and grow is there."

David Rau will continue to serve as treasurer and Maddie Mullen, Allen's sister, will serve as secretary.

Rick Thomason, publisher of the Kingsport Times News and the

Johnson City Press, remains in his role as president of Six Rivers Media.

*Six Rivers Media
June 2, 2022*

Gregory is news editor of Main Street Maury

Chris Gregory has been hired as news editor of Main Street Maury.

Gregory will also serve as news editor of two other Main Street publications: the Dickson Post and Cheatham County Exchange.

Gregory, 45, has 25 years of experience in journalism, working at The Tennessean from 1997 until 2014. In October 2014, he became the editor of the Hartsville Vidette in Trousdale County, where he served as editor, writer, photographer and graphic designer.

"We are so excited to welcome

Chris to Main Street," said Dave Gould, owner of Main Street Media and Publisher of the Cheatham County Exchange. "His experience of editing good local newspapers in Middle Tennessee will be of great benefit to our readers."

Gregory grew up in Hendersonville and is a 1994 graduate of Beech High School. He studied journalism at Middle Tennessee State University and currently resides in Hartsville with his son, Jay. In his spare time, he is currently president-elect of the Hartsville Rotary Club and co-treasurer of the Community Help Center of Trousdale County.

"I'm thrilled to be joining the Main Street family and am looking forward to meeting the new challenges in this stage of my career," Gregory said. "I can't wait to get to know the people in these communities and help build the Main Street brand, which is already one of the best in Middle Tennessee."

*Main Street Media, Gallatin
April 20, 2022*

Ray joins Post as reporter

Danielle Ray has joined the staff of the Murfreesboro Post as a news reporter.

She will be covering city and county government, school districts, businesses, the arts, churches and growth in the county.

Ray is from Benton, Ky. She has experience in print journalism



Ray

writing for The Paducah Sun in Western Kentucky and Kentucky Health News in Lexington.

She earned her bachelor's degree in English from Murray State University and her

master's in communication from the University of Kentucky.

"We are very excited to get someone with Dani's experience at the Murfreesboro Post," said Dave Gould, the owner of Main Street Media which owns the Murfreesboro Post. "Rutherford County is such a dynamic and growing area and I know she is anxious to get started covering it."

*Murfreesboro Post
June 27, 2022*

Daily Times fills two reporters' positions

Ashley Depew has stepped into the role of city government reporter at The Daily Times, Maryville, succeeding Andrew Jones, who now reports for the Asheville Citizen-Times.

Mathaus Schwarzen has joined the Daily Times as cops and courts reporter, succeeding Mariah Franklin, who now covers county government.

Depew earned a bachelor's de-



Depew

gree in journalism in 2021 from the University of Tennessee. She graduated summa cum laude with a volunteer of distinction award for professional promise. In the spring before graduating, she interned with The Daily Times.

She was chosen by her professors and college administrators to represent UT in the 2021 News21



Schwarzen

program at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism. She joined The Daily Times in August 2021 covering cops and courts.

Schwarzen is a recent graduate of Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee, where he earned his bachelor's degree in English.

During his four years at Bryan, he wrote for the student newspaper, the Bryan Triangle, and also served as Student Body President during his senior year. His other work includes fiction and poetry.

A native of Seattle, Schwarzen says he is looking forward to colder weather.

*The Daily Times, Maryville
July 15, 2022*

Main Street Media buys Chronicle of Mt. Juliet

From Dave Gould, Main Street Media of Tennessee: "On behalf of my wife, Ellen, and our company, Main Street Media of Tennessee, please allow me to share with you how excited we are to be the new publishers of the Chronicle of Mt. Juliet.

"First, please allow me to share a few words about Bill and Phyllis Robinson, who have owned the Chronicle since right after it was



Dave Gould

launched in 1980. They have put their blood, sweat and tears into this newspaper and loved on it to make it the community treasure it is today.

"Ellen and I are honored to follow in their footsteps, and, like the Robinsons, we are committed to local news and information and the community. The Robinsons aren't going anywhere, and we will continue to rely on their guidance and wise counsel as we take the reins of the Chronicle."

Main Street Media is a 9-year-old company that owns and operates 12 other community newspapers along with a variety of other locally operated media.

*Main Street Media, Gallatin
July 22, 2022*

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New democracy editor position at Associated Press should be model for all newsrooms

The Associated Press recently announced that it was creating a new position for a “democracy editor.” It tapped a long-time AP veteran and state government editor for the position. When Tom Verdin, who is in Sacramento, steps into the new role, he will oversee coverage of stories about voting rights and election processes.

In making the decision, AP’s executive editor Julie Pace acknowledged that such topics were often covered by political and government journalists. “The challenge that a lot of news organizations are facing when it comes to covering democracy is that, yes, this is of course a national issue, a macro issue, but it’s playing out all across the country in very local ways,” Pace told CNN.

She pointed, in particular, to a standoff in a New Mexico over certifying local election results. One of the key figures in that dispute was a county commissioner who was just sentenced for his role in the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol.

AP’s move is a good one and should be replicated in every



LOCAL MATTERS

JACKIE SPINNER

newsroom in America, including the smallest ones.

Far too many of our readers, as evidenced by the support the Jan. 6 insurrectionists still have, do not seem to understand how government works and why threats to it undermine the core of our democratic principles.

Half of Americans (49%) said it was accurate to say that arresting those who entered the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 to disrupt the certification of the presidential election violated the Constitution because they were exercising their constitutional right to petition the government for redress of grievances. An equal number (49%) said the statement was inaccurate, and arresting those who entered the capitol did not violate the Constitution, according

to the 2021 Annenberg Constitution Day Civics Survey.

It certainly doesn’t help when politicians themselves spread misinformation about how government works. Or when partisanship so taints the conversation that it becomes difficult to hear each other. That misinformation then leads to distrust.

A late 2021 poll by Pew Research found that just a quarter of Americans had faith in their government, a striking and near historic low.

We need a new approach.

In addition to covering local school boards and local elections, we owe it to our readers, and to ourselves as watchdogs of our democratic institutions, to explain better how the system works. In fact, we can and should do a better job of explaining to our readers what our role is in holding these institutions and processes accountable.

This doesn’t have to cost us money to add new staff to our newsrooms. We can follow the lead of the City Bureau in Chicago

to deputize our readers to help us cover local government.

The Documenters Network has trained more than 1,600 people across four cities to attend and annotate government meetings. Part of the training involves teaching people how to document objectively, without a partisan agenda.

With their mobile devices, our readers can help live stream public meetings, provide multimedia reports and take notes. It will give them a bigger stake and provide us with partners in holding government accountable.

In Detroit, a network participant reported recently from the Board of Water Commissioners on an affordability plan. Another provided coverage of a City Council meeting where a new tax abatement was debated. In Cleveland, a citizen tweeted from a school board meeting in which members unanimously approved a ban on guns in schools.

With a slight reframing of our coverage and with new involvement from our civic-minded readers, we don’t have to wait for

the national and bigger media outlets to find us when controversy erupts, as it did in New Mexico.

We need more “here is how it works” features, community forums, invitations to our readers, transparency.

We do not yet have the trust of the public back after the battering we took under the former president. One way we can rebuild that trust is by inviting people into the process, by taking away the mystery of how reporters do their jobs, how we cover government, how we watch.

Because the fact is that we are watching. We’ve always been watching.

Jackie Spinner is the editor of Gateway Journalism Review, which published this article on July 7, 2022. It is reprinted here with her permission. A version of this story first appeared in Publisher’s Auxiliary, the only national publication serving America’s community newspapers. Follow Spinner on Twitter @jackiespinner.

Brown named Times Free Press president

SUBMITTED
Chattanooga Times Free Press
July 7, 2022

Alton Brown, the former regional publisher for Lee Enterprises in North Carolina, has been named president of the Chattanooga Times Free Press.

Brown, 59, has worked in the newspaper business for more than three decades in management roles in Georgia, Ohio, Arizona and North Carolina. Brown said he was attracted to the Times Free Press by the values of the newspaper and the appeal of Chattanooga.

“Chattanooga is a beautiful city and my wife and I are really excited about becoming engaged members of the community,” Brown told employees of the Times Free Press Wednesday after assuming his new role. “But the big attraction for me was the core values of this newspaper and the commitment and dedication to quality journalism. To give the news fair and impartially is very important to me, and I look forward to working with everyone here to continue that tradition. Every community needs to have media that are focused on



Photo by Matt Hamilton/
Times Free Press

Alton Brown talks with members of the Times Free Press staff July 6.

the concerns of the community above all else.”

The announcement of Brown’s appointment was made Wednesday by Nat W. Lea IV, president and chief executive officer of WEHCO Media Inc., which owns the Times Free Press. Brown will head operations of the Chattanooga Publishing Co., as well as its online, newspaper and magazine operations in Chattanooga.

Mark Lane, president of WEHCO Media’s newspaper division who temporarily headed the Times Free Press following the resignation of former newspaper President Jeff DeLoach in March,

said he looks forward to working with Brown.

“Alton is a newspaper and media veteran who has a track record of proven success,” Lane said. “He cares deeply about local journalism and building relationships with the community, advertisers and team members.”

Lea said Brown brings an extensive background in the newspaper industry “and he is very passionate about this business.”

Brown began working in a newspaper mailroom at age 14 in Milledgeville, Georgia, and he has worked in newspapers throughout his career since graduating from Princeton University in 1985.

Brown was publisher of The Winston-Salem Journal in North Carolina for the past five years and previously served as both an advertising vice president and later general manager of the Akron Beacon Journal in Ohio after working as sales vice president for The Tribune in Scottsdale, Az.

Brown and his wife are the parents of two grown children and just purchased their new home in Ooltewah.

Calling for entries! TPA Directory cover photo contest 2023

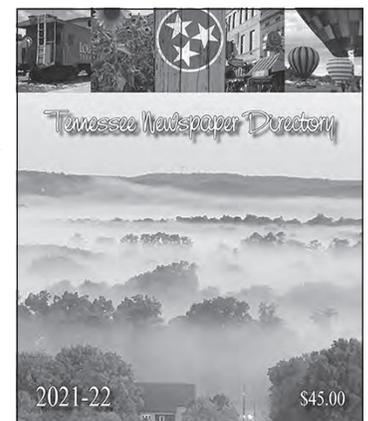
Photos should reflect scenic Tennessee through landscapes, architecture, wildlife and/or nature photography. The prize is \$200 and photo credit in the directory.

The contest is open to all employees of TPA member newspapers. Entries may include published and/or non-published photographs. A maximum of two entries by one photographer may be submitted.

Photo 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>.

Entry information should then be emailed to TPA Member Services Manager Robyn Gentile at rgentile@tnpress.com with the file name, name of the photographer, newspaper, contact phone number and some information about the subject/location photographed.



The 2021-22 main image by Jack McNeely, Cleveland Daily Banner, the 2021-22 contest winner.

Deadline: Sept. 9

Government speech doctrine is a dangerous path toward censorship

The First Amendment protects our rights to speak and pray. It gets more complicated when that expression is in government spaces or by government officials. This raises tough questions the Supreme Court is weighing in on now.

Two First Amendment cases at the United States Supreme Court (as of early May, 2022) show the danger of a concept known as the government speech doctrine. This doctrine provides a powerful defense for government entities facing First Amendment challenges from public employees or other individuals who engage in private speech but are connected to a government program or platform. Under this doctrine, free speech claims are eviscerated if speech is classified as government speech.

Shurtleff v. City of Boston

The first of these two cases involves flying flags at city hall. Harold Shurtleff contended that the city of Boston allowed hundreds of organizations to use its flagpole to



PERSPECTIVE: FREEDOM FORUM

DAVID L. HUDSON JR.

fly different flags but balked at his flag because of its religious content. Shurtleff made a classic free speech argument that city officials improperly engaged in viewpoint discrimination by treating his religious speech differently than the non-religious speech of others. The city of Boston countered with a powerful argument that flags flown at a city-owned plaza are government speech.

Kennedy v. Bremerton School District

This second case involves a former high school football coach who was terminated for religious activity on the football field. Joseph Kennedy would pray

on the 50-yard line after games. Sometimes others would join him, including players on both teams. Kennedy claims that when the school district fired him for his religious expression, it violated his rights under both the free speech and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment.

The school district counters that Kennedy's act of praying on the 50-yard line was a form of government speech under the Supreme Court's 2006 ruling in *Garcetti v. Ceballos*. Under that decision, public employees have zero free speech rights when they engage in official job-related speech. Previously, the court balanced the public employee's right to speak on matters of public concern with the public employer's interests.

"When public employees make statements pursuant to their official duties, the employees are not speaking as citizens for First Amendment purposes, and the Constitution does not insulate their communications from employer discipline." — Supreme Court rul-

ing in *Garcetti v. Ceballos*

There may be a place for the government speech doctrine in First Amendment law. For example, the Supreme Court explained in *Pleasant Grove v. Summum* in 2009 that monuments in a public park are a form of government speech as "governments have long used monuments to speak to the public." However, the doctrine must be narrowly defined and applied. Otherwise, freedom of speech becomes quite hollow.

Justice Samuel Alito warned about the government speech doctrine in a 2017 case about trademarks. The government argued in *Matal v. Tam* that trademarks were a form of government speech, protecting the government from a compelling free-speech argument by musician Simon Tam, who sought to trademark his band's name — The Slants.

Alito and his colleagues on the court rejected the application of the government speech doctrine to trademarks, writing that the government speech doctrine is

"susceptible to dangerous misuse." He explained, "If private speech could be passed off as government speech by simply affixing a government seal of approval, government could silence or muffle the expression of disfavored viewpoints."

The court rejected the government speech doctrine in the *Shurtleff* case and protected *Shurtleff's* private speech. It should do so in the *Kennedy* case as well. Joseph Kennedy was engaged in private speech, not government speech, when he prayed on the football field.

The government speech doctrine is dangerous because it could lead to much censorship of private expression. Hopefully, the Supreme Court will continue to signal that the doctrine applies only in narrow circumstances — and certainly not in these two cases.

David L. Hudson Jr., is First Amendment fellow of the Freedom Forum and is a law professor at Belmont University, Nashville.

Franklins sell Lexington Progress to Mirror-Exchange, Inc.

SUBMITTED
Lexington Progress
June 8, 2022

For only the third time in its 138-year history, The Lexington Progress has new owners.

The paper has been purchased by Mirror-Exchange, Inc., owned by sister and brother Scarlet Elliot and Victor Parkins, who are second-generation newspaper publishers. Their parents, Bob and Dorris Parkins started the Mirror-Exchange in Milan in 1966. The company also owns The Trenton Gazette, The Tri-City Reporter, and The Humboldt Chronicle.

The Franklin family had been publishing the paper since 1946, when it was purchased by W. T. "Jew" Franklin, Jr., and his wife Kathleen. Franklin became president of the Tennessee Press Association in 1973-74. He was instrumental in passing the Tennessee Sunshine Law, which requires state and local agencies to properly announce public meetings and open them to the public.

Tom Franklin became the publisher after his father's death on

September 10, 1980.

Tom and his wife Donna are retiring, and the family felt the new owners will continue the family tradition of the paper. "I felt like it was time," Tom said. "I am looking forward to spending more time with my family."

Victor Parkins came in and helped the Franklin family after Brad Franklin's death in 2015.

"They feel like family," Tom said, referring to the Parkins family. "They know the business and they will take good care of it."

Tom's wife, Donna, agreed: "We are both pleased with who we sold it to. Family is everything to us. It is important to have a small hometown newspaper, it is more personal," she continued.

Donna also retired June 4, 2022, after 51 years working in cosmetology. Over the years, she and the rest of the family have all worked at the paper at some point.

Tom's daughter, Brooke James, and his son Blake Franklin will continue their roles at The Progress.

"I am thankful for the Parkins family," Blake said. "I wish the new owners continued success. I



Submitted

Pictured above is the Franklin Family (L-R) Matt and Brooke James, Knox Franklin, Tom and Donna Franklin, Meredith James, Taylor and Kellye Franklin, Blake Franklin and Marshall James. The Franklin family owned and operated The Lexington Progress for 76 years.

hope the community will continue to support the Parkins family as they have supported us."

Said Brooke: "The newspaper has been our way of life for all my life. . . . from playing in the warehouse on large paper rolls as a little girl with Blake, to learning

my first paper route, and eventually coming back here after college.

I truly believe God places people in our lives when we need them the most. After I lost my older brother and business partner in 2015, I couldn't have survived here without the guidance Victor

and Scarlet so graciously provided, expecting nothing in return."

Victor Parkins is editor and publisher of The Mirror-Exchange, Milan, and oversees the operations of three other newspapers along with his sister, Scarlet.

"The Lexington Progress has a proven track record of serving the people of Lexington and Henderson County. Our goal is to maintain the same level of excellence to our readers," Parkins said.

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TPA CONCURRENT BOARD MEETING & BUSINESS SESSION, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE TRI-STATE PRESS CONVENTION

All meeting photos by Mike Towle, Tennessee Press Association



Rick Thomason, Kingsport Times News and Six Rivers Media, manages a smile as he leads a Concurrent TPA Board and Business meeting for the last time in his one-year tenure as TPA president. This meeting was held Thursday on the first day of the 2022 Tri-State Press Convention at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Memphis.



Carol Daniels, TPA executive director, makes a point during the June 23 TPA Board meeting, which featured ample discussion on a variety of topics, including where to host the 2023 Winter and Summer Conventions.



Above left to right: Director David Plaza, The Tennessean, Nashville, checks his notes during the TPA Board Meeting held in conjunction with the Tri-State Press Convention in Memphis on June 23. Above middle: Treasurer Eric Barnes, The Daily News, Memphis. Above right: Robyn Gentile, TPA member services manager, always has to be ready to answer all sorts of questions from board members. Bottom left: Director Sandra Dodson, Valley Publishing Company, Pikeville, listens closely to the discussion. Bottom right: Director Paul Mauney, The Greeneville Sun.

