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INSIDE

Esposito to retire from Adams, Daily Times

Page 2

Daniels: TPA, TPAF enable member training

Page 3

Tracks

Page 3

Foust: Sales in left-brain, right-brain world

Page 4

TFP's Hassman family donates \$25M to school

Page 5

Use video to grow revenue

Page 6

New paper in Houston County

Page 11

Obituaries

Pages 11, 12

TPA Member Showcase

Page 12

Family ownership changes for Enterprise and Banner

SUBMITTED
Tri-County Publishing, McKenzie
September 6, 2019

The ownership changed in September for Tri-County Publishing, Inc. (TCP), the publisher of the Dresden Enterprise and The McKenzie Banner. Joel and Teresa Washburn of McKenzie, purchased the stock of Jeff and Jennifer Washburn, of Dresden, in the family-owned business.

For 71 years, the Washburn family has been involved in the publication of the Dresden Enterprise and The McKenzie Banner.

James Loyd Washburn started as a printer's devil in 1948, shortly after returning from occupied Japan immediately following World War II.

James died in 1985, leaving the business to his wife, Ramona, majority owner, and sons, Jeff and Joel. The brothers purchased Ramona's shares in 2015.



Joel Washburn

The sale marks a milestone in the life of Jeff Washburn, as he mostly retires from the newspaper business, in which he had worked since the age of nine. For 45 years, seven months and two days, Jeff served as the managing editor of the Dresden Enterprise, a position he held with pride as he traveled throughout Weakley County covering the events and people of the county.

He began his newspaper career in McKenzie, working in the printshop, writing news stories, and doing photography.

He was later tapped to work at Associated Publishers, Inc. in 1973, when the new web press was installed at Huntingdon.

That sister company printed nine



Submitted, Dresden Enterprise

Jeff Washburn holds a recent copy of the Dresden Enterprise.

community newspapers, including Dresden and McKenzie.

In 1973, Jeff and Kenneth Kee were the press operators for a new five-unit web press.

Kenneth Kee, of McKenzie, along with other pressmen, still operate that press. Kee has printed the Enterprise and Banner for sixty years.

Jeff is the mayor of Dresden, the city judge in McKenzie, owner of Poppi's Pizza in Dresden, and a law partner in the firm of Washburn and Hutcherson in Dresden. His many obligations are in great part why he chose to sell the publishing company.

Jeff wrote, "During my career here, I have seen, written about, and edited literally thousands of stories about the good, bad, and ugly of the everyday occurrences involving the residents of this great county. This job has afforded me the opportunity to celebrate up close and personal the great accomplishments of our citizens and likewise grieve with individuals and families in times of loss

See **WASHBURN** Page 2

Main Street Media launches new local papers in Clarksville, Nashville

SUBMITTED
Main Street Media of Tennessee
September 1, 2019

Main Street Media of Tennessee, Gallatin, a publisher of community newspapers, websites and social media pages serving six counties across Middle Tennessee, has expanded into Montgomery and Davidson Counties.

Main Street Nashville: East launched Wednesday, Aug. 28 with a focus on Donelson, Hermitage and Old Hickory. The following day, Main Street Clarksville debuted in Montgomery County. Both weekly papers will cover local news, sports, people and events in the area. Mailed subscriptions will be free for two years for in-county addresses.

In addition, Main Street Media of Tennessee has entered into an agreement to publish The Fort



Gould

Campbell Courier, the official weekly newspaper of the Fort Campbell Army installation since 1963. The Courier's first edition in partnership with Main Street Media of Tennessee published Friday, Sept. 6.

Corresponding websites – www.mainstreet-nashville.com, www.mainstreetclarksville.com and www.fortcampbellcourier.com - went live on the day of each publication's launch, and all three can be found on social media.

"We are excited to be bringing very locally-focused newspapers to these communities," said Dave Gould, owner of Main Street

Media of Tennessee. "Montgomery County is growing so quickly, and we believe readers will enjoy our brand of local news in Main Street Clarksville.

"The Courier has been the official newspaper of Fort Campbell for 56 years and it's going to be an honor to publish that paper and serve the families of the Fort Campbell community. We believe a combination of Main Street Clarksville and the Courier will give advertisers a great opportunity to reach that market.

"We are equally excited about Main Street Nashville: East. This will be our first weekly paper in Davidson County, and we have talked to numerous people in Donelson, Hermitage and Old Hickory who tell us local news is very important in that area."

Main Street Media of Tennessee publishes 11 weekly newspapers, websites, magazines and social media pages throughout Middle Tennessee. Titles include The Murfreesboro Post, Wilson Post, Gallatin News, Hendersonville Standard, Robertson County Connection, Portland Sun, Cheatham County Exchange, Dickson Post, Main Street Clarksville, Main Street Nashville: East, Fort Campbell Courier and Main Street Preps.

In 2018, Main Street Media earned 58 Tennessee Press Association awards including first-place awards for best public service journalism and best editorials. Two of its newspapers, the Gallatin News and Hendersonville Standard, took home General Excellence awards for best newspapers in the state in their respective circulation categories.

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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 December issue is Tuesday, November 5.

Esposito set to retire from Adams, Daily Times

SUBMITTED
Adams Publishing Group
September 13, 2019

Carl Esposito, publisher of The Daily Times (Maryville/Alcoa) for nine years and regional president for Adams Publishing Group for nearly three years, will retire effective Nov. 1, Adams Publishing Group announced in a September press release.

Paul W. Mauney, general manager of The Greeneville Sun and APG's chief revenue officer for the



Esposito

Tennessee/Western North Carolina/Southern Virginia region, will succeed Esposito as regional president for Adams' Tennessee/North Carolina/Virginia group.

Bryan Sandmeier, general manager of The Daily Times, will be promoted to publisher.

Before coming to Maryville, Esposito was Media General's senior executive for its Tennessee/Southwest Virginia properties, which included the Pulitzer prize-winning Bristol Herald Courier, CBS affiliate WJHL-TV, websites TriCities.com and SWVAToday.com, and six paid-circulation weekly newspapers. Esposito will retire following



Mauney

more than four decades of corporate newspaper leadership and community involvement. He currently serves on the boards of the Tennessee Press Association and the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association

Gregg Jones, APG's executive vice president and president over the company's Eastern United States Division, said he was "absolutely thrilled" when he hired Esposito in October 2010. The Daily Times then was owned by Jones' family.

Said Jones, "My expectations were great, given that my respect for Carl came not just because he was one of the finest newspapermen I had ever known, but because of his decades-long demonstrated commitment to producing wonderful newspapers that reflect and engage their readership, his dedication to fighting for progress in the communities he serves and his strong integrity."

"I am so grateful for the opportunities I've had with The Daily Times and Adams Publishing Group" Esposito said. "And perhaps the most gratifying part as I prepare to complete my career



Sandmeier

is knowing that two great leaders in Paul Mauney and Bryan Sandmeier will carry on our tradition of customer and community focus across our Tennessee/North

Carolina/Virginia group operations and at The Daily Times."

Mauney joined Adams Publishing in June after managing multiple properties as regional publisher of Gatehouse Media's North Carolina newspapers in the central part of the state. He began his newspaper career in 1987 as district sales manager at The Shelby Star in North Carolina and then held circulation and advertising positions at North Carolina newspapers The Henderson Dispatch and The Enquirer-Journal in Monroe; and at Tennessee newspapers The Daily News Journal in Murfreesboro and The Review Appeal/Brentwood Journal in Franklin; then back to several North Carolina newspapers.

Mauney was also publisher of The Recorder/Noticiero Semanal in Porterville, Calif. from 2004-06, and then served as General Manager of the Newspaper Division of

See **ESPOSITO** Page 3

WASHBURN from Page 1

and suffering. I have been tremendously blessed by God as he has afforded me the good fortune to come to know and love Weakley Countians from east to west and north to south.

"Over the past few months, as I approached my 65th birthday, I began to realize and accept that the time was right for me to begin getting some of my irons out of the fire as many people have often told me that I have too many irons in the fire.

"My brother, Joel, and I began talking about me selling my interest in Tri-County Publishing, Inc. and other publishing-related assets to him. The corporation publishes the Dresden Enterprise and McKenzie Banner newspapers as well as operates a commercial print shop and sells advertising specialties.

"Just this week we reached an agreement for that transaction to take place and we focused

our efforts on wrapping up that agreement as quickly as possible. September 6 (was) the day when I will no longer be an owner of Tri-County Publishing and each day reporting for work at the newspaper office.

"In my new role of helping my brother work to build a better newspaper for Dresden and Weakley County, I have the good fortune of getting to be selective about my assignments and number of hours worked per week. I will no longer have the burden and stress of seeing that the newspaper makes it to the newsstands and subscriber mailboxes week in and week out.

"This new opportunity also will allow me to sleep later in the morning and spend more time at home at night with my wife, Jennifer.

"I also will have more opportunity to serve the citizens of Dresden as mayor by working to make our city a better place to live and raise

children."

In conjunction with the ownership change, the Dresden Enterprise has a new design and a new flag – the nameplate at the top of page 1. Upon the transfer of ownership in September, Joel Washburn issued the following statement:

"The Dresden Enterprise will continue as a community newspaper serving Weakley County.

"My brother, Jeff and I have been in the publishing business for more than 40 years.

"I thank Jeff for his many years of service to the community and the industry. I will rely on his continued support to improve your community newspaper.

"I hope to build on the tradition of the printed newspaper and add new online offerings.

"A community newspaper relies on the support of local citizens and businesses. We thank you for your support in the past and hope to earn your support in the future."

TPA, TPAF enable new members' training and support

By the time you are reading this, the Tennessee Press Association will have just completed a series of training sessions at member newspapers towns across the state. I hope all who attended the Generational Strategies training learned some ways we can better serve our readers and our advertisers.

I look forward to your feedback on both the content and the format. We want to make training more accessible to all our members, which I hope we did with this seminar. We offered four consecutive days at four different locations across Tennessee so that your advertising and editorial folks had shorter distances to drive, and a half-day training class was possible for all members.

We are hoping we can offer similar training opportunities like this in the future.

TPA is always striving to find



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CAROL DANIELS

new ways that we can bring benefits to our members, and we LOVE to hear from you with ideas or suggestions. The Chuck Underwood training was a direct result of a discussion with a member.

As you know, the Tennessee Press Association Foundation helps fund projects from which TPA members can benefit. This year the foundation board added two grant recipients; both will benefit our member papers.

The new recipients add to the services funded by the foundation, including the legal hotline and

the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government (TCOG).

The legal hotline has been a valuable resource for decades, and the number of calls that Richard Hollow answers is proof enough how much our members need and use this service.

TCOG's Executive Director Deborah Fisher is an invaluable resource and partner during the legislative session. TCOG is also a great resource for members with questions about open meetings, or open government.

Two of the new sponsorship recipients are the Free Speech Center at MTSU and the Tennessee Bar Association Reporters Workshop. TPA will be working with the Free Speech Center this year to bring an ad campaign to all local members focusing on the first amendment. The Free Speech Center will also be starting

a hotline for member papers with first amendment questions. Last year was the first Bar Association Reporters Workshop, this two-day, fully-paid workshop is open to all newsroom staff who apply. Because of the popularity of this program, a selection committee determines the final class participants. Last year, several staff from TPA member papers attended and found it very beneficial.

Your TPA team is always looking for ways we can bring services and training to our members. If you have any suggestions or ideas you would like us to explore, please reach out and let us know.

Thank you,
Carol

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

TRACKS

Atkinson is new Star publisher

Veteran newspaper executive Bill Atkinson is the new publisher of The Meridian Star. His appointment was announced in September by Donna Barrett, president and CEO of CNHI, LLC., The Star's parent company.

"We knew for Meridian he was a good guy and he is going to do the right thing for Meridian," Barrett said.

Atkinson also retains his role as publisher of the Crossville Chroni-



Atkinson

cle in Crossville, Tennessee. Publishers overseeing more than one publication has become common in the newspaper industry, Barrett said.

Atkinson has experience as publisher of group newspaper sites. Before being named publisher in Crossville in June 2017, he was group publisher for nine years of Gulf

Coast Newspapers & Courier Publications, Crescent Publishing, in Mid-Coast and Downeast Regions of Maine and Baldwin County, Ala. Previously, he was group general manager of the Lone Star News Group and publisher of the Cleburne Times-Review in Texas. He began his newspaper career in 1983 in the advertising department of the Crossville Chronicle.

"People should expect improvements and new products, and maybe reworking of some old products," Atkinson said. "There

will be more interaction with the community and consumers.

"I would like people to view The Meridian Star as a friendly face. In time of need they can come to us and we'll help them."

Atkinson was among a rotation of publishers who had been helping at The Star since Alexander Gould resigned in May.

"He fell in love with the town and the people," Barrett said.

*The Meridian Star
September 1, 2019*

See **TRACKS** Page 4

ESPOSITO from Page 2

Freedom Communications before moving to Burlington, NC as publisher in 2008, where he eventually became regional publisher, adding The Asheboro Courier-Tribune and Lexington Dispatch to his responsibility.

"Paul brings with him a wealth of experience and expertise, which I am confident he will put to good use for APG's newspapers, associates and the communities they serve," Jones said.

"I'm incredibly thankful to have this expanded opportunity to serve the Adams Publishing Group newspapers in Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia, in

addition to The Greeneville Sun." Mauney said. "I look forward to working with all the fine associates throughout the group and their communities."

Sandmeier, a North Dakota native, has been circulation director of The Daily Times since 2008 and took on the dual role as general manager in January 2017.

From 2002-08, Sandmeier was circulation director at the Manhattan (Kansas) Mercury; from 2000-02, he was circulation director at the Jonesboro (Ark.) Sun; in 1999 and 2000, he held the same position at the Times-Record in Fort Smith, Ark.. He was circulation director for 12 years at The

Salina (Kan.) Journal, held several positions at the Racine (Wisc.) Journal Times, and also worked as distribution manager at The Bismarck (N.D.) Tribune.

"Carl's retirement is a huge loss to the Adams Publishing Group, The Daily Times and the communities we serve," Sandmeier said. "But I am determined to do him proud as his successor at The Daily Times."

Of Sandmeier, Gregg Jones said he was the "natural person to jump into Carl's big shoes as publisher of The Daily Times. In fact, having acted as general manager of The Daily Times since Jan. 1, 2017, and having had Carl as his mentor for the

past nine years, Bryan already pretty much has the publisher's job down pat."

With 30 daily newspapers, more than 100 non-daily newspapers and other enterprises operating in 20 states and the District of Columbia, Adams Publishing Group describes itself as "first and foremost a family-owned community newspaper company, which is driven to provide high quality products and services that make a positive difference in the lives of its constituents, which are, in prioritized order: its readers, its customers/advertisers, its communities, its Associates (employees) and its shareholders."

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- 3-5: 2019 National Newspaper Association's 133rd Annual Convention and Trade Show. The Pfister Hotel, Milwaukee, Wisc.
- 6-8: Southern Newspaper Publishers Association (SNPA) - Inland Annual Meeting, J.W. Marriott Chicago, Chicago, Ill.
- 6-12: National Newspaper Week, sponsored by Newspaper Association Managers, Inc. Theme: "Think F1rst - Know Your 5 Freedoms."
- 8: TPA Generational Training Workshop, Jackson
- 9: TPA Generational Training, Workshop, Nashville
- 10: TPA Generational Training, Workshop, Chattanooga
- 11: TPA Generational Training, Workshop, Morristown

NOVEMBER

- Oct. 31 - Nov. 3: College Media Association Fall National College Media Convention 2019, in conjunction with Associated Collegiate Press, Grand Hyatt Washington, Washington, D.C.
- 7: TPA Board of Directors Meeting, Nashville Public Library, 1:00 p.m.

DECEMBER

- 31: Deadline TPA Public Notice Journalism Contest

FEBRUARY 2020

- 12-13: TPA Winter Convention, DoubleTree Nashville Downtown Hotel, Nashville
- 21: Deadline: UT-TPA State Press Contests
- 28: Deadline: TPA Ad/Circ Ideas Contest

- 17-19: 2020 Key Executives Mega-Conference, Southern Newspaper Publishers Association, Omni Fort Worth Hotel, Fort Worth, Tex.

MARCH 2020

- 5-8: 2020 Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) Computer-Assisted Reporting (CAR) Conference, New Orleans, La.

APRIL 2020

- 17-18: Journalism Education Association National Convention, Gaylord Opryland, Nashville

Sales flexibility needed in left-brain, right-brain world

Diane was telling me about her early days in selling. “One day stands out in my mind,” she said. “I had back-to-back appointments with two different prospects to talk about a special section. The first person was interested in what his ad would look like and the importance of selecting illustrations to project the right image. The second person jumped right into the numbers and wanted to know the details of rates and tracking systems.

“Both people bought ads, but it fascinated me that they arrived at their decisions in such different ways. Both cared about the appearance of their ads, but the first person cared more. Both people cared about numbers, but the second person cared more.

“That’s when I realized that



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JOHN FOUST

there is a lot of truth in the right brain-left brain concept I had heard so much about. The left side is the logical, mathematical side and the right side is the emotional, creative side. Of course, no one is 100 percent on either side, but most people have a natural tendency toward one side. Tendencies usually show up in childhood. Left-brain children are better at math and right-brain children are better at creative writing.”

Diane explained that these traits are clearly evident in adults. “We’ve all been in conversations where the other person seems to be on a completely different wavelength. That could be due to different thinking styles. One of the key principles of selling is to ‘know your audience,’ which goes beyond knowing their company history and marketing motives. We have to get in step with the other person’s thinking style, too.

“During a sales presentation, I try to adapt to the other person’s style. When I’m talking to left brainers, I focus on facts and figures – and I use testimonial examples with lots of statistical evidence. When I talk to right brainers, I concentrate on creative strategy, with similar testimonials.

When I meet with two or more people, I make sure to include information for both types.”

What about the ads themselves? “It’s interesting to study ads that deliberately take thinking styles into consideration,” Diane said. “Look through a technical publication and you’ll see ads that are filled with product specs and statistics. The same advertisers would have to take a different approach in a publication which appeals primarily to right-brain readers. But in a general-interest setting – like a newspaper – it’s smart to include ad elements that appeal to both types.

“All of this has convinced me that flexibility is one of the most important traits of an advertising professional,” she explained. “Too many people in this business think

they can make the same presentation to everybody. That just doesn’t work. We have to make adjustments and do everything possible to connect. We shouldn’t expect them to adapt to us. We have to adapt to them.”

Diane makes a good point. It’s not always about right and wrong. Sometimes it’s a matter of right and left.

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John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com

TRACKS from Page 3

Jenkins joins Sun, Reneau departs

Michael S. Reneau, who had served as editor of The Greeneville Sun since 2015, has departed from the Sun and was replaced in early September by Scott Jenkins.

Jenkins is an award-winning newspaper editor who had most recently worked in North Carolina as regional executive editor of the Times-News of Burlington and The Dispatch in Lexington.

Reneau left to become deputy editor of WORLD News Group, a Christian national news outlet that publishes WORLD Magazine, web-exclusive content and several



Jenkins

radio programs/podcasts.

Jenkins, who was born and raised in Oak Hill, W. Va., has spent the last 23 years in a variety of newspaper roles in North Carolina. As a reporter

early in his career, Jenkins covered virtually every beat possible, including government, crime and politics. After six years as a reporter with the newspaper, in 2005 he began a stint as night editor of the Salisbury Post in Salisbury, N.C. Two years later the newspaper named him assistant managing editor, before he became news editor in 2009, a role he filled for seven years.

In 2016, The Dispatch in Lexington, N.C., tapped Jenkins as its executive editor. Earlier this year he became regional executive editor



Reneau

in addition to his previous duties, as he assumed oversight of the newsroom of the TimesNews in Burlington.

“I’m a firm believer in the importance of

community journalism and its mission to inform and empower readers with news they need and enrich their lives with stories about the great things happening around them,” Jenkins said.

Reneau joined the Sun in November 2013 as assistant managing editor. Less than a year later, then-Editor John M. Jones Jr. promoted him to managing editor. Then in 2015, when Jones retired, Reneau became editor.

The Greeneville Sun
August 3, 2019

Independent welcomes Patterson to staff

The Chester County Independent, Henderson, welcomes newly hired staff writer, Kendall Patterson to its staff. Patterson hails from Corinth Miss. He is an Ole Miss print journalism grad, specializing in public relations with a minor in digital media.



Patterson

Patterson interned with the Daily Corinthian in addition to working as staff writer and photographer at the Daily Mississippian. He enjoys photography and poetry, and loves

all things superhero.

“I hope to make an impact personally with people’s lives and with the paper to make my mark,” Patterson said. “I am looking forward to events and sports I will cover, theater programs and more.”

Patterson intends to reach out through technology, among other venues, to younger generations and beyond. “I plan to keep (the Independent’s) social media up to date, using my digital media skills for the community,” he said.

“I am pleased to have Kendall join our team,” said publisher Scott Whaley.

Chester County Independent,
Henderson
July 31, 2019

Sherrill named editor at Tullahoma News

Veteran editor and journalist Duane Sherrill has taken the reins as editor of the Tullahoma News, according to News publisher Brian Blackley.

The move was announced in conjunction with the departure of long-time reporter and managing editor Kelly Lapczynski.

“Replacing Kelly Lapczynski will be no easy task, but I’m confident that we picked the right person,” Blackley said. “Duane is an old school community news-



Sherrill

paper journalist, but he loves the new technology that allows us to bring our stories to the community in new and exciting ways.”

Sherrill, a long-serving newspaperman,

began his career in 1990 at The Southern Standard in McMinnville. He served as a crime and courts reporter before moving to The Smithville Review as editor in 2017, a newspaper in the same group as The Standard.

“I want to make The News a must-read publication each and every edition,” Sherrill said. “I want it to be the first thing you open up when you go to the mailbox.”

The Tullahoma News
September 10, 2019

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Don't forget to update your
Tennessee Press Service
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It's as simple as emailing the
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egoodman@tnpress.com



Tennessee Press Service Advertising Placement Snapshot

	ROP:	Networks:
August 2019	\$108,483	\$7,231
Year* as of August 30	\$1,060,651	\$122,940

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

TFP publisher Hussman and family make \$25M donation to UNC journalism school

BILL BOWDEN
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
September 10, 2019



Walter E. Hussman Jr.

The Hussman family, which owns the Chattanooga Times Free Press, is giving \$25 million to the journalism school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The school will be renamed the UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media, said Dean Susan King. It's the largest donation in the journalism school's history, King said.

"Obviously, this is a major historic moment for our school," she said. "I think for journalism to have someone at this moment of such cataclysmic disruption and lack of trust to say journalism is so important that he wants to invest in the future for the pipeline of great journalists and media leaders — that is the most optimistic thing I have felt in a long time. We are very, very excited about this."

The donation is being made personally by the Hussman family — Walter E. Hussman Jr., publisher of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and the Times Free Press, wife Ben Hussman, son Palmer Hussman and daughters Eliza Gaines and Olivia Ramsey.

Walter Hussman is also the chairman of the board of WEHCO Media, which owns the Times Free Press. He said none of the money is coming from company funds.

"They are all 100 percent in favor, which pleases me to see the fourth generation of our family is so committed to journalism," said Hussman, referring to his three adult children.

Hussman is UNC graduate

UNC has one of the best journalism schools in the country, said Hussman, who graduated from that school in 1968 before earning a master's in business from Columbia University in 1970. Hussman's two daughters and his sister, Marilyn Augur, are all UNC graduates.

Hussman said the main reason the donation is being made is because the UNC journalism school has decided to endorse and adopt the statement of core values

published every day in all 10 of WEHCO Media's daily newspapers, including the Times Free Press.

Hussman said he hopes other schools of journalism will follow the lead of UNC with their own statements of core values, as that could help restore some of the public's trust in news reporting.

King said Hussman drafted the core values after meeting with her one night in February 2017. When she read it, she told him it should be etched in stone.

And it will be. The core values will be chiseled into a stone wall in the lobby of Carroll Hall, where the journalism school is located, she said.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution already is displayed in the lobby. It guarantees, among other things, that Congress will make no law abridging freedom of the press.

The statement of core values appears on Page A2 of the Times Free Press each day. The values include impartiality, credibility and thoroughness.

"To provide the most complete report, a news organization must not just cover the news, but uncover it," Hussman wrote in the core values. "It must follow the story wherever it leads, regardless of any preconceived ideas on what might be most newsworthy."

The truth isn't always clear when reporters begin working on a story, wrote Hussman. The role of journalists is to "report as completely and impartially as possible all verifiable facts so that readers can, based on their own knowledge and experience, determine what they believe to be the truth."

For some people, social media has blurred the lines between news and opinion. Hussman said the difference needs to be clearly delineated.

"The public has lost trust in the media in America," Hussman said. "To reestablish that, I think people need to go back to these core values that really were the bedrock of journalism in our country.

Public trust in news media at 'low level'

"Journalism is a noble profession," he said. "But something is wrong when we see the public's trust in the news media at such a low level. Some politicians and even some in the news media itself regularly attack the 'mainstream media.' There is little we can do when criticism comes from outside our profession. But there is something we can do by re-examining our own standards, principles and journalistic values. We need to be honoring those time-tested best practices which had earned the trust and respect of the public over many decades."

Besides adding the Hussman name to the school, UNC will make another change to the name of its School of Media and Journalism.

"We're having them reverse that and put journalism first," Hussman said. "Everybody was enamored with the term 'media' until 'media' came to include something else — social media."

The Hussman family has donated to the UNC journalism school before, including a \$667,667 donation to establish a professorship named for Walter Hussman Sr., the father of Walter Hussman Jr. After a match by the state, the professorship is now worth more than \$1 million, King said.

The Hussman family bought the Arkansas Democrat in 1974 and won a high-profile newspaper war against the Arkansas Gazette in 1991. Gannett shut down the Gazette, and Little Rock Newspapers Inc. bought the newspaper's assets. Hussman began publishing the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette the following day.

WEHCO Media bought the Chattanooga Free Press in 1998. He then purchased the Chattanooga Times and merged the newspapers, with the merged edition under a shared nameplate debuting on Jan. 5, 1999.

If all goes according to plan, the print edition of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette would cease by the end of the year, except for Sundays, Hussman said.

Hussman is providing Apple iPads to Democrat-Gazette subscribers so they can read a replica of the newspaper online.

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12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement) <input type="checkbox"/> Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)			
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(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)		537.75	533
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(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		0	0
(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		0	0
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		565.17	560
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)			
(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541		186.92	174
(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541			0
(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)		.33	0
(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		6.83	6
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		194.08	180
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		759.25	740
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		90.75	110
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		850	850
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		74%	76%
* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.			
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I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).			

How to use video to develop revenue: Start with listening

Editor's note: This past summer, for Innovation in Focus, Reynolds Journalism Institute (RJI) was speaking with news organizations that are exploring new, emerging or unique revenue models. Alabama Media Group launched Red Clay Media in 2017 as a video-driven revenue stream. It began with videos created in the newsroom that inspired engagement from their readers. Today it is a thriving video arm with three distinct brands that focus on feel good, inspirational and comedic southern content. Author Kat Duncan spoke with Elizabeth Hoekenga Whitmire, senior director of audience development for Alabama Media Group and Red Clay Media, to learn more about how they've conquered what many newsrooms are still struggling with - making money with video content.

Duncan: How would you describe each of the brands under Red Clay Media?

Whitmire: "It's a Southern Thing" is funnier, it's going to joke a lot more when we share content. "This is Alabama" is just a really positive, excited voice. And "People of Alabama" is interesting because it's not so much that the brand has a voice but many different ones that are the voices of the stories we're telling. The people are speaking for themselves. If I had to describe those voices collectively, I'd describe them as inspirational.

Duncan: How did you decide that video was the platform you wanted to build upon?

Whitmire: We saw a lot of potential in high quality video, especially during a time when the focus on video was more of 'take your cell phone out and let's just capture something' to have a video element. We really saw an opportunity to tell stories through video and create experiences that people would want to share. And to focus on social, more than trying to get people to come to a website. We changed the way we thought about video to focus on the engagement piece.

Duncan: Though it is a separate arm, the revenue from these brands supports the traditional editorial newsroom?

Whitmire: Yes, it originally launched in our newsroom. At the time I was the director of Social Media. When "This is Alabama"



**RJI
GUEST
COLUMN**

KAT DUNCAN

started to take off, we saw the opportunity for the southern brand and the revenue opportunity and we realized this should be treated as a separate division of the company. It sits totally outside of the newsroom because we are thinking about revenue and didn't want to have gray areas.

Duncan: How is your revenue generated?

Whitmire: Pre-roll, mid-roll on videos. Instant Articles on Facebook. Sponsorship, you'll notice many of our videos are sponsored. Custom-branded content, which is when we create custom content with a brand in mind. And merchandise is a big part of it. I think that's been one of the more surprising areas. We've really been able to develop a line that speaks to that southern experience, and what I think has worked really well is that we've incorporated it into our content.

Duncan: What revenue streams are the most successful for you?

Whitmire: It is primarily split between the sponsorships, custom content and merchandise. We've also started experimenting with development. I believe we were the first local media company to sell a show to Facebook news, that was our "Chasing Corruption" series.

Duncan: What does a sponsorship look like for your brands?

Whitmire: The straight sponsorship is simply aligning the brand with the content. For example on Facebook, we use the branded-content tool. The business's page is tagged, their logo is in the video and they're getting the association with videos that are getting millions of views. For the custom videos, we will actually write something with the sponsor in mind, but we don't do that as frequently as the straight sponsorship.

Duncan: Is Facebook the most successful social media outlet for your content? What works best for you?



Photos courtesy of Red Clay Media

Catherine May and Lauren Musgrove film in the Cahaba River for "This is Alabama."

Whitmire: Facebook is definitely where we have our largest audience, almost 3 million followers on Facebook between our main Facebook page and our watch page. That's where we've been able to build the biggest audience quickly. But it isn't necessarily our primary focus, we're very invested in YouTube and we've quickly grown a lot on Instagram. We're continuing to figure out what the Twitter voice for our brand is. Just as we're interested in diversifying our approach to revenue, the same goes for our audience.

We're thinking social, we want to meet people where we are but at the same time we don't want to put everything we have into social. We do care about building traffic to the website, we care about newsletters and we'd like to experiment with texting. We're always looking for new ways to reach people and have those conversations.

Duncan: It looks like you've grown a lot over the past two years. What did you start with

compared to where you are today?

Whitmire: It started with a small staff in the newsroom, we had two full-time video producers working on "This is Alabama," but everyone else staffed around that brand was already doing something in the newsroom. Then when we launched Red Clay Media, we started with 12 people but today we are closer to 20.

Duncan: Do you try to bring your Red Clay Media audience to your main editorial content or do you let them be separate?

Whitmire: We see them as two completely different audiences. We've never approached social that way. We've always thought about distributing our content in different spaces that makes sense for that content. So even the news content, going back to five years ago, we saw it as engagement and another way to interact with our audience - not necessarily as a tool to convert them to our website.

Duncan: For newsrooms that want to try something similar, do

you feel that knowing what your voice was and what you wanted to build upon is what made you successful?

Whitmire: Yes, definitely. We started with the audience opportunity. We were creating this content in the newsroom and seeing a lot of people engaging and sharing these southern experiences. It was listening to the audience that led us to this place. For any newsroom who is thinking about trying something similar, that is so important - listen to your audience and figure out what the experience is in your community that is bringing people together.

Duncan: How do you measure success? Is it revenue? Commenting? Other types of engagement?

Whitmire: It's both revenue and audience. For audience, it really is engagement that is what has made us successful. People talking about us, sharing our content, recommending us to their friends. We

VIDEO from Page 6

are always looking at commenting and sharing.

Merchandise is really interesting because it has the revenue component but also the engagement component. We are creating these products directly from some of the conversations we are having with our audience and from the content that is speaking to our audience. When they respond and are interested in the product, to me, that really shows how invested they are in the relationship with the brand and speaks to our authenticity and ability to connect with them.

Duncan: What is one of your most popular products?

Whitmire: It's so strange but one of our most popular products is a button that says, "Bless your heart." You literally hit the button and it's one of our characters, a very southern woman, from our videos saying, "Bless your heart." That's something that only makes sense if you have that southern experience, and that's really what we're going for.

Duncan: What is something that has surprised you from this experience?

Whitmire: We had numbers to indicate that there was huge audience interest, but you never expect to grow millions of followers in a short period of time, so that was a pleasant surprise. And certainly seeing how different types of content have taken off. We had one video about how grandmothers choose their grandmother name, deciding whether you want to be Grandma or Mimi, etc. Many of us were sitting around talking about what our mothers decided they wanted to be called. Again, it's going back to that shared experience, we had a conversation in the office and so many people chimed in - whenever a conversation happens like that it's always a good sign. But that video just took off. On Facebook I think it had 100 million views and you never go into it thinking you're going to get 100 million views on something, so those are always pleasant surprises.

Duncan: Are you still looking at expanding, more brands, more



Adam Schwartz and Luke Porter filming an episode of "So True, Y'all" for "t's a Southern Thing" in Birmingham, Alabama, with actors Talia Lin, Leah Luker and Gina Miller.

revenue streams - what is next for your company?

Whitmire: Definitely expanding in what we offer in our current brands, especially "It's a Southern Thing." We are looking at launching several new series. So far our most popular content has been sketch comedy and we've really seen some interest in cultural

content that isn't comedy. So that's the next phase for us, thinking about programming that goes beyond comedy.

Duncan: Are you sticking to web-based video or are you considering other options like TV, radio?

Whitmire: We are definitely looking into development. We actually recently started working with a Hollywood management firm to launch a production development arm.

We're very interested in making programming for TV and streaming services. As we head into our next phase, that'll be a big part of it.

Duncan: What are the first steps for those that want to try a similar venture?

Whitmire: The first step is going

back to that audience piece, what are the topics that your audience will rally around, listening to the audience is key. Once you've figured out what those topics should be, and I understand this is difficult and everyone has limited resources - but giving people the space to focus on building brands like this is so important. I think we were successful because we were able to fully focus on building these brands, not trying to do it on the side while also helping run day-to-day content in the newsroom. If you treat it as a side gig, the results are probably going to reflect that.

But listening to your audience is going to tell you what your thing is. We paid attention to what was really resonating with people and what people were identifying with and went from there. Starting with listening is going to lead you to the right place.

Kat Duncan is a senior editor in the RJJ Innovation & Futures Lab. She produces the series Innovation in Focus, which explores emerg-

NEWS

Gerber named to NLA board; ASNE and APME merge

Alison Gerber, editor of the Chattanooga Times Free Press, has been named membership initiatives officer for the newly-formed News Leader Association, which was recently formed by the merger of The American Society of News Editors (ASNE) and the Associated Press Media Editors (APME).



Gerber

In a statement, NLA says it aims to foster and develop the highest standards of trustworthy, truth-seeking journalism; to advocate for open, honest

and transparent government; to fight for free speech and an independent press; to nurture the next generation of news leaders committed to spreading knowledge that informs democracy.

Their stated goal is for all citizens to be informed by accurate, truthful, independent reporting

so they can demand the best from our democratic institutions.

News Leaders Association, Columbia, Mo. Aug. 30, 2019

National Newspaper Week is Oct. 6-12

National Newspaper Week 2019 will be observed Oct. 6-12. The 79th annual celebration marks the impact of newspapers in their communities.

This year's theme is "Think First - Know Your 5 Freedoms."

Material, including editorials, cartoons, promotional ads and more, is now available to CNPA Members on the NNW site, NationalNewspaperWeek.com.

Please plan to celebrate National Newspaper Week by downloading these materials and devoting as many column inches as possible to reinforce the importance of Newspaper to your communities.

Please also make it local by editorializing about your newspaper's unique relevance. This can be about your duties as government watchdog, your role as a community forum and coverage of community events, publication

of timely public notices, etc.

NNW is sponsored by Newspaper Association Managers, Inc., the consortium of North American trade associations representing the industry.

Newspaper Association Managers, Inc. Sept. 15, 2019

UT student paper to focus on digital, reduce print editions

The University of Tennessee-Knoxville's student-run newspaper, The Daily Beacon, is cutting back print production to once a week in an effort to focus more on its digital presence.

The change was announced in a letter from the Beacon's current editor-in-chief, Kylie Hubbard. The paper will now publish weekly on Wednesdays. In addition, the student media group will now focus more on publishing on its website, video production and production of Honey Magazine.

"Cutting back on print won't really change The Daily Beacon," Hubbard said. "I think it honestly propels us forward."

The change comes two years

after The Daily Beacon cut down from publishing a print paper daily to twice a week.



Hubbard

Print advertising sales have declined in recent years and "people are looking to digital" to advertise, Hubbard said.

The Beacon pays its staff with advertising revenue, and Hubbard said

that will continue.

Hubbard, a former News Sentinel intern, said by cutting back on print, they will also be able to print longer editions of the Beacon each week. The Knoxville News Sentinel press prints The Daily Beacon.

"We've been eight pages for most of our issues," Hubbard said. "We're hoping for 12 to 16 pages and hoping to do more with print as well."

Jerry Bush, director of student media, said the decision to print once a week was unanimously passed last semester by the Student Media Board, the decision-making board for student media at UT-Knoxville.

With the shift to a digital focus, Hubbard said it allows student journalists to "explore all paths of journalism," including photo and video. Hubbard said she hopes this change will encourage students to implement those elements more frequently. Bush said students at the Beacon are "producing more videos and digital content than it ever has before."

It will be "a change in mentality," but Hubbard said she thinks it will be for the best.

"It gives more opportunity," Hubbard said. "Even if it seems like less, it's more."

The Daily Beacon is editorially independent, meaning the university has no oversight in what is published. UT-Knoxville has had a student newspaper since 1871.

Hubbard said the support from Student Life and the UT-Knoxville community has allowed the Beacon to continue publishing, both online and in print.

"Student media is so important and we're really fortunate that we get to produce this content that some student media doesn't get at all," Hubbard said.

Knoxville News Sentinel Aug. 21, 2019

Stories come to life when reporters find 'real people'

Bart's note: Hopefully this column will encourage people to rely less on official sources and to find "real people" who live closer to where stories really reside.

Police, government officials and experts have a lot of knowledge and are easy go-to sources for reporters working in understaffed newsrooms with multiple deadlines and requirements to publish on multiple platforms.

But those same sources tend to have agendas, ways of controlling messages and high-level views of issues that can sometimes misstate, mischaracterize or obscure what is really happening to people on the ground.

While most officials are well-intended and try to help reporters fully inform the public about important topics, we in the media must recognize that complex issues almost always look differently from the bottom up. A full or fuller understanding can only be obtained by finding non-officials, interviewing them and sharing their input in articles.

Almost every news story improves when reporters take the extra step — and undergo the hard work — of moving past the obvious or the easy, and delve instead



BETTER WRITING WITH BART

BART PFANKUCH

into the viewpoints of people who are directly affected by a problem or who are living with an issue every day.

Here are some tips to find "real people" sources, to interview them and to use their voices in your pieces in an effective way.

- Social media provides modern reporters with an indispensable tool for finding people on the front lines of an issue. Scrolling through Facebook or other online outlets can provide names, faces and a point of messaging with people who are directly affected by an issue. Publishing a post specifically calling out for people directly involved in an issue has worked wonders recently for my colleague who reported on college graduates with overwhelming debt, people who fled our state for more lucrative jobs and those who faced sanctions from a state debt-collec-

tion program.

- Trade groups, community service providers and non-profits that work directly with memberships or the people they serve are a great outlet. Sources arranged this way are often predisposed to speak to you. A church that counsels former inmates was critical to my search for mothers who were addicted to methamphetamine and were working toward sobriety.

- Leaving the office and traveling to places where people live, work or seek help provides a super opportunity to approach and interview people who know the truth or have a story to tell. My best source on a recent story about childhood hunger, a mom who agreed to an interview, a photo and even a video, came from hanging around at a local food bank. Speaking with the food bank director and receptionist also paid dividends.

- Reports, testimony, archived legislative hearings and other paper or digital documents often contain names of people who have shared information about themselves and know a topic from the inside. At meetings, watch for people who show up in the audience and find out why they are there.

Approach them for interviews, or get names and cell numbers and call them later.

- Once you reach a "real person" source, try your best to meet them in person, and even better while they are undergoing activities related to the story. Don't meet a farmer at a coffee shop; instead, visit their farm and interview them while they work. Personal interaction breeds openness and also creates opportunities for photos, video and audio recordings.

- Be patient with "real people" sources. Give them time to think through their answers and to articulate how they really feel. Remember, this may be their first time ever speaking to a reporter.

- Ask probing questions but be prepared to accept rejection. I often tell these sources, "I'll ask anything that comes to mind, and if you don't feel comfortable answering, it's OK."

- Don't forget the basics: full name, age, occupation, marital status or other basic details that are relevant to the story but easy to forget to ask while in the field. Get cell phone numbers of all sources in case you need to clarify something.

- Be on the lookout for telling

details that can inject life into your copy, such as how someone looks, how they act, how they speak, and how they interact with others. Ask specific questions and avoid generalities. Record details in your notes to avoid errors. If you're wondering about something, ask them about it.

- Greater sensitivity is required with "real people" sources. It helps build trust and openness by being open and honest with them about the story you're exploring, how and when the material will appear and what you are likely to use in the piece. As non-officials, these types of sources deserve more sensitivity on the reporter's part to ensure they are not further harmed by an article.

- Finding and quoting "real people" sources heightens your credibility. Official sources will become less likely to B.S. reporters who they know are willing to dig deep to find people who may confirm, or contradict, the impression of an issue they want the reporter to accept.

Bart Pfankuch is a 30-year reporter, writer and editor who now serves as content director for South Dakota News Watch. Reach him at bart.pfankuch@sdnewswatch.org.

TPA/TPS/TPAF officers and board members announced for 2019-20

STAFF REPORTS Tennessee Press Association September 1, 2019

Chris Sherrill Vass, public editor of the Chattanooga Times Free Press, is the new president of the



Vass

Tennessee Press Association (TPA).

TPA is the trade association of the state's daily and non-daily newspapers. It is composed of 24 daily newspapers and 105 non-daily newspapers.

Vass succeeds Doug Horne, owner of Republic Newspapers, Knoxville.

Other officers elected at TPA's Business Session during the annual Summer Convention, July 18, in Chattanooga were Daniel Richardson, publisher of the Carroll

County News Leader, Huntingdon, re-elected vice president for non-daily newspapers; Darrell Richardson, publisher of The Oak Ridger, elected vice president for daily newspapers; Joseph Hurd, publisher of The Courier, Savannah, re-elected secretary; and Eric Barnes, publisher of The Daily News, Memphis, elected treasurer.

Directors re-elected for two-year terms representing District One are: Dale Gentry, publisher of The Standard Banner, Jefferson City; Carl Esposito, publisher of The Daily Times, Maryville and Sara Jane Locke, publisher of The Herald-News, Dayton.

Directors re-elected for two-year terms representing District Three are: E. Scott Critchlow, co-publisher of the Union City Daily Messenger; Keith Ponder, publisher of The Daily Herald, Columbia; and Daniel Williams, business manager of The Paris Post-Intelligencer.

Doug Horne will continue on

the board for one year as immediate past president. Also continuing on the Board as directors are Amanda Bond, publisher of the Pickett County Press, Byrdstown; Maria De Varenne, executive editor of The Tennessean, Nashville and Jack McNeely, publisher of the Herald-Citizen, Cookeville.

The TPA Board of Directors elected trustees to serve on the Tennessee Press Association Foundation (TPAF) Board of Trustees for three-year terms. Re-elected trustees are: Nate Crawford, Doug Horne and Janet Rail.

TPAF officers

TPAF officers elected at the July 12 TPAF Board of Trustees meeting are Victor Parkins, publisher of The Mirror-Exchange, Milan, elected president and R. Michael Fishman, publisher of the Citizen Tribune, Morristown, elected vice president.

TPS officers

Directors of the Tennessee Press Service (TPS), business affiliate of TPA, elected to three-year terms during the July 19 Stockholders Meeting are David Critchlow, Jr. co-publisher of the Union City Daily Messenger and Jana Thomasson, publisher of The Mountain Press, Sevierville. Continuing as TPS directors are Ralph Baldwin, Cleveland Daily Banner; W.R.(Ron) Fryar, Cannon Courier, Woodbury; Dave Gould, Main Street Media of Tennessee; and Michael Williams, publisher of The Paris Post-Intelligencer.

At the July 18 TPS Board of Directors Meeting, Dave Gould; Main Street Media of Tennessee, Gallatin; was re-elected president for a one-year term, and Jana Thomasson, The Mountain Press, Sevierville, was re-elected vice president for a one-year term.

Free webinars for TPA members

Oct. 18
The Community's
Perception(s): State of
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Newspapers will survive and flourish long-term, if you are committed

PETER W. WAGNER
N'West Iowa Review
September 1, 2019

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Any eighth-grader can launch an information and opinion website from a computer in the corner of his bedroom. But it takes financial backing, wise management, committed professional writers and editors, and a printing press to produce a credible newspaper.

If the strength and holding-power stand out in the printed word – if their printed paper is what makes them unique in their market – why are so many publishers betting their future on their website?

Sure, any wise publisher is going to have a website presence, but he's going to stake his future on his printed publication.

Family-owned neighborhood groceries, once a staple, were replaced by modern supermarkets the middle of the last century. But those neighborhood grocers were eventually replaced by today's convenience stores.

The same will be true of the hometown paper. The newspaper of today, attempting to be all things to all people, will eventually

evolve into tomorrow's most-read, most-trusted local news source. Newspapers will, more than ever, be the glue that holds thriving, changing communities together.

But to do so, community newspapers must think local and be local. As recently as the mid-twentieth century, hometown papers were still reporting who visited who and what was going on at the school, all the local churches and the Odd Fellow's hall. Community papers concentrated on local names and happenings never covered by outside media. They concentrated on the details of the American Legion baseball game, who entered the hospital and the success of the summer rec program.

Newspapers must still provide the much-appreciated local news to survive and eventually grow. Print can do local information better than the radio station. Local radio has neither the air time nor reporting staff to report much beyond the headline of any story.

Local bloggers, independent websites and other digital formats never reach the broad audience of a subscription-based or free-distribution newspaper.

And independent websites are

often not credible, choosing to share large doses of opinion with scraps of both worthy information and uninvestigated misinformation.

Finally, a newspaper covers the entire life of the community and clearly reports all that is important to the local reader. The neatly edited and attractively presented material, all in one easy-to-hold publication, makes keeping informed simple. That same reader would have to check a dozen local, independent, websites to even begin to obtain such knowledge and wisdom.

Content is everything. The number of editorial pages are not as important as the quality and originality of the stories printed on those pages. In order to survive today's cultural change, newspapers have to deliver (get the double meaning of deliver?) news and information the reader wants and might share around the water cooler that day.

But we have a difficult time ahead of us while waiting for others to recognize the need for, and importance of, the community paper. Newspaper circulation across the nation continues to decline. But many papers are

doing so because the management is driving them in that direction, believing they can cut costs and increase reader numbers with a stronger online presence.

According to a recent Pew Research Center report, paid circulation was down 8 percent weekdays and 9 percent Sundays this past year.

Due perhaps to most papers having increased subscription and single-copy pricing, circulation revenue has held steady this past year. But unfortunately, display advertising dollars were down 13 percent.

Meanwhile, digital ad revenue has grown exponentially, but the majority of all profits have gone to Facebook and Google and not much to newspaper publishers, says the Pew report. What small increase there has been in local digital revenue has not been nearly enough to cover the loss of once empowered print-display income.

Most important, however, as we view the continued importance of the printing press, traffic to all websites has seemed to level off. Individual time spent on these websites has declined as well. The average number of minutes per visit to digital news sites is down

16 percent since 2016, says the Pew report.

So, yes, current times are difficult. The culture is changing. But there is still a strong future for the printed word. Newspapers are not dead and need to be in communities where someone is championing their value and producing an interesting, informative and worthwhile publication.

Looking for good local sales training for your paper or group, or for a direct-to-the-point program to recommend to your group or press association manager? Contact Peter W. Wagner at (cell) 712-348-3550 or pww@iowainformation.com. Wagner is founder and publisher of the award-winning N'West Iowa REVIEW and 13 additional publications. This free monthly GET REAL newsletter is written exclusively for state and national press associations and distributed by them to their members. To get Wagner's free PAPER DOLLARS email newsletter for publishers, editors and sales managers, email him at pww@iowainformation.com. The two monthly email newsletters contain information completely different than found in Wagner's monthly Publisher's Auxiliary column.

The day women broke the rules and wore pants in the newsroom

Who won the right for women in the editorial department of the Knoxville News Sentinel to wear pantsuits to work?

Who else?

It was the summer of 1970 and pantsuits were the latest fad. All the women in the newsroom wore dresses or skirts (along with blouses) to work, but some wanted to wear the latest fashion. There was some doubt whether it would be acceptable, so Charla Sear, general assignments reporter, decided to find out.

She asked Harold Harlow, the paper's managing editor, whether it would be allowed. He said no.

She decided there was only one way to disregard his wishes – If ALL the women in the department agreed to wear pantsuits or pants of some kind to work on the same day. She organized the effort and the day chosen as pants day was Aug. 26, 1970 — the 50th anniversary



**GUEST
COLUMN**

GEORGIANA VINES

sary of the amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave women the right to vote.

Everyone agreed to do it, even Ruth Thompson (a key copy desk staffer running the rim). The only exception was Dot Wright, the editor's secretary, but we decided she didn't count.

The only thing I didn't like about it was that it was my day off — the day was after covering a city council meeting. I didn't want to miss anything like that, so sometime during the day, I came down in a two-piece outfit featuring slacks. I also brought my

daughter, Carla, who was a little over a year old. I dressed her in a culotte. I didn't want her to miss out on anything either.

By the time I arrived, it seemed like it was normal to wear pants. It was business as usual, all the women staffers were doing their jobs and it was obvious from what they wore they had not been sent home to change their clothes. I asked if there had been any problems and was told no.

It was not until several years later I learned how Harlow took this "insubordination."

Duncan Bennett, who sat across from Harlow as news editor, said when the first woman arrived in a pants suit, Harlow said, "I can't believe it." Duncan said when the next woman arrived, Harlow said the same thing. Then Harlow began shaking his head with each utterance and lighting another cigarette. This went on for several hours.

Finally, Harlow declared: "I know what I'll do. I'll just ignore them."

And because he did, Aug. 26, 1970, became the day that women won the right to wear what they wanted in the News-Sentinel newsroom.

This column originally appeared Aug. 26, 2019 in the News Sentinel. Georgiana Vines is a retired News Sentinel associated editor. She now writes a bi-monthly column and occasional stories for the News Sentinel. Vines was inducted into the Tennessee Press Association's 50-Year Club in 2016. It should also be noted, in the spirit of this column, that when Vines gave birth to a child in 1969, the News Sentinel didn't have a family leave policy, so she was forced to resign from the paper so she could stay home and take care of her newborn daughter -- although she ended up back at the paper about six months later.



Submitted photo

I came down in a two-piece outfit featuring slacks. I also brought my daughter, Carla, who was a little over a year old. I dressed her in a culotte. I didn't want her to miss out on anything either.

Things that a good designer should never say

I've been consulting since June 1989. Thirty years is a long time and it's time for me to retire and shift my attention to Julia, family, grandkids and guitar.

Over for the next few months, I'm offering some of my best columns from the past few years.

This one focuses on things a good designer should never say.

Throughout my career as a consultant, I've heard managers, editors – yes, even designers – say things that disappoint me.

I made up my mind many years ago to avoid saying those things, and I hope that you'll put them on your list of things you'll never say.

Here they are:



BY DESIGN

ED HENNINGER

"Let's play with the design."

Nope. Design isn't play. It's hard work. If you're not ready to do that hard work, then you're not ready to be a designer.

"We have color on every page now. Let's use as much color as we can." No, let's not. Many things are still said better in black and white.

"We're in the business of writing." No we're not. We are in the

business of bringing meaning to readers' lives.

"There are no rules." Oh, yes there are. Lots of them. And you'd better know what they are before you can even begin to think you're ready to break them.

"Times is a good typeface for text." No. It's not.

"It's OK to write long stories." Readers will take the time to read them." No. They won't. More now than ever, readers want their information in smaller pieces. They will take the time for a longer story – if you take the time to break it into shorter chunks.

"It's OK to make the text just a bit smaller on this story. It's a

good piece and we have to fit it in." Never. Edit . . . edit . . . edit. The story has not been written that can't be cut.

"Let's jazz it up." Design is not about "jazz." It's about organizing content and giving that content quality display.

"Readers want more stories, not more photos." Oh, yeah? Then why is it that research shows time and again that the first thing readers look at on a page is the photo (or other visual)?

"Body text should be set justified." Sez who? More and more newspapers (and other publications) use flush left text. Most readers don't notice—and those



who do, don't care.

"It's OK to miss deadline." No. It's not. Ever.

Ed Henninger, director of Henninger Consulting. E-mail: edh@henningerconsulting.com. Phone: 803-325-5252.

Case of independent contractor mis-classification remains pending

NLRB Independent Contractor status update

Former NLRB Counsel Richard Griffin (Obama appointee), in a strategy of legal adventurism, took the position that mis-classifying someone as an independent contractor was an independent, stand-alone violation of the National Labor Relations Act. A case brought by General Counsel Griffin pursuing his theory, Velox Express Inc., has been pending before the NLRB since 2018. The NLRB, because of the importance of the issue, invited interested parties to file amicus briefs. Significantly, President Trump's newly appointed General Counsel, Peter Robb, parted company with former General Counsel Griffin. General Counsel Peter Robb argued that misclassifying an employee as an independent contractor, standing alone, does not violate the Act.

Unions hate independent contractor status. The National Labor Relations Act was specifically amended by the 1947 Taft-Hartley Amendments to expressly exclude independent contractors. U.S. Supreme Court decisions have made clear that the NLRB is to use the usual common law test to determine independent contractor status. No Court Decision has ever held it was an independent violation of the National Labor Relations Act if, after litigation,



LEGAL UPDATE

L. MICHAEL ZINSER

individuals were found to be employees instead of independent contractors. That issue has always been decided on a case-by-case basis. In November 2018, I predicted that the current NLRB would reject the assertion that classifying someone as an independent contractor is independently, stand-alone a violation of the National Labor Relations Act.

On August 29, 2019, the National Labor Relations Board held that companies do not violate the National Labor Relations Act solely by misclassifying employees as independent contractors. The Board majority held that a company's communication to its workers of its opinion that they are independent contractors does not, standing alone, violate the National Labor Relations Act if that opinion turns out to be mistaken. Bottom line, the decision to classify an individual as an independent contractor rather than an employee will not, by itself, subject an employer to liability under the National Labor Relations Act. After Velox Express, companies can rest easy knowing

they will not have liability under the NLRA for simply misclassifying their workers.

NLRB Proposes Rulemaking to Protect Employee Free Choice

On August 12, 2019, the NLRB majority published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). The rules amend NLRB rules and regulations that govern employee choice and elections. NLRB Chairman John Ring and Members Marvin E. Kaplan and William J. Emmanuel voted to propose the Amendments. The three are Republicans appointed by President Trump. Board Member Lauren McFerran (Democrat appointed by President Obama) dissented.

1. Vote and Impound Procedure replaces Blocking Charge Policy – A Blocking Charge is an unfair labor practice charge filed by a party to a representation proceeding that alleges conduct that would interfere with employees' free choice when they vote. Blocking Charges occur most often where a union is facing a decertification petition and is likely to lose the election. It has been common for a union to file an unfair labor practice charge and then claim the election cannot go forward until the charge is resolved. In the past, the NLRB has held the decertification petition in abeyance pending

the determination of the unfair labor practice charge. This often delays the election for months and even years. As the Board noted in the NPRM, it "is inclined to believe, subject to comments, that the current Blocking Charge policy impedes, rather than protects, employee free choice."

The NPRM proposes to replace the current Blocking Charge policy with a vote and impound procedure that allows the election to go forward. Under this proposed change, NLRB Regional Directors would continue to process the election and conduct an election if the charge has not been resolved. If the charge has not been resolved before the election, the ballots would remain impounded until the Board makes a final determination regarding the charge. This change in the Blocking Charge Rule will ensure that elections are conducted at a time that truly reflects employee free choice in accordance with the purposes of the National Labor Relations Act.

2. Voluntary Recognition Bar Changes – The NLRB has long recognized the lawfulness of voluntarily recognizing a union without an NLRB-conducted secret ballot election. The big issue is how long employees must wait before they can challenge majority status of a voluntarily recognized union. The period of time during which such challenges are not permitted is

referred to as the "Voluntary Recognition Bar." Under current law, a voluntarily recognized union is entitled to a presumption of majority support for a reasonable period of time. The Board defines a reasonable period of time as no less than six months from the parties' first bargaining session, but no longer than one year.

The NPRM states that voluntary recognition will not bar the processing of an election petition unless (1) the employer and union notify the regional office that recognition was granted; (2) the employer posts a notice provided by the regional office that informs employees recognition has been granted and that they have the right to file a decertification or rival union petition within a 45-day window; and (3) 45 days pass after the posting without a properly supported petition being filed.

This change is designed to allow employees to express their free choice on unionization through a prompt and impartial NLRB-conducted secret ballot election.

3. Section 9(a) Recognition in the Construction Industry – Section 8(f) of the National Labor Relations Act allows Construction Industry employers and unions to set terms and conditions of employment in a Collective Bargaining Agreement without showing a majority of support for the

Launch of Houston County Herald community newspaper announced

DANNY PEPPERS
Houston County Herald
September 1, 2019

Editor's note: The following article, which is edited for length, was originally published in the Houston County Herald and serves as Owner and Publisher Danny Peppers' announcement to his readers of the newspaper's launch.

If you live in Houston County and have a mailbox, you should get this newspaper each week on

Thursdays. After many requests from people in Houston County, we have decided to start this weekly newspaper here, and make it all about Houston County, much like we did in Stewart County four years ago. My mission statement in the beginning was to honor God and help others. It hasn't changed and applies to both papers. This is the first issue of the Houston County Herald community newspaper.

My name is Danny Peppers and I've been in the newspaper



Peppers

Newspaper, the All-State and was published in Capsule, the campus magazine.

I started working in advertising

business many years. I graduated from Austin Peay in 1998 with a Bachelor of Science in Mass Communications and a minor in Journalism. I wrote for the APSU

at The Leaf-Chronicle newspaper in 1998, and started at the Paris, Tenn. newspaper in 2012. Each experience was a valuable learning opportunity, without which this would not be possible. I can only thank God for the many blessings I have received, people He has put in my path, and much more.

I graduated from Stewart County High School in 1984, my wife Carrie in 1986. I love this area and I have been approached by many people since starting the

Standard, asking me to do a paper for Houston County. I want this paper to be all about the people and places in Houston County. Liz Buttermore, who lives in Cumberland City and attends Erin Church of God of Prophecy, will be the person you will probably see most around town and at our office. She will be the office manager for the Herald. Our graphic designer is a Houston County girl, who has truly been a blessing and

See **PEPPERS** Page 12

OBITUARIES

Louise Knight

Louise Knight, age 93, formerly of Oak Ridge, passed away on Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2019 peacefully at home. She was a member of the Livingston Church of Christ and Livingston Civic Garden Club.



Knight

Louise was preceded in death by her parents, Hoyt and Mary Belle Holder Blanks and her husband of 59 years, Richard F. Knight. They were co-owners

of the Livingston Enterprise and Jackson County Sentinel Newspapers in Middle Tennessee before selling and retiring to Oak Ridge, where they originally met when

their parents were sent there for the war effort.

She is survived by two daughters, Ann Lindsay (John) and Carolyn Swindle (David). She also leaves four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The family wishes to express a special thank-you to the River Oaks Place, Lenoir City, the nurses, aids and staff of University of Tennessee Hospice nurses and staff.

Submitted
Sept. 1, 2019

Frank Delano Empson

Longtime photojournalist and Portland resident Frank Empson died on Sept. 3 at home. He was 85.

Empson was born in Gallatin, on May 20, 1934 to the late Ward Empson and Evelyn Graves Empson. Empson was a United States

Army veteran, serving in the military from 1956-58 and later became a decorated and devoted journalist. He worked for 37 years at the The Tennessean, Nashville, as a photographer and chief photographer. Empson's achievement including photographing eight presidents, two world fairs, the first non-stop flight to England and numerous football games and other sporting events.

"He was aware that he had photographed many historical events and was always willing to speak to groups using his photography for educational purposes," former Portland Leader staff writer Bonnie Fussell said. "His photography of the civil rights movement in Nashville is invaluable. His contagious smile and a love of people will be missed."

He, also, had passion for sketching, drawing, and loved painting



Empson

portraits.

After his retirement from The Tennessean, Empson and his wife, Pat, traveled and he also worked as a part-time photographer for the Portland Leader

for eight years, mainly working as a sports photographer.

"It's like Portland Panthers sports and Frank were synonymous with each other. Frank and Curtis Marlin were always there covering Portland sports," said former Leader editor Sonya Thompson.

Empson was preceded in death by his wife, Peggy Scruggs Empson; daughters, Sue Scruggs Hoyal and Barbara Empson Dorris.

Empson is survived by his wife,

Pat Anglea Empson; son, Mike Scruggs (Debbi) of Collierville; daughter, Peggy Scruggs Patterson (Danny) of Westmoreland; brother, Dr. William Empson (Betty) of Hermitage; step-daughters, Beth Anglea Leftwich (Gary) of White House and Gail Anglea Stroud of Franklin; grandchildr en, Corey (Austyn) Scruggs, Jonathan (Carolyn) Scruggs, Sara (Geoff) Lorenz, Julia (John) Bell, Erin (Greg) Carter, Amy (David) Miller, Forest (Daniel) Petroski, Max Dorris and Ayva Dorris; step-grandchildren, Cara West, Cala (Craig) Ballentine, Catie (Matt) Bailey, Coleman (Lindsay) Stroud, Amber (Nathan) West, and Brandon (Angel) Leftwich; and many great grandchildren.

The Portland Leader
Sept. 11, 2019

See **OBITS** Page 12

ZINSER from Page 10

union. Section 8(f) states that an Agreement signed under Section 8(f) does not bar a petition for a Board election. Current law allows a Construction Industry union to convert an 8(f) relationship into a 9(a) relationship based on contract language alone without any other evidence of a showing of majority of support of the employees.

The NPRM reverses this current law and states that contract language alone cannot create a 9(a) relationship. Under the new Rule, a union would have to show positive evidence, apart from contract language that the union unequivocally demanded recognition, the employer accepted it, based on a contemporaneous showing of sup-

port from a majority of employees in an appropriate unit.

This third change also reflects the current NLRB's efforts to protect employee free choice under the National Labor Relations Act.

Future Predictions

I believe that employers can expect the NLRB to continue to focus on revising the existing election procedures including revisions to the "Quickie Election" rule that became effective in April 2015.

NLRB Moves to Respect Property Rights

On August 23, 2019 the National Labor Relations Board reversed precedent and issued a decision

that recognized the private property rights of employers. The case involved the San Antonio Symphony Musicians. The Musicians typically perform at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts. The Symphony does not own the Tobin Center. Rather, it has a license to use that facility for some of its performances. The dispute arose when Symphony employees wanted to distribute handbills and leaflets on the sidewalk in front of the Tobin center. That sidewalk is private property owned by the Tobin Center.

The Tobin Center told the Musicians they could not distribute handbills or solicit on its premises. The employees then moved across the street and continued to publicize their dispute.

The Musicians filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge claiming that the Tobin Center had violated their Section 7 rights because it refused to allow the distribution of handbills on their property.

The NLRB ruled that off-duty employees of a contractor (the Symphony in this case) are trespassers that are entitled to access for Section 7 purposes only if "the property owner cannot show that they have one or more reasonable alternative non-trespassory channels of communicating with their target audience. If there is at least one such channel... the property owner will be free to assert its fundamental property right to exclude without conflicting with federal labor law."

The NLRB stated that non-tres-

passory means "may include newspapers, radio, television, billboards, and other media through which is transmitted the ordinary flow of information that characterizes our society."

This new case means that off-duty employees of an on-site contractor may be excluded from the worksite by the property owner in most cases. In today's world of social media and other forms of easy publication, such contractor employees would have a number of effective alternatives to trespassing on the employer's property.

L. Michael Zinser is president of The Zinser Law Firm, P.C., in Nashville, Tenn. He can be reached at 615.255.9700 and mzins@zinslaw.com.

TPA MEMBER COVERAGE SHOWCASE: The Jackson Sun

Medina's population booms, but business growth hasn't kept pace

BRANDON SHIELDS
The Jackson Sun
March 17, 2019

A crowd gathered in February to celebrate the grand opening of The Nail Place in Medina.

Jenna Cooper has worked for different nail salon places in Jackson — even the previous occupant of the space her business now occupies — but she felt it was time to start her own business.

"I've been around long enough and see how these businesses succeed, and my husband, Tyler, and I finally decided to make the jump," Cooper said. "I didn't think I was ready to do that, but a lot of people we knew said we could do it."

Cooper, who first opened The Nail Place in December, is one of a handful of new business owners in Medina. A new car wash is coming to town, and the Jackson Clinic has bought a parcel of land for a new location there, too.

Medina has grown from fewer than 1,000 people in the 2000 Census to more than 5,000, according

to Mayor Vance Coleman. That growth is expected to continue with more development underway.

Rapid growth, but businesses haven't kept pace

While housing developments surrounding a district full of new schools has attracted more residents, mainly from Jackson, the business district of the town hasn't grown as quickly.

Coleman was in attendance for The Nail Place's grand opening at a small strip mall on Highway 45.

"When you have a lot of empty business, it looks like it's hard for businesses to be successful," Coleman said about the importance of having the store fronts filled. "When somebody comes in and invests in our city, we ought to use them and try our best to make them successful."

In the last decade, the area along Highway 45 has seen more businesses come in, including a Food Giant supermarket, Fred's, Dollar

General, McDonald's, Sonic, a couple of small clinics and a gym.

Mayor: 'We do our best to help'

Coleman said communication between incoming businesses and the city differs from case to case.

"A lot of times we'll know from the time they start that they're here, but other times, like when Fred's came, they'd already bought the land before they came to us about opening up here," Coleman said. "We haven't done a lot of talking with the clinic as far as what all they plan on opening."

"They're so early in the stages, we'll have more contact with that as it gets closer to for them opening."

Making sure store fronts stay full in the older part of town on Main Street has been more difficult. Coleman said during his re-election campaign in 2016 that many businesses have opened there, but the majority have not lasted very long.

"We do our best to help them,



Photo by Kenneth Cummings, The Jackson Sun

The city of Medina has grown quickly over the last couple of decades, but some local businesses have still struggled to stay afloat.

but sometimes it doesn't work out," Coleman said.

Places like Rhodes' Diner and Medina Flower Shop have stuck around. Main Street Grill and Co-Co's food service are a couple that are newer, but thriving.

"We're glad we have our business here because we know everybody, and they know us," Cooper said. "We appreciate the fact they're willing to bring their business to us because this is where we live."

OBITS from Page 11

Bill Vaughan

Bill Vaughan, a former Knoxville reporter who became a Nashville lobbyist and worked for several prominent politicians, died Saturday, Sept. 21, at his home in Maryville. He was 77.

Vaughan, a Jellico native, started his career in 1961 as a copy boy at The Knoxville Journal. He balanced his shifts at the now-defunct daily newspaper with his studies at the University of Tennessee, where he met his wife.

"I came to UT to go to school, and my roommate was a child-



Vaughan

hood friend of his," Judy Vaughan said. "I went home with her for the weekend and met him over there. We married two and a half years later, and that's when our adventure

began."

Vaughan went on to work as a political reporter for the Journal. He became fascinated with politics while covering the state legislature in Nashville, and he later landed a job as press secretary for U.S. Rep. Jimmy Quillen in Washington, D.C.

Vaughan seemed to be in high demand once he moved back to Nashville. He served as state tourism director, assistant press secretary for former Gov. Winfield Dunn and press secretary for Dortch Oldham's gubernatorial campaign before working for 15 years as the director of a coal lobbying group called Facts about Coal in Tennessee.

"He just kind of kept his hand in the pot in a little bit of everything. People would call him just to talk to him about what he thought about different things," his wife said. "He kind of knew everybody."

Vaughan and his close friend,

Ron McMahan, started a Nashville lobbying firm bearing their names. The two met while they were both reporters at The Knoxville Journal; McMahan went on to become the editor of the paper.

"Behind that gruff voice and personality was a guy who had a big heart and helped many people," Vaughn said of his longtime friend when McMahan died in 2008.

"What you saw in Ron was what you got. He was very competitive, strong-willed, and never hesitated to say what he thought to anyone."

Outside of work, Vaughan enjoyed tending roses in his garden and playing golf at Holston Hills Country Club. He was a member

there for 30 years, his wife said. He'd play every Sunday with former Knoxville City Councilman Larry Cox, Alan Carmichael of public relations firm Moxley Carmichael and former U.S. Rep. Jimmy Duncan, with whom he worked near the end of his career.

"I called them the four amigos," Judy Vaughan said.

Bill Vaughan had suffered from dementia in recent years, his wife said. When he died Sunday, he was surrounded by his family, including his four daughters.

"He had a good life," Judy said. "His mind's clear now."

Knoxville New Sentinel
September 22, 2019

PEPPERS from Page 11

so instrumental in getting this first issue published. You may know Janessa Parchman, a 2017 graduate of Houston County High School, who is working toward a degree in graphic design.

We are proud to get this first issue published, it's being mailed to every home in the county for free right now, thanks to our

advertisers. Our office is located at 9 Adkins Drive in downtown Erin, close to the courthouse. We would like to have correspondence from all over Houston County. Please give us time to add things, but do let us know what you would like to see in your paper. We will hold to a standard of journalistic ethics, integrity, and just plain good honest reporting without an agenda.

The facts need to be printed, and you the public can form your own opinion. This is going to be a local paper all about Houston County. We will also try to have feature stories about local people, as often as possible and recognize those who go "above and beyond."

Our office will be open Mon.-Fri. 9 am-4 pm. You can call us at 931-289-3802, or e-mail office@

HoustonCountyHerald.com. Our website is www.HoustonCountyHerald.com, with the entire paper uploaded each week for a small subscription fee. We will be providing a community event calendar and church announcements for special events free of charge. Please submit information two weeks from date of publication. Deadlines for advertising will be Friday at noon, the week before

publication.

We have been working many hours to bring this to you, and I don't promise perfection, but passion. We will try to make sure you have a quality product in your hand each week. Please send us pictures from around the county and information about current events. We look forward to getting out and meeting more of you as the weeks go on.

2019 State Press Contests Awards

Special Section

October 2019

UT, TPA announce 2019 newspaper contest winners

STAFF REPORTS
September 1, 2019

Newspaper publishers, editors, writers, and designers won top awards Thursday, July 18, in the Tennessee Press Association's 2019 newspaper contest co-sponsored by UT.

The TPA's State Press Contests awards luncheon was held Thursday, July 18, as part of the 2019 TPA Summer Convention hosted July 18-19 by the Read House Hotel in Chattanooga.

The July 18 awards dinner not only recognized all the winners

in the 2019 State Press Contests, it was also a time at which other key announcements and introductions were made.

The Chattanooga Times Free Press, the Johnson City Press, the Leaf-Chronicle (Clarksville), the Hendersonville Standard, and the Gallatin News won the top general excellence awards in their respective divisions. All five divisions had different winners from 2018, marking the first in the 21 years of the points-based statewide press contests there has not been at least one repeat winner from the previous year.

Points are awarded for each entry, and general excellence honors are based on the newspaper's total points in their division.

The all-time leader in general excellence wins is The Tennessean, Nashville, with 12, followed by the Southern Standard, McMinnville, with 11, and the Erwin Record with 10. The Record holds the record for most consecutive "titles" won with nine, spanning 2003-2011 inclusive.

The Chattanooga Times Free Press and the Tennessean (Nashville) each won 11 first-place awards

this year. The Johnson City Press received eight first-place awards and the Bristol Herald Courier received seven first-place awards.

Among the many stories from 2018 cited for excellent work, contest judges highlighted the Tennessean's coverage of the Waffle House shooting in Antioch, Tennessee.

As part of the annual contest, newspapers winning first-place awards in the categories of editorials, best single editorial, and public service received \$250 prizes from UT's Edward J. Meeman Foundation. The Gallatin News won three

awards this year, one for each category.

UT has cosponsored the annual contest since 1940.

The Meeman Foundation was established in 1968 at UT to fund the contest, provide professional critiques of journalists' work, and support journalism students and educators.

Reciprocal judging is done with another state's association. This year, the Texas Press Association judged 1,406 entries from 72 of the Tennessee Press Association's 129 member newspapers.

2019 TPA State Press Contests First Place Winners

Photo by Tony Centonze, for Tennessee Press Association



First-place winners in the 2019 State Press Contests gathered for a group photo following the awards luncheon on Thursday, July 18, at The Read House Hotel in Chattanooga, Tenn. Front row: Nicole Young, Robertson County Times, Springfield; Heather Mullinix, Crossville Chronicle; Dale Gentry, The Standard Banner, Jefferson City; Echo Day, The Leader, Covington; Scott Whaley, Chester County Independent, Henderson; Natalie Alund, The Tennessean, Nashville; Sinclair Sparkman, The Lebanon Democrat; Brooke McCain, Brownsville Press; Michael Reneau, The Greeneville Sun; Brian Blackley, Lakeway Publishers, Tullahoma.

Middle row: Lyle Graves, The Ledger, Nashville; Don Foy, Herald-Citizen, Cookeville; Joe Hurd, The Courier, Savannah; John Carney, Shelbyville Times-Gazette; Jason Reynolds, Main Street Media of Tennessee, Gallatin; Tracey Wolfe, Grainger Today, Bean Station; Alan Sloan, farragutpress, Farragut; Autumn Hughes, Cleveland Daily Banner; Gwen Swiger, Cleveland Daily Banner; Alison Gerber, Chattanooga Times Free Press; Tena Lee, Main Street Media of Tennessee, Gallatin; Ken Leinart, The Courier News, Clinton.

Back row: Michael Anastasi, The Tennessean, Nashville; Larry McCormack, The Tennessean, Nashville; David Plazas, The Tennessean, Nashville; Chris Smith, The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville; James Clark, Southern Standard, McMinnville; Michael Williams, The Paris Post-Intelligencer; Josh Cross, Main Street Media of Tennessee, Gallatin; Allison Collins, Chattanooga Times Free Press; Dave Gould, Main Street Media of Tennessee, Gallatin; Matt McLane, Chattanooga Times Free Press; Lisa Denton, Chattanooga Times Free Press; Mark Kennedy, Chattanooga Times Free Press; Sam Watson, Johnson City Press; Meg Scarbrough, Chattanooga Times Free Press.

2019 TPA STATE PRESS CONTESTS LUNCHEON (PHOTOS BY TONY CENTONZE, FOR TENNESSEE PRESS ASSOCIATION)



LEFT: Annette Hurd, Savannah Publishing Co., enjoys the 2019 TPA State Press Contests Awards Luncheon in Chattanooga. RIGHT: Carl Esposito, The Daily Times, Maryville, at the TPA State Press Contests Awards Luncheon, held July 18 at the Read House Hotel.



LEFT: Mark Jones, was part of a large Chattanooga Times Free Press, contingent that hosted one of the most memorable TPA conventions in the Association's history. RIGHT: Brooke McCain, Brownsville Press, was all smiles as her newspaper won TPA awards



LEFT: Nicole Young, Robertson County Times, Springfield, won multiple awards that were presented July 18 in Chattanooga. RIGHT: Malinda Hunter, TVA, Chattanooga, was right at home at this year's Summer Convention, held in Chattanooga.



2019 TPA STATE PRESS AWARDS LUNCHEON (PHOTOS BY DONN JONES, DONN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY. SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 4)



LEFT: UT Interim President Randy Boyd presents Heather Mullinix, Crossville Chronicle, a first place plaque during the ceremony on July 18. RIGHT: UT Interim President Randy Boyd presents David Plazas, The Tennessean, Nashville, a 2019 TPA State Press Contests Awards for Editorials.



LEFT: Rob Walters, Bristol Herald Courier receives a first place plaque for Best Special Issue or Section from UT Interim President Randy Boyd. RIGHT: Echo Day, The Leader, Covington, accepts a first place award for Best Special Issue or Section.



LEFT: Outgoing TPA President Doug Horne shared presentation duties. Tracey Wolfe, Grainger Today, accepted the award for Best News Photograph. RIGHT: Lyle Graves, accepts the Hamilton County Herald's award for Community Lifestyles from UT Interim President Randy Boyd.



2019 TPA STATE PRESS CONTESTS LUNCHEON (CONT.) (PHOTOS BY DONN JONES, DONN JONES PHOTOGRAPHY)



LEFT: Awards moderator Charles Primm, University of Tennessee, during a lighter moment while announcing awards.
RIGHT: Allison Collins, Chattanooga Times Free Press, accepts the award for Best Website from Randy Boyd, UT Interim President.



LEFT: UT Interim President Randy Boyd presents the Community Lifestyles award to Alan Sloan, the farragut-press.
RIGHT: Larry McCormack, The Tennessean, Nashville accepts the Best Feature Photograph award.



LEFT: Michael Anastasi, vice president and editor of The Tennessean, Nashville, accepts the paper's award for Make-Up and Appearance from UT Interim President Randy Boyd.
RIGHT: Ken Leinart, The Courier News, Clinton, receives the first place award for Headline Writing.



Complete list of 2019 contest winners

General Excellence

Group I. The Gallatin News

Group II. Hendersonville Standard

Group III. The Nashville Ledger

Group IV. Johnson City Press

Group V. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Make-Up and Appearance

Group I

1. The Courier News, Clinton Ken Leinart

Judge's Comments: The Courier stood out from a tight race at the top with dramatic feature images and organic layouts. In the end, The Courier received the best layout for their willingness to take risks, and then execute those visions flawlessly at times.

2. Hamilton County Herald, Chattanooga Leigh Singleton

Judge's Comments: Hamilton's gorgeous feature photography, composition, and use of typography made it stand out among the others.

3. The Leader, Covington Echo Day, Jeff Ireland, Alan Ervin

4. The Gallatin News Carrie Tomlin, Sherry Mitchell, Josh Cross, Zach Womble, Michael Gallagher, Zack Owensby, Mary Anne Ferrell

5. The Erwin Record Keeli Parkey, Lisa Whaley, Damaris Higgins, Richard Rourk, Kendal Groner

Group II

1. farragutpress, Farragut farragutpress Production, farragutpress Editorial

2. The Knoxville Ledger Leigh Singleton

3. Hendersonville Standard Pam Wingett, Michael Gallagher, Zack Owensby, Mary Anne Ferrell, Sherry Mitchell, Tena Lee,

Dave Gould

4. The Lebanon Democrat Jared Felkins, Sinclaire Sparkman, Matt Masters, Andy Reed, Mark Rodgers, Angie Mayes

5. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City Dale Gentry, Kim Cook, Ray Seabolt, Jesse Woody

Group III

1. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville Don Foy, Jack McNeely, Kate Cook, Lindsay McReynolds, Scott Wilson, Ben Craven

2. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville Staff

3. The Nashville Ledger Leigh Singleton

4. Southern Standard, McMinnville James Clark, Jeffery Simmons, Lisa Hobbs, Margaret Hobbs, Lacy Garrison, Seth Wright, Nikki Childers

5. The Paris Post-Intelligencer Glenn Tanner, Michael Williams, Leslie Sensing, Tommy Priddy, Gay Francisco, Tiffany Hopkins, Ken Walker

Group IV

1. Bristol Herald Courier Robert Allen, Sandra Ross, David Thometz, Chelsea Gilenwater, George Stone, Nate

Hubbard

2. The Daily Times, Maryville APG Maryville Design Staff

3. Johnson City Press Brian Reese, Robert Pierce, Mike Murphy, John Stout, Jason Bullard

Group V

1. The Tennessean, Nashville Nashville Design Studio Staff

Judge's Comments: This is an attractive newspaper. The great design immediately draws the eye. Strong headlines urge the reader to learn more. Strong typefaces are easy to read. This was the clear leader in this design category.

2. Chattanooga Times Free Press Staff

Judge's Comments: Excellent use of white space. I felt the design was attractive without compromising space for stories. I like the typefaces chosen for this design. An absolute wonderful use of graphics.

3. News Sentinel, Knoxville Staff

Local Features

Group I

1. Hamilton County Herald, Chattanooga

See **WINNERS**, Page 6

Commercial Appeal's Weber wins 2018 AP Photo of the Year award



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Adam Yeomans, AP Regional Director of the South, announces that the 2018 Associated Press Photo of the Year Award for Tennessee went to Jim Weber, The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, who was unable to be present to accept his award at the 2019 TPA Summer Convention in Chattanooga. Weber's photo, above right, shows Memphis police arresting Spanish-language reporter Manuel Duran during an immigration protest April 3, 2018 in downtown Memphis.



2018 AP

Photo of the Year,
for Tennessee

Photographer:
Jim Weber

The Commercial Appeal, Memphis

Index to First Place Winners' Entries

<p>General Excellence Group I. Gallatin News Group II. Hendersonville Standard Group III. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville Group IV. Johnson City Press Group V. Chattanooga Times Free Press <i>Pages 16-17</i></p> <p>Make-Up & Appearance I. The Courier News, Clinton II. Farragutpress, Farragut III. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville IV. Bristol Herald-Courier V. The Tennessean, Nashville <i>Pages 19-10</i></p> <p>Best Single Editorial I. Gallatin News "Commissioners should not use private email for conducting county business" <i>Staff</i> <i>Page 11</i></p> <p>II. The Lebanon Democrat "Fields should resign as Wilson County commissioner" <i>Jared Felkins</i> <i>Page 13</i></p> <p>III. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville "No excuse for portables after school shootings" <i>Chris Smith</i> <i>Page 14</i></p> <p>IV. The Greeneville Sun "Be sure to show your work"</p>	<p><i>Michael Reneau</i> <i>Page 15</i></p> <p>V. News Sentinel, Knoxville "Would teachers armed with guns really have helped during these shootings?" <i>Jack McElroy</i> <i>Page 18</i></p> <p><i>* Meeman Award Winners</i></p> <p>Best Personal Humor Column I. The Courier News, Clinton "But only if it's a natural smile" <i>Ken Leinart</i> <i>Page 23</i></p> <p>II. Hickman County Times, Centerville "Ready for boys?" <i>Donna S. Wallace</i> <i>Page 24</i></p> <p>III. The Ledger, Nashville "Prine is great but Rock Hall isn't the right fit" <i>Joe Rogers</i> <i>Page 25</i></p> <p>IV. Johnson City Press "Feeding the birds? It's for the squirrels!" <i>Becky Campbell</i> <i>Page 26</i></p> <p>V. Chattanooga Times Free Press "When a single period is plenty" <i>Mark Kennedy</i> <i>Page 27</i></p> <p>Best News Photograph I. Grainger Today, Bean Station</p>	<p>"Eight arrested during VOP roundup" <i>Tracey Wolfe</i> <i>Page 9</i></p> <p>II. The Ledger, Knoxville "Mountains into mulch" <i>Adam Taylor Gash</i> <i>Page 10</i></p> <p>III. The Paris Post-Intelligencer "Fire gets Marilyn Street home" <i>Bill McCutcheon</i> <i>Page 11</i></p> <p>IV. Johnson City Press "Chemical grenades end Johnson City standoff" <i>Becky Campbell</i> <i>Page 12</i></p> <p>V. Chattanooga Times Free Press "One killed in West 38th Street shooting" <i>C.B. Schmelter</i> <i>Page 13</i></p> <p>Best Feature Photograph I. Carthage Courier "Fair fun" <i>Eddie West</i> <i>Page 21</i></p> <p>II. The Wilson Post, Lebanon "'Develop the whole child' " <i>Dallus Whitfield</i> <i>Page 22</i></p> <p>III. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville "'They,' 'He' and 'She' " <i>Courtney Pedroza</i> <i>Page 22</i></p>	<p>IV. Cleveland Daily Banner Capuchin money gets frisky <i>Autumn Hughes</i> <i>Page 23</i></p> <p>V. The Tennessean, Nashville "Daring surgery, promising results" <i>Larry McCormack</i> <i>Page 24</i></p> <p>Best Sports Photograph I. Chester County Independent, Henderson "Chester teams having mega fun" <i>James Webb</i> <i>Page 25</i></p> <p>II. The Wilson Post, Lebanon "Cumberland men host Fisk Tigers" <i>Steve Wampler</i> <i>Page 25</i></p> <p>III. Southern Standard, McMinnville "Champions get crowned" <i>Jeffery Simmons</i> <i>Page 25</i></p> <p>IV. The Daily Times, Maryville "Unable to stem the Tide" <i>Joy Kimbrough</i> <i>Page 26</i></p> <p>V. Chattanooga Times Free Press "Continued supremacy" <i>Robin Rudd</i> <i>Page 27</i></p> <p>Best Personal Column I. The Leader, Covington</p>	<p>"Celebrating Sunshine Week" <i>Echo Day</i> <i>Page 28</i></p> <p>II. The Wilson Post, Lebanon "Remembering Mister Rogers" <i>Ken Beck</i> <i>Page 29</i></p> <p>III. Union City Daily Messenger "Little moments a constant reminder" <i>Chris Menees</i> <i>Page 28</i></p> <p>IV. The Greeneville Sun "A Christmas moment at the checkout counter" <i>Cameron Judd</i> <i>Page 29</i></p> <p>V. Chattanooga Times Free Press "' ' God put us together' " <i>Mark Kennedy</i> <i>Page 30</i></p> <p>Headline Writing I. The Courier News, Clinton <i>Ken Leinart</i></p> <p>II. The Tullahoma News <i>Kelly Lapczynski, Andrea Agardy</i></p> <p>III. Southern Standard, McMinnville <i>Staff</i></p> <p>IV. Bristol Herald Courier <i>Robert Allen, David Thometz, Sandra Ross</i></p> <p>V. Chattanooga Times Free Press <i>Staff</i></p>
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WINNERS, from Page 5

David Laprad

2. The Gallatin News
 Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell, Angie Flatt, Rick Murray

3. Manchester Times
 Casey Watts, John Coffelt, De-

marco Moore, Josh Peterson

4. The Erwin Record
 Kendal Groner, Keeli Parkey, Lisa Whaley

5. News-Herald, Lenoir City
 Jonathan Herrmann, Jeremy Nash

Group II

1. The Knoxville Ledger
 Joe Morris, Hollie Deese

2. The Elk Valley Times, Fayetteville
 Lucy Williams, Sandy Williams, Paul Henry, Laurie Caruso

3. The Lebanon Democrat
 Jared Felkins, Matt Masters

4. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
 Steve Marion, Dale Gentry, Kimary Clelland, Gayle Page

5. Murfreesboro Post

Jason Reynolds, Cat Murphy, Ken Beck, Ivan Aronin, Dave Gould

Group III

1. Shelbyville Times-Gazette
 Dawn Hankins, Mark McGee

See **WINNERS**, Page 7

WINNERS, from Page 6

Judge's comments: The hands-down winner of this year's entries. Great variety in stories that are well-written and draw the reader in. I might have like to see the sea of gray on the jumps broken up with more photography.

2. Southern Standard, McMinnville

James Clark, Margaret Hobbs, Lisa Hobbs

3. The Daily Herald, Columbia

James Bennett, Mike Christen, Jay Powell

4. The Nashville Ledger

Tom Wood, Ivan Aronin, Hollie Deese

5. Crossville Chronicle

Missy Wattenbarger, Rebekah K. Bohannon Beeler, Heather

Mullinix, Gary Nelson, Michael Moser, Cheryl Duncan

Group IV**1. Johnson City Press**

Evan Mays, Sue Guinn Legg, Brandon Paykamian, Nathan Baker, Mackenzie Moore, Jessica Fuller, Joe Avento

Judge's comments: Great variety of topics with good pictures to help draw reader's interest. Very information and entertaining.

2. Cleveland Daily Banner

Larry Bowers, Autumn Hughes

Judge's Comments: Memorial Day features, pics, and related stories work well together. Good thorough information about kidney transplant delivered in upbeat story.

3. The Daily Times, Maryville

Melanie Tucker, Amy Beth

Miller, Steve Wildsmith

4. Kingsport Times-News

Holly Viers, J. H. Osborne

3. The Greeneville Sun

Cameron Judd, Michael Reneau, Sarah R. Gregory, Lisa Warren, Tate Russell, Mansi Boegemann

Group V**1. Chattanooga Times Free Press**

Staff

2. News Sentinel, Knoxville

Staff

Best Single Feature**Group I****1. Hamilton County Record**

David Laprad

Judge's comments: This article rose to the top... it was the only piece I couldn't wait to finish, but then the ending was missing. But even so, it still clearly the best of the bunch.

2. Herald & Tribune, Jonesborough

Marina Waters

Judge's Comments: This sweet article had me from the start. I could picture those sweet faces sticking out from behind their garden and I just wanted to keep reading. Great job!

3. The Gallatin News

Josh Cross

4. Hamilton County Record

David Laprad

5. The Bledsonian-Banner, Pikeville

Chase Smith

Group II**1. Murfreesboro Post**

Matt Masters, Zack Owensby

2. The Oak Ridger

Donna Smith

3. Roane County News

Cindy Simpson

4. The Elk Valley Times, Fayetteville

Lucy Williams

5. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City

Steve Marion

Group III**1. The Paris Post-Intelligencer**

Glenn Tanner

Judge's comments: The first three

See **WINNERS**, Page 8

Past UT-TPA State Press Contests Sweepstakes and General Excellence Winners

From TPA Archives

A points-based Sweepstakes Award was established in 1999. In 2006 the category of General Excellence became a points-based award and replaced the Sweepstakes Award. The newspaper in each of the five contests divisions (Groups I, II, III, IV and V) with the highest total points in its group receives the General Excellence Award.

1999 Sweepstakes Award

I – Chester County Independent, Henderson
II – The Review Appeal, Franklin
III – The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
IV – The Tennessean, Nashville

2000 Sweepstakes Award

I – Chester County Independent, Henderson
II – Southern Standard, McMinnville
III – The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
IV – The Tennessean, Nashville

2001 Sweepstakes Award

I – The Rutherford Courier, Smyrna
II – Southern Standard, McMinnville
III – The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville
IV – The Tennessean, Nashville

2002 Sweepstakes Award

I – Chester County Independent, Henderson
II – Southern Standard, McMinnville
III – The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
IV – Chattanooga Times Free Press

2003 Sweepstakes Award

I – The Erwin Record
II – Southern Standard, McMinnville
III – The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
IV – The Tennessean, Nashville

2004 Sweepstakes Award

I – The Erwin Record
II – Southern Standard, McMinnville
III – The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
IV – The Tennessean, Nashville

2005 Sweepstakes Award

I – The Erwin Record
II – Southern Standard, McMinnville
III – The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
IV – The Commercial Appeal, Memphis

2006 General Excellence

I – The Erwin Record
II – LaFollette Press
III – The Leaf-Chronicle,

Clarksville
IV – The Tennessean, Nashville

2007 General Excellence

I – The Erwin Record
II – The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
III – The Daily Herald, Columbia
IV – The Commercial Appeal, Memphis

2008 General Excellence

I – The Erwin Record
II – Memphis Business Journal
III – Southern Standard, McMinnville
IV – The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville
V – The Tennessean, Nashville

2009 General Excellence

I – The Erwin Record
II – The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
III – Southern Standard, McMinnville
IV – The Daily Herald, Columbia
V – The Commercial Appeal, Memphis

2010 General Excellence

I – The Erwin Record
II – The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
III – Shelbyville Times-Gazette
IV – The Jackson Sun

V – The Commercial Appeal, Memphis

2011 General Excellence

I – The Erwin Record
II – The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
III – Southern Standard, McMinnville
IV – The Jackson Sun
V – The Tennessean, Nashville

2012 General Excellence

I – Herald & Tribune, Jonesborough
II – (a tie) Gallatin News Examiner and Grainger Today, Bean Station
III – Southern Standard, McMinnville
IV – The Jackson Sun
V – The Tennessean, Nashville

2013 General Excellence

I – Herald & Tribune, Jonesborough
II – (a tie) The Standard Banner, Jefferson City, and Manchester Times
III – Elizabethton Star
IV – The Jackson Sun
V – The Tennessean, Nashville

2014 General Excellence

I – The Erwin Record
II – The LaFollette Press
III – Elizabethton Star

IV – The Jackson Sun
V – Chattanooga Times Free Press

2015 General Excellence

I – (a tie) Independent Herald, Oneida and The Portland Leader
II – The Wilson Post, Lebanon
III – Southern Standard, McMinnville
IV – The Jackson Sun
V – Chattanooga Times Free Press

2016 General Excellence

I – The Portland Leader
II – The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
III – The Lebanon Democrat
IV – The Jackson Sun
V – Chattanooga Times Free Press

2017 General Excellence

I – The Gallatin News
II – The Wilson Post, Lebanon
III – (Tie) The Daily Herald, Columbia, and The Lebanon Democrat
IV – Johnson City Press
V – The Tennessean, Nashville

2018 General Excellence

I – Independent Herald, Oneida
II – The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
III – The Nashville Ledger
IV – Bristol Herald Courier
V – The Tennessean, Nashville

WINNERS, from Page 7

places in this category were very difficult to separate. All three features were especially engaging and well-crafted. This one stood out the most for being the best written and most impactful, with the most unique subject matter. Really loved this story.

2. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville

Courtney Pedroza

Judge's Comments: This story stood out mightily for the timely topic, excellent writing, and very well-crafted story.

3. Southern Standard, McMinnville

James Clark

4. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville

Jim Herrin

5. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville

Mary Jo Denton

Group IV

1. Cleveland Daily Banner

Gwen Swiger

2. Citizen Tribune, Morristown

John Gullion

3. Johnson City Press

Becky Campbell

4. Cleveland Daily Banner

Christy Armstrong

5. The Daily Times, Maryville

Waylon Cunningham

Group V

1. News Sentinel, Knoxville

Matt Lakin

Judge's comments: Great writing about a great piece of history. You interviewed a lot of people and it really opened up the story. Great job.

2. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Tyler Jett

Judge's Comments: This story gave me real insight into these two politicians. I felt like I got to know them and that's difficult with politicians. Thanks.

3. The Tennessean, Nashville
Jessica Bliss

Community Lifestyles Group I

1. Hamilton County Herald, Chattanooga

Nancy Henderson, David Laprad

2. The Gallatin News

Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell, Rick Murray

3. Brownsville Press

Brooke McCain, Katy Cowan, Chris McCain

4. Independent Appeal, Selmer

Sandy Whitaker

5. Pulaski Citizen

Margaret Campbell, Cary Jane Malone, Dan Watson

Group II

1. farragutpress, Farragut

farragutpress Editorial, farragutpress Production

2. The Tullahoma News

Kelly Lapczynski, Elena Cawley, Andrea Agardy, Erin McCullough, Kali Bradford, Susan Campbell

3. Hendersonville Standard

Tena Lee, Sherry Mitchell, Rick Murray

4. Murfreesboro Post

Jason Reynolds, Carrie Tomlin, Jim Davis, Dave Gould

5. The Lebanon Democrat

Jared Felkins, Angie Mayes, Pete Mecca

Group III

1. Southern Standard, McMinnville

Margaret Hobbs

Judge's comments: The use of colorful art and engaging content made this a clear winner.

2. The Nashville Ledger

Linda Bryant, Tom Wood

3. Union City Daily Messenger

Donna Ryder



Submitted

Above: Outgoing TPA President Doug Horne (right), Republic Newspapers, Knoxville, presents his 2019 President's Award to Darrell Richardson, publisher of The Oak Ridger. Horne made the presentation on Aug. 10 at his office after Richardson was unable to attend the TPA Summer Convention that was held July 18-19 in Chattanooga.

4. The Daily Herald, Columbia

James Bennett, Jay Powell, Aaron Walther, Mike Christen

5. Shelbyville Times-Gazette

John Carney, David Melson, Dawn Hankins, Jason Reynolds, Michelle Hastings

Group IV

1. Bristol Herald Courier

Sandra Ross

Judge's comments: Beautiful, inviting sections. Design is excellent, and stories are well edited. Much of the content seems to come from correspondents, but it all fits together as though it was written by the same staff - a tribute to good editing. Reading these sections feels like sitting down with a friend. Easy like Sunday morning. Great job.

2. Johnson City Press

Jessica Fuller, Hannah Swayze



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Doug Horne, Republic Newspapers, Knoxville, and outgoing president of the TPA, presents the 2018 Public Notice Journalism Award to Tracey Wolfe, a reporter with Grainger Today, Bean Station. Wolfe was honored during the 2019 TPA State Press Contests Luncheon held July 18 in Chattanooga.

3. Citizen Tribune, Morristown

John Gullion, Jean Henderson, Glenna Howington, Cliff Hightower

4. Cleveland Daily Banner

Gwen Swiger, Colby Denton

5. The Daily Times, Maryville

Melanie Tucker

Group V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Lisa Denton

Judge's Comments: Difficult to judge - great entries. This one used white space effectively with strong colors and graphics that were sometimes "outside the box" - with good effect."

2. News Sentinel, Knoxville Staff

Best Sports Writing Group I

1. News-Herald, Lenoir City
Nick Davis

Judge's comments: Outstanding job of providing a vast array of coverage across multiple sports. Stories were well-written and engaging. The community should be proud of their newspaper.

2. Macon County Times, Lafayette

Craig Harris, Johnny Beaver

3. Smithville Review

Duane Sherrill

See **WINNERS**, Page 9

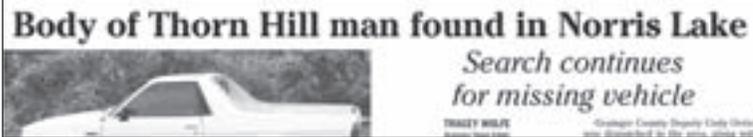
Save the dates for the 2020 TPA Winter Convention • February 12-13, 2020 • Nashville



First place award

Best News Photograph Group I

Tracey Wolfe – Grainger Today, Bean Station



Tommy Bryan, Jason Goolesby, John Sloan, Michael Gallagher

Group III

- 1. The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro**
Cecil Joyce, Luis Torres

Judge's Comments: Emotional story telling; good quotes, detailed, thoughtfulness with challenges.

- 2. Union City Daily Messenger**
Kevin Weeks

Judge's Comments: Variety of subject matter including sports personalities, schools, coaches and players. Tough decision made by high school; leadership by faith.

- 3. The Newport Plain Talk**
Seth Butler, Dennis Barker Jr.

- 4. Southern Standard, McMinnville**
Jefferey Simmons

- 5. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville**
George Robinson

Group IV

- 1. Johnson City Press**
Joe Avento, Jeff Birchfield, Tanner Cook, Douglas Fritz

- 2. Cleveland Daily Banner**
Richard Roberts, Joe Cannon, Patrick MacCoon

- 3. The Greeneville Sun**
Sam Bundy

- 4. The Daily Times, Maryville**
Corey Roepken, Troy Provost-Heron, Taylor Vortherms

Group V

- 1. The Tennessean, Nashville**
Dave Ammenheuser, Erik Bacharach, Joe Rexrode, Adam Sparks

- 2. Chattanooga Times Free Press**
Stephen Hargis, Mark Wiedmer, Mark Pace

- 3. News Sentinel, Knoxville**
Blake Toppmeyer, Mike Wilson

Best Sports Coverage



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Randy Boyd, interim president for the University of Tennessee, gave opening remarks for the 2019 TPA State Press Contests Awards Luncheon July 18 at the Read House Hotel in Chattanooga.

Group I

- 1. The Courier, Savannah**
David Shirley, Shelia Bomar

Judge's comments: Very nice range of coverage with good art and writing.

- 2. Smithville Review**
Duane Sherrill

Judge's Comments: Nice layouts. Great pictures.

- 3. The Erwin Record**
Keeli Parkey, Richard Rourk, Lisa Whaley, Damaris Higgin

- 4. The Gallatin News**
Zach Womble, Michael Gallagher, Zack Owensby, Phil Stauder, Randy Moore, John Decker, Andy Telli

- 5. Morgan County News, Wartburg**
Taylor Crombie, Goose Lindsay

Group II

- 1. farragutpress, Farragut**
farragutpress Editorial, farragutpress Production, Ken Lay, Carlos Reveiz

gutpress Production, Ken Lay, Carlos Reveiz

- 2. Hendersonville Standard**
Zach Womble, Rick Murray, Don McPeak, Andy Telli, John Decker, Michael Gallagher, Zack Owensby

- 3. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City**
Eric Cain, Jacob Lindsey, Dale Gentry, Dave Gentry, John Turner, Melanie Fritz, Ronnie Housley

- 4. The Lebanon Democrat**
Andy Reed

- 5. The Wilson Post, Lebanon**
Tommy Bryan, Steve Wampler, John Sloan, Bobbie Kay Bryan, Ivan Aronin, Dallus Whitfield, Wayne Reeder

Group III

- 1. The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro**
Cecil Joyce, Luis Torres, APG Maryville Design Staff

WINNERS, from Page 8

- 4. The Advocate & Democrat, Sweetwater**
Scott Carter, Danielle Proulx

- 5. The Leader, Covington**
Jeff Ireland

Group II

- 1. The Knoxville Ledger**
Rhiannon Potkey

- 2. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City**
Dale Gentry, Dave Gentry, Steve Marion

- 3. The Herald Chronicle, Winchester**
Sam Cowan

- 4. The Tullahoma News**
Zach Birdsong

- 5. The Wilson Post, Lebanon**

See **WINNERS**, Page 10

WINNERS, from Page 9

2. The Newport Plain Talk

Seth Butler, Dennis Barker Jr., Dylan Young

3. Crossville Chronicle

Michael Lindsay

4. Southern Standard, McMinnville

Jeffery Simmons

5. The Daily Herald, Columbia Staff

Group IV

1. The Greeneville Sun

Sam Bundy, Tate Russell, Wayne Phillips, Darren Reese

Judge's comments: The best part of the Sun is its storytelling, going beyond scores, stats and play-by-play to really get into the souls of the communities and teams it followed through their successful seasons.

2. Johnson City Press

Joe Avento, Jeff Birchfield, Tanner Cook, Douglas Fritz, Jamie Combs

Judge's Comments: No shame in finishing second here. The margin was whisker-thin. Excellent, well-rounded product.

3. The Daily Times, Maryville

Austin Bornheim, Troy Probst-Heron, Corey Roepken, Lauren Moore, Taylor White, Taylor Vortherms

4. Cleveland Daily Banner

Richard Roberts, Joe Cannon, Patrick MacCoon

5. Citizen Tribune, Morristown

Matt Daniels, Derwin Helton, JD Vaughn, Shilante Carter, Daniel Munson

Group V

1. The Tennessean, Nashville Staff

Judge's comments: The exceptional column writing raises the overall level of the section. Good storytelling always wins out over dry reporting. Added depth of the hometown pro teams makes it a winner.

2. Chattanooga Times Free Press Staff

Judge's Comments: Anyone who loves SEC football year-round would love the Times Free Press. Anyone who thinks "minor" high school sports are worth a lot of attention would not, even when those sports are in season, at least according to the submitted entries. Since that is a significant criteria, that hurts the overall score.

3. News Sentinel, Knoxville Staff

Best Graphics and/or Illustrations

Groups I, II & III

1. The Leader, Covington Echo Day

Judge's comments: Hard to decide between first and second place. Small details pushed this one to the top. Well done.

2. The Knoxville Ledger Leigh Singleton

Judge's Comments: A hair behind first place. Very nice product. You should be proud.

3. The Nashville Ledger Leigh Singleton

4. Grainger Today, Bean Station Robert Turner

5. Hendersonville Standard Staff

Groups IV & V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Sara Jackson, Cindy Deifenderfer, Clay Bennett, Matt McClane

Judge's Comments: Clearly the winner. Such diversity and clever designs. Great job.

2. The Tennessean, Nashville Kent Travis

Judge's Comments: Infographics are a favorite of mine.

3. Bristol Herald Courier David Thometz, Chelsea Gillenwater

4. News Sentinel, Knoxville Charlie Daniel

5. The Daily Times, Maryville Marcus Fitzsimmons

Editorials

Group I

1. The Gallatin News
Dave Gould, Sherry Mitchell, Josh Cross, Tena Lee

2. News Herald, Lenoir City
Jonathan Herrmann, Steve Meadows

3. New Tri State Defender, Memphis
Dr. L. LaSimba M. Gray (Jr.)

4. Grainger Today, Bean Station Tracey Wolfe

5. The Courier, Savannah
Ron Schaming, R. Kelly Jordan

Group II

1. The Lebanon Democrat
Jared Felkins, Jacob Smith, Linda Alessi

Judge's comments: Felkins' entry pointed out things outside the normal reader's knowledge. Probably not a popular stance in his area, but it needed to be said.

2. Hendersonville Standard
Tena Lee, Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell, Dave Gould

3. The Knoxville Ledger
Sam Stockard

4. The Herald Chronicle, Winchester
Linda Stacy

5. The Wilson Post, Lebanon
Brian Harville, Zack Owensby, Tommy Bryan, Kenny Martin, Dave Gould

Group III

1. Crossville Chronicle
Heather Mullinix

2. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville
Chris Smith

3. The Nashville Ledger
Sam Stockard

4. The Mountain Press, Sevierville
Jason Davis

5. Herald Citizen, Cookeville
Lindsay McReynolds, Kate Cook, Don Foy



First place award

Best News Photograph Group II

Adam Taylor Gash –
The Ledger, Knoxville



Group IV

1. Bristol Herald-Courier
Cliff Cumber

2. Kingsport Times-News
Ted Como

3. The Greeneville Sun
Michael Reneau

4. The Daily Times, Maryville
Bob Norris, J. Todd Foster

5. Cleveland Daily Banner
Rick Norton

Group V

1. The Tennessean, Nashville
David Plazas

2. News Sentinel, Knoxville

Jack McElroy

3. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Clint Cooper

Best Single Editorial

Group I

1. The Gallatin News
Tena Lee, Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell, Dave Gould

2. The Gallatin News

Josh Cross, Tena Lee, Sherry Mitchell, Dave Gould

3. News-Herald, Lenoir City

Jonathan Herrmann, Steve Meadows

See **WINNERS**, Page 11



First place award

Best News Photograph Group III

*Bill McCutcheon –
The Paris Post-Intelligencer*



Commissioners should not use private email for conducting county business

We've known for a while now that members of the Sumner County Commission have used private email accounts to conduct their county business. What we haven't known, until recently, is why.

That reason came to light last month when newly elected County Commissioner Jeremy Mansfield asked Sumner County Law Director Leah Dennen for a county email address.

"Open records are the exact reason we advise against having a county email address," Dennen responded. "If you have a county email, anything and everything would have to be turned over in a records request. By using your own, you have better control over what can be turned over if a request is made."

When we asked Dennen to explain, she said that many people don't realize that when they email a county commissioner that those emails may be subject to Tennessee's Open Records Act.

First place award

Best Single Editorial Group I

*Tena Lee, Josh Cross,
Sherry Mitchell, Dave
Gould –
Gallatin News*

Meeman Award Winner

This way, she noted, if someone emails about something not related to government business, the county commissioner has more control over what they turn over if a request is made.

Dennen also argued she believes a county commissioner is less likely to discuss county business with another county commissioner if they are using private email accounts.

We believe both reasons are severely flawed, and urge the

county to offer a county email address to any commissioner who asks for one.

We also urge all of the 24 county commissioners to request a county email address and use it to conduct county business. This isn't a radical - or even new idea. In fact, it's pretty much the standard among governmental agencies across the state.

We're not naïve enough to think that officials in other cities or counties don't skirt around the issue by using their private email accounts to conduct business. (We've seen that on a national level as well). That can't always be stopped. But what can be stopped is the use of flimsy reasoning for not making such a system available to those who do want to be transparent.

The fact that this isn't provided in Sumner County makes it look like our elected officials have something to hide - or in the very least that transparency is not a high priority.

Sam Stockard

Group III

1. **The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville**
Chris Smith

Judge's comments: Excellent piece that shows the other side of tax cuts. Well reasoned, pulls no punches. This is the kind of editorial that should move people to action in your community and encourage other newspapers to do similar stories on their own schools. Well done.

2. **The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville**

Chris Smith

Judge's Comments: Very strong writing that pulls no punches and doesn't waste words. This piece gets right to the point, backs up its opinion with facts and explains global trade in a way that makes sense to the every man. Then it hits readers with a strong end that pulls it together. Great work.

3. **The Mountain Press,**

Sevierville

Jason Davis

4. **Crossville Chronicle**
Heather Mullinix

5. **Crossville Chronicle**
Heather Mullinix

Group IV

1. **The Greeneville Sun**
Michael Reneau

Judge's comments: Well-written, concise editorial on issues raised in news coverage. While taking a stand on the issue, the newspaper also steps up to encourage transparency in elected officials' decision making.

2. **Bristol Herald Courier**
Cliff Cumber

Judge's Comments: Thoughtful, thorough piece making the case against an initially well-meaning law that had become a restriction on public information. Illustrating their case with a tragic, local incident, this editorial gives readers a lot to think about.

3. **The Daily Times, Maryville**

Bob Norris

4. **Kingsport Times-News**
Ted Como

5. **Cleveland Daily Banner**
Rick Norton

Group V

1. **News Sentinel**
Jack McElroy

2. **Chattanooga Times Free Press**
Pam Sohn

3. **Chattanooga Times Free Press**
Clint Cooper

Best Personal Column

Group I

1. **The Leader, Covington**
Echo Day

2. **The Advocate & Democrat**

See **WINNERS**, Page 12

WINNERS, from Page 10

4. **Brownsville Press**
Carlton Veirs

5. **Grainger Today, Bean Station**
Tracey Wolfe

Group II

1. **The Lebanon Democrat**
Jared Felkins

Judge's comments: A good job holding an elected official accountable for his behaviors, both before and after the election. It's all there for an editorial.

2. **The Herald Chronicle, Winchester**

Linda Stacy, Alan Clark

Judge's Comments: A touching localized piece that sparks empathy for the veteran and also makes one proud of their community. Job well done.

3. **The Tullahoma News**
Andrea Agardy

4. **Roane County News, Kingston**
Hugh Willett

5. **The Knoxville Ledger**

WINNERS, from Page 11

Michael Thomason

3. Grainger Today, Bean Station
Tracey Wolfe

4. Robertson County Times, Springfield
Nicole Young

5. Brownsville Press
Joe Sills

Group II

1. The Wilson Post, Lebanon
Ken Beck

Judge's Comments: Timely and evocative piece about Mr. Rogers, who was interviewed twice by the writer. Well done!

2. The Lebanon Democrat
Sinclair Sparkman

Judge's Comments: A fine essay about living in, and finally leaving, what many perceived as a rough neighborhood.

3. The Wilson Post, Lebanon
John Sloan

4. Hendersonville Standard
Dave Gould

5. Hendersonville Standard
Tena Lee

Group III

1. Union City Daily Messenger
Chris Menees

2. The Daily Herald, Columbia
James Bennett

3. The Daily Herald, Columbia
James Bennett

4. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville
Chris Smith

5. Southern Standard, McMinnville
Lacy Garrison

Group IV

1. The Greeneville Sun
Cameron Judd

2. Cleveland Daily Banner
Rick Norton

3. The Greenville Sun

Michazel Reneau

4. Bristol Herald-Courier
Ben Talley

5. Johnson City Press
Robert Houk

Group V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Mark Kennedy

2. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Bill Stamps

3. The Tennessean, Nashville
Alex Hubbard

Best Personal Humor Column

Group I

1. The Courier News, Clinton
Ken Leinart

Judge's Comments: Closest to laugh-out-loud, and a nice ending. Your style has a rhythm of its own, but you make it accessible through consistency.

2. The Advocate & Democrat, Sweetwater
Melissa Kinton

Judge's Comments: Pretty funny. A close second. The reader goes along with you because of your good writing.

3. Smithville Review
Duane Sherrill

4. The Advocate & Democrat, Sweetwater
Mike Thomason

5. The LaFollette Press
Deidre Wilson

Group II

1. Hickman County Times, Centerville
Donna S. Wallace

Judge's Comments: Funny column by a talented writer. And absolutely true. Boys are gross.

2. Hickman County Times, Centerville

Donna S. Wallace

Judge's Comments: Timely and appropriate in a time when ill manners are a fact of modern life.

3. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
William Blevins

4. The Tullahoma News
Andrea Agardy

5. The Lebanon Democrat
Sinclair Sparkman

Group III

1. The Nashville Ledger
Joe Rogers

2. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville
Lindsay McReynolds

3. The Daily Herald, Columbia
Justin Glover

4. The Daily Herald, Columbia
Justin Glover

5. The Nashville Ledger
Joe Rogers

Group IV

1. Johnson City Press
Becky Campbell

2. Cleveland Daily Banner
Rick Norton

3. The Daily Times, Maryville
Steve Wildsmith

4. Cleveland Daily Banner
Richard Roberts

5. Bristol Herald Courier
Joe Tennis

Group V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press
Mark Kennedy

Judge's comments: This was the stronger of the two submitted. I actually chuckled out loud reading about exclamation points. (I just held great restraint from using just now, trying to use the matchbook suggestion.

2. Chattanooga Times Free Press
Jay Greeson

Judge's Comments: Funny column. Difficult category. Great to have two talented writers within the same organization.

Best Breaking

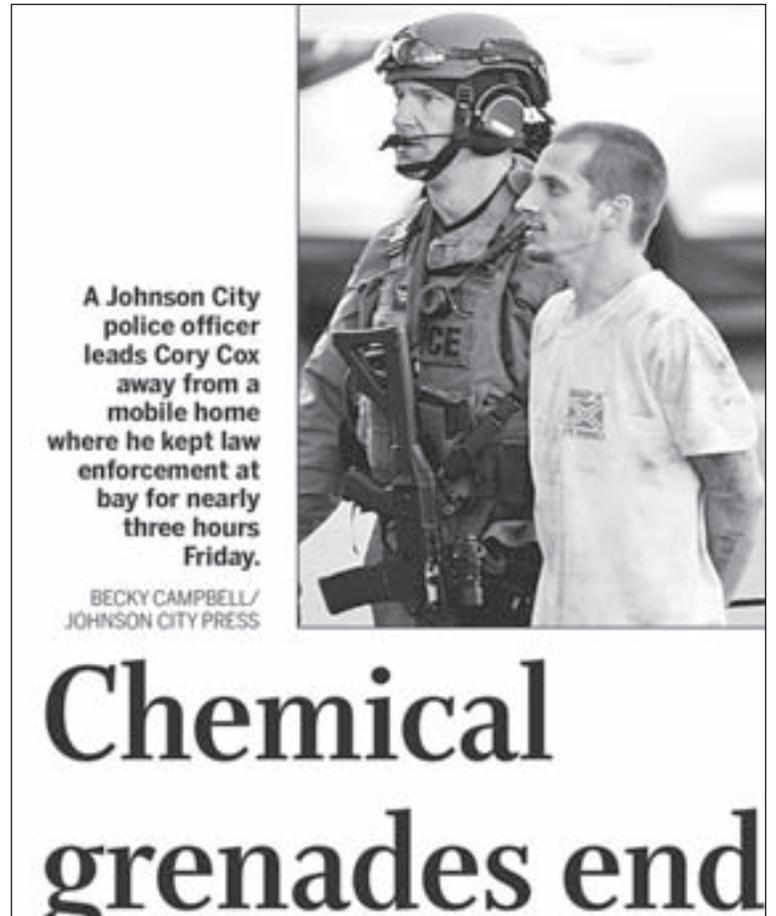
See **WINNERS**, Page 13



First place award

Best News Photograph Group IV

Becky Campbell – Johnson City Press



A Johnson City police officer leads Cory Cox away from a mobile home where he kept law enforcement at bay for nearly three hours Friday.

BECKY CAMPBELL/
JOHNSON CITY PRESS

McKinley Mobile Home Park in a showdown with 30-year-old Cory M. Cox. Officers arrived shortly after 1:15 p.m. after receiving an anonymous tip he was there. Johnson City Police Maj. Debbie Botelho confirmed that Cox was inside the trailer, as three other people left the residence saying Cox was inside. The JCPD's hostage negotiator talked to Cox in hopes of getting him to





First place award

Best News Photograph Group V

C.B. Schmelter –
Chattanooga Times Free Press



Fields should resign as Wilson County commissioner

Theodore Roosevelt once said, “The most practical kind of politics is the politics of decency.” It’s apparent Wilson County Commissioner-elect Robert Fields should take those words to heart and resign his seat on the commission or refuse to take the oath of office.

It’s difficult to believe Fields would “perform with fidelity the duties of the office” to which he was elected, and which he is about to assume, as is recited in the oath of office. Fidelity is defined as “faithfulness to a person, cause or belief, demonstrated by continuing loyalty and support.”

A closer look at Fields’ actions in the past two weeks demonstrates a clear mistrust of him among many Wilson County residents, and Fields’ lack of both explanation and apology for those actions raise significant question as to whether he can represent all the residents of District 1 and Wilson County, for that matter, regardless of race, ethnicity or political beliefs.

It was determined following last Thursday’s Wilson County General Election that Fields tied with his opponent, Tim Roehler, for commissioner in District 1 with two provisional ballots left to count. The following day, Fields took to Facebook to question Roehler as to why he “kept quiet” about Roehler’s wife being African American and their children who are “inter-racial.” He also questioned why Roehler hid the fact that he was a Democrat.



First place award

Best Single Editorial Group II

Jared Felkins
- Lebanon Democrat

Meeman Award Winner

On Sunday afternoon, Fields said he would “concede the race to Mr. Roehler [on Monday] and will fully support him.”

Later Sunday evening, Fields told The Democrat he changed his mind and was going to wait for the provisional ballots to be counted, which took place Wednesday.

“I have changed my mind,” he said in a voicemail. “I am not going to concede on Monday. I will wait and see what the provisional ballots say on Wednesday.”

On Sunday, Fields emphatically said, “I am not a racist. I was simply answering a question [that the race would be determined by two provisional votes].

“In retrospect, I can see that the comment can be considered racist, but I am not a racist.”

On Wednesday morning, Fields was declared the winner by one vote.

Fields sent a text message to The Tennessean on Wednesday that said, “I have been informed of the

results, and I look forward to serving the citizens of District 1.”

Fields has since been unavailable for comment despite multiple attempts.

What’s absent from the conversation is, at the least, an apology to Roehler and his family. They deserve that, and Wilson County residents deserve for Fields to renounce his seat on the commission.

The rest of that commissioner’s oath of office is recited, “I do solemnly swear to support the constitutions of Tennessee and the United States and to faithfully perform the duties of the office of county commissioner . . .”

There’s a section in the Tennessee Constitution that says, “That government being instituted for the common benefit, the doctrine of nonresistance against arbitrary power and oppression is absurd, slavish and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind.” The first three words of the U.S. Constitution are, “We the people . . .”

At least in the court of popular opinion, there are questions as to whether Fields can be inclusive to the representation of all who live in his district. Oath is defined as “a solemn promise, often invoking a divine witness, regarding one’s future action or behavior.” It leaves a lot of doubt as to whether Fields can or should make such a significant promise regarding future actions when he’s failed to adequately face the mistakes he’s made in his recent past.

WINNERS, from Page 12

News Coverage Group I

1. **Brownsville Press**
Brooke McCain, Carlton Veirs
2. **The Erwin Record**
Kendal Groner
3. **The Leader, Covington**
Echo Day
4. **Carthage Courier**
Eddie West
5. **Crockett County Times, Alamo**
Cynthia Kilburn

Group II

1. **The Elk Valley Times, Fayetteville**
Lucy Williams, Sandy Williams
Judge’s comments: Fire destroys iconic local business: Great, thorough coverage of what was sure to be a major economic disaster. Well-written, good use of quotes and stats from fire officials and emergency response teams. Photos showed a gaping hole in the historic downtown business district. The importance of the business landmark was highlighted in a sidebar where local residents shared their memories of the decades-old company. Good job.
2. **The Lebanon Democrat**
Jacob Smith

Judge’s Comments: Human remains found: A mysterious disappearance eight years earlier is seemingly solved with the grim discovery of a body but questions and investigations continue. Well-done piece bringing back the facts of the case from 2012. Great background.

3. **Roane County News, Kingston,**
Damon Lawrence
4. **The Standard Banner, Jefferson City**
Steve Marion
5. **The Oak Ridger**
Donna Smith, Benjamin Pounds

Group III

1. The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro

Nancy DeGennaro, Helen Comer, Mariah Timms, Natalie Alund

Judge’s Comments: It was a very difficult choice between first and second place. Both did a great job with breaking news in their communities. This one stood out because of the quality of the writing across the package, the variety of stories included, and the information provided to readers.

2. The Newport Plain Talk
Seth Butler, Matt Winter

Judge’s Comments: WOW!! This is true breaking news coverage. You worked very hard to get this in your paper and did exactly what was needed (and what most

editors would have done). Very engaging content. There are no small stories, only small places, and your coverage of this shows why you will continue to remain relevant in your community. Masterful job with true breaking news—not breaking news you have five days to package and write.

3. **The Newport Plan Talk**
Alison Brooks, Seth Butler
4. **The Paris Post-Intelligencer**
Ken Walker, Glenn Tanner, Cassie Walsh, Alexis Ray
5. **The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville**
Stephanie Ingersoll, Jennifer Babich

See **WINNERS**, Page 14

WINNERS, from Page 13

Group IV

- 1. Johnson City Press**
Becky Campbell

Judge's Comments: The lead grabbed me by summing up what happened but leaving the question of 'how did it get to this point?'. The writer gives details of the events without drawing it out.

- 2. Citizen Tribune, Morristown**
Robert Moore, Cliff Hightower

Judge's Comments: The sidebar shows the staff worked hard to encapsulate this moment in time that disrupted lives and set a community on edge. Having other voices in the story beyond just the officials makes this story excel.

- 3. The Daily Times, Maryville**
Mike Gibson

- 4. The Greeneville Sun**
Eugenia Estes

- 5. The Daily Times, Maryville**
Wes Wade

Group V

- 1. The Tennessean, Nashville**
Staff

- 2. News Sentinel, Knoxville**
Jamie Satterfield

- 3. Chattanooga Times Free Press**
Emmett Gienapp

Best News Reporting Group I

- 1. Robertson County Times**
Nicole Young, Adam Tamburin, Holly Meyer, Mariah Timms, Natalie Allison, Yihyun Jeong

Judge's Comments: This team of reporters and their editors did an excellent job of covering the touchy subject of capital punishment justly. They interviewed many sources and did not pronounce judgment - simply reported the facts. This is a solid writing team. Robertson County is being served well by this group of journalists and their editors.

- 2. Morgan County News, Wartburg**
Goose Lindsay

Judge's Comments: Goose Lindsay is serving the residents of the community well. Both entries from the Morgan County News were strong. Lindsay's solid reporting of the sheriff's lawsuit coupled with this Moonshine series show his commitment and love of the community he serves. The "Moonshine on the move" series was chosen to represent the entirety of the entries. It was great coverage of good news in a county that needs it.

- 3. The Gallatin News**
Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell

- 4. News-Herald, Lenoir City**
Jonathan Herrmann

- 5. Manchester Times**
Casey Watts, Josh Peterson

Group II

- 1. Hendersonville Standard**
Tena Lee, Sherry Mitchell

- 2. Murfreesboro Post**
Sam Stockard, Dave Gould

- 3. The Herald Chronicle**
Seth Byrd

- 4. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City**
Steve Marion

- 5. The Tullahoma News**
Elena Cawley

Group III

- 1. Crossville Chronicle**
Michael R. Moser

Judge's Comments: Great series on cases coming through the local court system. Well-written stories recount the offenses and the resulting impacts on victims, perpetrators, their families and the community. Poignant topics covered professionally yet with empathy.

- 2. The Daily Herald, Columbia**
James Bennett, Mike Christen

Judge's Comments: Terrific series on 2018 elections - everything voters needed to know about candidates and issues in city, school and county elections...even the election system. Candidate

No excuse for portables after school shootings

For years, the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System has been pleading with the Montgomery County Commission and the voting public that we can't keep putting off new school construction.

For years, the commission has been kicking the can down the road, packing more kids into our existing schools and allowing them to spill out into portable classrooms parked outside.

Now we've fallen behind, and now we're nearing a crisis. Because those kids in those portables — they aren't safe.

Every now and then, the County Commission relents and approves money for new construction. That's what happened Feb. 12 when it approved \$14.6 million for classroom expansions at four schools.

Two days later, a young man walked into Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, and killed 17 people, most of them teenagers ages 14 to 17.

Only a month earlier, an hour's drive northwest of Clarksville, a 15-year-old opened fire at Marshall County High School in Benton, Kentucky, killing two students.

Responses to the school shootings have been wide-ranging, with calls for tighter gun laws, better mental health care, arming teachers, more SROs, reducing bullying, censoring video games. The solution will likely to come from a combination of several of the above.

But the one solution most people agree on will take a lot more local



Meeman Award Winner

First place award

Best Single Editorial Group III

Chris Smith - The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville

support than our community has been willing to give in the past: Improved building security.

We're lucky enough to live in a city that's growing, with new jobs, a thriving university, and a steady flow of retiring soldiers from Fort Campbell putting their roots down here. But if we drop our property tax rate every time the value of our land increases, as we have done again and again for the last few decades, we'll never be able to keep up with that growth.

As a result of our failure to meet those school construction needs, today, as you read this, your school system is using 69 portable classrooms, sitting unsecured outside the main buildings, with students having to walk back and forth to change classes, go to lunch, in some cases to go to the restroom.

Where are they? At the elementary and middle schools, serving the youngest of our students.

There are 51 portables at 11 of our elementary schools:

- Barkers Mill - 10 portables.
- Minglewood - 8 portables.

- Northeast - 8 portables.
- Rossview - 7 portables.
- Hazelwood - 4 portables.
- Norman Smith - 5 portables.
- Liberty - 3 portables.
- Ringgold - 3 portables.
- Moore - 1 portable.
- West Creek - 1 portable.
- Woodlawn - 1 portable.

There are 18 portables at four of our middle schools:

- Northeast - 9 portables.
- Rossview - 7 portables.
- New Providence - 1 portable.
- West Creek - 1 portable.

Does that list bother you? It should. The doors to every one of those schools might as well be wide open.

The county's Feb. 12 decision to expand four schools will eliminate 27 of those 69 portables. But that still leaves 42 portables, and of course we're likely to need more before those expansion classrooms open.

Recent active shooter response training has infuriated some people who are dismayed to hear the trainers say that it's not a matter of "if" we have a school shooting in Clarksville, it's a matter of "when."

Those words shouldn't make us angry at the trainers. They should wake us up and make us angry at the county leaders of the past who left us in this dangerous situation.

The County Commission's recent action to expand some classrooms gets us closer to a solution, but we have a long way to go to catch up to and resume our school construction schedule.

Let's pray we get there soon enough.

interviews and news stories supplemented with regular feature columns. Great team effort.

- 3. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville**

Stephanie Ingersoll, Jennifer Babich

- 4. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville**
Ben Wheeler, Paige Stange

- 5. The Nashville Ledger**
Hollie Deese, Jeannie Naujeck, Kathy Carlson

Group IV

- 1. Bristol Herald Courier**

Alyssa Oursler, Robert Sorrell

Judge's Comments: First based on the fact that it's an enterprise series, very cohesive, planned and well-executed.

- 2. Bristol Herald Courier**
David McGee, Lurah Spell

Judge's Comments: Second by a hair. The citizens are fortunate to have you as a watchdog over these types of politicians. It was like pulling teeth, but you stayed after it and got the story.

- 3. Kingsport Times-News**
Rain Smith

- 4. The Daily Times, Maryville**

Waylon Cunningham

Judge's Comments: Timely, relevant and localized. A couple of things could possibly have been done better, but all-in-all, a great job.

- 5. Citizen Tribune, Morristown**

Glenna Howington, Robert Moore, Cliff Hightower

Group V

- 1. The Tennessean, Nashville**
Jessica Bliss, Anita Wadhvani, Natalie Allison, Natalie Alund,

Be sure to show your work

Remember in math class when your teacher asked you to show your work when putting your answers on your homework? We hope the Greene County Commission keeps that principle in mind later this month.

It's likely that at their June 18 regular meeting, commissioners will decide whether they want to appeal the decision of Washington County Chancellor John A.

Rambo forcing the county to fund additional staffers in Clerk & Master Kay Solomon Armstrong's office.

There are two issues worth discussing here.

First, a transcript has surfaced of a deposition of Greene County Mayor David Crum from December 2017. In the deposition, Crum indicates the Greene County Commission may have discussed in executive session whether or not to settle Armstrong's lawsuit out of court or whether to proceed in court.

In our opinion, such discussion in closed session would violate the Tennessee Open Meetings Act. When the Tennessee General Assembly passed its open meetings law in 1974, it originally included no exclusion for attorney-client privilege. So, if a governing body were embroiled in legal action — such as has been the case with the Armstrong lawsuit — it could not discuss particulars of the matter with its attorney. Thus, the same attorney-client privilege enjoyed by other attorney-client relationships didn't apply to governmental bodies.

That changed in 1984 with a dispute between the Smith County Board of Education and the Smith County Education Association, argued before the Tennessee Supreme Court. The court's opinion



Meeman Award Winner

First place award

Best Single Editorial Group IV

Michael Reneau - The Greeneville Sun

created the exception in the law that allows for governmental bodies to meet in closed, executive session with their attorneys.

From the Tennessee Coalition of Open Government's "Keys To Open Government" publication: "The Supreme Court acknowledged the likelihood of abuse and set specific restrictions and conditions for conducting those closed meetings to protect the legal privilege without damaging the intent of the sunshine law. It made clear no decision of any kind can be made except in public."

Justice Frank Drowota wrote in the Supreme Court opinion: "Clients may provide counsel with facts and information regarding the lawsuit and counsel may advise them about the legal ramifications of those facts and the information given to him. However, once any discussion, whatsoever, begins among the members of the public body regarding what action to take based upon advice from counsel, whether it be settlement or otherwise, such discussion shall be open to the public and failure to do so shall constitute a clear violation of the Open Meetings Act."

The key phrase in that passage — "once any discussion, what-

soever" — seems to make pretty clear that once discussion turns to exchanges with the attorney to exchanges between members of a governing body, the meeting should then become public or such discussion should cease. Regardless of whether or not a previous executive session violated the sunshine law, the citizens of Greene County are entitled to hear our county commissioners' reasoning for either pursuing or not pursuing an appeal of the Armstrong decision.

Thus, county commissioners should "show their work," so to speak, when they make that decision.

The second issue at hand is whether or not the commission should appeal at all.

Armstrong's original request was for the county to fund an additional full-time and an additional part-time position in her office. With salaries and benefits, what she requested would total about \$61,000 in total additional outlay for the county, according to documents.

Instead, after having lost its fight, the county will likely be on the hook for at least \$411,000 in legal fees, plus the cost of the positions themselves.

Litigating was a gamble. We can understand standing on principle. But there comes a time when prudence should also govern our decisions. As such, we think it best for the county to cut its losses and not appeal.

Regardless of its decision, though, the commission's deliberations toward that decision must take place out in the open, where voters and taxpayers can judge the merits of the decision for themselves.

lives of the victims and helped the community cope and grieve.

2. News Sentinel, Knoxville

Mat Lakin

Judge's Comments: Would really like for first and second to be a tie for first. Both represent tremendous work and great writing. Matt Larson's profiles of the cases that put killers on Tennessee's death row focuses where it belongs: on the victims and law enforcement

who worked the cases that continued to haunt them - sometimes for decades.

3. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Emmett Gienapp, Meghan Mangrum, Judy Walton

Investigative Reporting

Group I

1. Manchester Times

Casey Watts, Elena Cawley

Judge's comments: This is a good, solid investigative piece and reveals a serious problem in your judicial system. I found it interesting and I can only hope it helps pave the way for correcting the problem. Good work.

2. Robertson County Times, Springfield

Nicole Young

Judge's Comments: Excellent job. You discovered a serious problem, exposed the problem and now changes are being made. That's what investigative reporting is suppose to do. Great job.

3. The LaFollette Press

Crystal Huskey

4. The Ashland City Times

Kelly Fisher

5. The Courier, Savannah

R. Kelly Jordan

Group II

1. The Knoxville Ledger

Nancy Henderson, Linda Bryant

Judge's Comments: Great job demonstrating thoroughness, high interest for readers, and balance of reporting. Each issue was researched extensively and incorporated data and the human component and impact. The graphic presentation of each piece set this entry apart from anything else in its category. Beautifully done.

2. Hendersonville Standard

Tena Lee, Sherry Mitchell

Judge's Comments: These reports were very effective in uncovering nasty political campaign tactics, finding and naming those behind them, exposing the apparent indifference of the officials who should have held them accountable, and informing the voters, who should throw the whole lot of them out.

3. Hendersonville Standard

Tena Lee, Sherry Mitchell

4. Murfreesboro Post

Sam Stockard, Dave Gould

5. Mufreesboro Post

Jason Reynolds, Sam Stockard, Ivan Aronin, Dave Gould

Group III

1. The Nashville Ledger

Hollie Deese

Judge's Comments: Excellent choice of topic and well researched. Everyone can relate.

2. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville

Jennifer Babich

Judge's Comments: Taking military coverage to a new direction. Nice to see the homefront coverage. Steps inside a world the bulk of the public does not see.

3. The Mountain Press, Sevierville

Jeff Farrell

4. The Nashville Ledger

Jeannie Naujeck

5. The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro

Brinley Hineman

Group IV

1. Johnson City Press

Nathan Baker, Robert Houk, Becky Campbell, Jessica Fuller, Hannah Swayze

2. The Daily Times, Maryville

Waylon Cunningham

3. The Daily Times, Maryville

Amy Beth Miller

4. Bristol Herald-Courier

Alyssa Oursler

5. Johnson City Press

Nathan Baker, Becky Campbell, Zach Vance, Robert Houk

Group V

1. The Tennessean, Nashville

Dave Boucher, Allen Arthur

Judge's comments: Excellent series of stories that pushed county and state authorities to real change that will protect accused offenders in the future. Sunlight on a major problem - housing people accused of crimes in solitary confinement under the guise of "safekeeping," led to real change. That would not have happened without the

See **WINNERS**, Page 18

WINNERS, from Page 14

Jason Gonzales, Holly Meyer, Adam Tamburin

Judge's comments: Would really like for first and second to be a tie for first. Both represent tremendous work and great writing. The sheer volume of work by the Tennessean staff in covering a mass shooting at the Waffle House is phenomenal. They covered every angle, picked up every loose end, celebrated the

2019 General Excellence Winners

Circulation Group I: Combined weekly circulation of 5,000 or less

Circulation Group II: Combined weekly circulation of 5,001-15,000

Circulation Group III: Combined weekly circulation of 15,001-50,000



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Josh Cross, Gallatin News, receives the first place plaque for Best Editorials, Group I, from Randy Boyd, UT interim president, at the 2019 State Press Contests Awards Luncheon.



Submitted photo

Main Street Media of Tennessee's (Gallatin) combined staffs, representing the Gallatin News and Hendersonville Standard, won General Excellence awards in Groups I and II, respectively. Left to right: Josh Cross, Zach Womble, Sherry Mitchell, Ginger McCleendon, Randy Moore, Tena Lee, Lisa Peters and Dave Gould.



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Chris Smith (right), of The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville, receives the first place plaque for Best Feature Photo, Group III, from Randy Boyd, UT interim president. The Leaf-Chronicle also won Group III General Excellence honors.

2019 General Excellence Winners

Circulation Group IV: Combined weekly circulation of 15,001-50,000



Submitted photo

Johnson City Press staffers pose with awards they won at the 2019 TPA State Press Contests Awards Luncheon, including General Excellence for Group IV. Front row: Sue Guinn Legg, Robert Houk, Becky Campbell and Brandon Paykamian. Back row: Jared Bentley, Nathan Baker, Sam Watson, Joe Avento, Tanner Cook, Douglas Fritz, Jonathan Roberts, David Floyd and Jeff Birchfield. Not pictured: John Thompson.

Circulation Group V: Combined weekly circulation of 50,001-200,000



Submitted photo

Chattanooga Times Free Press staffers celebrate their Group V General Excellence award. Left to right: Matt McClane, Chris Vass, Alison Gerber, Mark Kennedy, Alex Chambliss, Meg Scarbrough, Jeff DeLoach, Lisa Denton, Dave Flessner, Allison Collins and Mark Jones.



All photos in this column by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography
Gwen Swiger, Cleveland Daily Banner, accepts the Group IV Best Single Feature award from Randy Boyd, UT interim president.



J. Todd Foster (middle), The Daily Times, Maryville, and Autumn Hughes accept the Group IV Best Education Reporting award.



Sam Watson (right), Johnson City Press, accepts the Group IV award for Best Business Coverage.



Dave Flessner (right), Chattanooga Times Free Press, accepts the Group V award for Best Business Coverage. The Times Free Press also won the overall Group V General Excellence award.

WINNERS, from Page 15

newspaper.

- 2. The Tennessean, Nashville**
Joey Garrison, Nate Rau, Dave Boucher

Judge's Comments: Great digging. These stories clearly served the public interest in uncovering misuse of taxpayer money to advance the mayor's affair. What stood out most to me was the context offered in these stories that truly let the reader decide for themselves whether this was an acceptable use of funds or not. Excellent work.

- 3. News Sentinel, Knoxville**
Jamie Satterfield

Best Business Coverage Group I

- 1. Hamilton County Herald, Chattanooga**
David Laprad, Hollie Deese

- 2. Smithville Review**
Duane Sherrill

- 3. The Gallatin News**
Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell, Sabrina Garrett

- 4. Brownsville Press**
Brooke McCain, Katy Cowan

- 5. News-Herald, Lenoir City**
Brooke McCain, Katy Cowan

Group II

- 1. The Knoxville Ledger**
Mike Blackerby, Dave Link, Linda Bryant, Joe Morris

Judge's Comments: Wow! That's how you do it. Excellent layout and illustrations draw you in for excellent stories.

- 2. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City**
Steve Marion, Dale Gentry, Kimary Clelland

Judge's Comments: Great writing, great coverage. Good job all around!

- 3. farragutpress, Farragut**
farragutpress Editorial, farragutpress Production

- 4. The Lebanon Democrat**
Jared Felkins, Sinclair Spark-

man, Matt Masters, Angie Mayes

- 5. Murfreesboro Post**
Jason Reynolds, Sam Stockard, Ivan Aronin, Dave Gould

Group III

- 1. The Nashville Ledger**
Bill Lewis, Hollie Deese, Jeanie Naujeck, Tim Ghianni, Linda Bryant, Tom Wood

- 2. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville**
Jimmy Settle

- 3. The Daily Herald, Columbia**
James Bennett

- 4. Shelbyville Times-Gazette**
Jason Reynolds, John Carney, Ashley Coker, Terence Corrigan, Dawn Hankins

- 5. The Paris Post-Intelligencer**
Ken Walker, Cassie Walsh, Chance Farmer, Bill McCutcheon, Leslie Sensing

Group IV

- 1. Johnson City Press**
Robert Houk, Zach Vance, Brandon Paykamian, Nathan Baker

- 2. Cleveland Daily Banner**
Rick Norton, Christy Armstrong, Colby Denton, Larry Bowers, Tim Siniard

- 3. The Greeneville Sun**
Ken Little, Kristen Early, Bianca Marais, Michael Reneau

- 4. The Daily Times, Maryville**
Waylon Cunningham, Bob Norris, Sophie Grosserode, Lesli Bales-Sherrod, Rachel Totten

Group V

- 1. Chattanooga Times Free Press**
Dave Flessner, Joan McClane, Mike Pare, Allison Shirk

- 2. The Tennessean, Nashville**
Ben Goad, Lizzy Alfs, Sandy Mazza, Jamie McGee, Nate Rau

- 3. News Sentinel, Knoxville**
Staff

Best Education Reporting

Would teachers armed with guns really have helped during these shootings?

A bill to let teachers carry guns advanced in the legislature last week. A look at school shootings in the Knoxville area might lend some perspective on whether this measure might help, or harm, school safety.

On Nov. 8, 2005, administrator Jim Pierce of Campbell County Comprehensive High School learned that Kenny Bartley had brought a handgun to school. Assistant Principal Ken Bruce ordered the 14-year-old to the office.

At first, the gun was not loaded, but during the meeting with administrators, Bartley slid in the magazine. When Principal Gary Seale grabbed for the gun, the boy opened fire, wounding Seale and Pierce and killing Bruce. An unarmed teacher disarmed the student.

Would an armed educator have helped the situation? One might have covered the administrators as they questioned Bartley, though it's uncertain that such caution would have been taken. Local law enforcement was not notified of the problem in advance.

Bartley pleaded guilty in 2007 to a deal that would have made him eligible for parole after 25 years. He later won a new trial, and in 2014 was found guilty of



Meeman Award Winner

First place award

Best Single Editorial Group V

Jack McElroy - News Sentinel, Knoxville

only reckless homicide. He was released on time served.

On Aug. 21, 2008, freshman Jamar Siler walked into Central High School's cafeteria, approached a lunch table, pulled a small-caliber gun from his backpack, and shot sophomore Ryan McDonald through the chest, killing him.

The school resource officer was doing paperwork nearby, and he and a Knox County Schools security officer rushed to the scene. Siler was gone, but a Knox County deputy spotted him a few minutes later six blocks from the school, stopped him and took the semi-automatic. It still had four rounds in the magazine.

If an armed teacher had been

in the cafeteria, would he or she been able to shoot Siler before he fired? That seems unlikely, though perhaps the 15-year-old could have been shot before he fled.

Of course, he might have returned fire, too.

Siler's case was moved into adult court, and he pleaded guilty to a deal that got him 30 years in prison.

On Feb. 10, 2010, students at Inskip Elementary School were dismissed early because of snow showers. Principal Elisa Luna and Assistant Principal Amy Brace used the time to bring Mark Stephen Foster, a fourth-grade teacher, into the office and notify him that his contract was not being renewed.

Foster left the office but returned a short while later with a gun and fired on the administrators. The women survived, though Luna was paralyzed. Foster was taken into custody about 15 minutes later on Central Avenue Pike after his vehicle was delayed by road construction.

In this case, a teacher with a gun was the problem, not the solution.

Foster pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 56 years in prison.

The 2020 State Press Contests' deadline is Feb. 21. Set aside full page PDFs of your best work now.

Group I

- 1. Hamilton County Record, Chattanooga**
Nancy Henderson, Hollie Deese, Jeannie Naujeck

Judge's Comments: Great writing throughout. Each article grabs the readers' interest and delivers a great story.

- 2. Smithville Review**
Duane Sherrill, Bill Conger

Judge's Comments: Great coverage and well-written. Attention-getting subject matter.

- 3. News-Herald, Lenoir City**
Jonathan Herrmann, Jeremy Nash

- 4. The Gallatin News**
Tena Lee, Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell

- 5. The Advocate & Democrat, Sweetwater**
Jessica Kent, Tommy Millsaps

Group II

- 1. The Lebanon Democrat**
Jared Felkins, Sinclair Sparkman, Matt Masters, Angie Mayes

Judge's Comments: Good mixture of coverage from the effects of state legislation to rezoning and features about programs and students. Well-written news and features.

- 2. Roane County News, Kingston**
Damon Lawrence

Judge's Comments: Great coverage of a proposed school plan for new facilities. Well-written, concise with good use of quotes.

- 3. The Knoxville Ledger**
Jeannie Naujeck, Sam Stockard, Linda Bryant, Mike Blackerby, Hollie Deese, Nancy Henderson

- 4. Murfreesboro Post**
Jason Reynolds, Sam Stockard, Connie Esh, Ivan Aronin, Dave Gould

- 5. Hendersonville Standard**
Tena Lee, Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell

Group III

See **WINNERS**, Page 19

2019 Make-up & Appearance Winners

Circulation Group I:
The Courier News, Clinton

Circulation Group II:
farragutpress, Farragut

Circulation Group III:
Herald-Citizen, Cookeville

The Courier News
75¢
Wednesday, February 1, 2019

Six bucks and a jar of peanut butter

Chamber to unveil 'Vision'

'Life is hard work'

Pastor Wayne Phillips is 'Ally of the Year'

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Graduates turn the page

CLASS of 2018

Galindo story, \$33 million highlight FHS graduation

HVA's 470 grads set school record for scholarship \$ total

Bartlett has 'so many emotions' about his 489 BHS graduates

IT ONLY TAKES A MINUTE BE PREPARED
LCUB
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Herald-Citizen
The Daily Newspaper of the Upper Cumberland

Up 2-0:

The Wall's arrival draws near

400 Homeless Children

Algood to buy historic mansion

Five TTU alumni honored

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- WINNERS, from Page 18**
- 1. The Daily Herald, Columbia**
Mike Christen, James Bennett
 - 2. Southern Standard, McMinnville**
Lisa Hobbs, James Clark, Lacy Garrison
 - 3. The Newport Plain Talker**
Seth Butler, Matt Winter, Duay O'Neil

- 4. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville**
Jim Herrin
 - 5. The Nashville Ledger**
Hollie Deese, Linds Bryant, Jeannie Naujeck
- Group IV**
- 1. The Daily Times, Maryville**
Amy Beth Miller, Melanie Tucker, Lesli Bales-Sherrod
Judge's Comments: These stories

- show the reporter truly works and understands their beat. Good job!*
- 2. Bristol Herald Courier**
David McGee, Leif Greiss, Lurah Spell, Zach Irby
Judge's Comments: Interesting articles easy to follow.
 - 3. Cleveland Daily Banner**
Christy Armstrong
 - 4. Johnson City Press**
Brandon Paykamian, Jessica

- Fuller, John Thompson
- Group V**
- 1. The Tennessean, Nashville**
Jason Gonzales, Amelia Knise-ly, Adam Tamburin
Judge's comments: This in-depth look at Tennessee's innovative tuition-free program gives insight to a larger issue at play beyond the simple fact that not enough people are graduating college. An excellent collaborative approach that covers a complex issue with

- clarity and support.*
- 2. Chattanooga Times Free Press**
Meghan Mangrum
Judge's Comments: Excellent job covering the district's initiative to comply with federal law and to involve the community. Topic is relevant and timely to readers. Understanding the state and federal laws pertaining to individuals with disabilities is paramount to
- See **WINNERS**, Page 20



First place award

Best Feature Photograph Group I

Eddie West – Carthage Courier

WINNERS, from Page 20

Judge's Comments: Three strong submissions. Really liked the Buzzing with excitement. Those are the brakes and Hot wheels worked well.

2. The Newport Plain Talk
Seth Butler, Matt Winter

3. The Nashville Ledger
Lyle Graves

4. The Daily Herald, Columbia
James Bennett

5. Shelbyville Times-Gazette
David Melson

Group IV

1. Bristol Herald Courier
Robert Allen, David Thometz, Sandra Ross

2. Cleveland Daily Banner
Ed Coons, Rick Norton

3. The Daily Times, Maryville
Marcus Fitzsimmons, Mike Sisco

4. Kingsport Times-News
Frank Cannon, Frank Cannon, Ned Jilton

5. Johnson City Press
Brian Reese, Robert Pierce

Group V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press
Lisa Denton

Judge's Comments: Good selection of 3 headlines that use a play on other phrases to draw attention to the stories

2. The Tennessean, Nashville
Karen Grigsby

Public Service

Group I

1. The Gallatin News
Sherry Mitchell, Josh Cross, Dave Gould, Tena Lee

2. Hamilton County Herald, Chattanooga
David Laprad

3. The Courier, Savannah
R. Kelly Jordan, Courier Staff

4. Pulaski Citizen
Scott Stewart

5. Crockett County Times, Alamo
Cynthia Kilburn, Jennifer McCall, Bailey Wilson

Group II

1. Hendersonville Standard
Tena Lee, Josh Cross, Sherry Mitchell, Paul Alberstadt, Dave Gould

2. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
Steve Marion, Dale Gentry, Gayle Page

3. The Lebanon Democrat
Jared Felkins, Sinclair Sparkman, Matt Masters, Angie Mayes, George Coleman

4. The Tullahoma News
Elena Cawley, Casey Watts

5. The Knoxville Ledger
Mike Blackerby, Nancy Henderson, Linda Bryant

Group III

1. The Nashville Ledger
Kathy Carlson, Linda Bryant, Sam Stockard, Tom Wood

2. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville
Jimmy Settle, Chris Smith, Jennifer Babich, Mark Hicks

3. The Daily Herald, Columbia
James Bennett, Keith Ponder

4. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville
Ben Wheeler, Lindsay McReynolds

5. The Paris Post-Intelligencer
Cassie Walsh, Ken Walker, Chance Farmer, Glenn Tanner, Bill McCutcheon, Leslie Sensing, Alexis Ray

Group IV

1. Johnson City Press
Zach Vance, Nathan Baker, Robert Houk, Brandon Paykhamian, Becky Campbell, Hannah Swayze, Jessica Fuller

2. The Daily Times, Maryville
Wes Wade, Sarah Grace Taylor

3. Cleveland Daily Banner
Brian Graves, Rick Norton, Autumn Hughes, Christy Armstrong, Colby Denton

Group V

1. The Tennessean, Nashville
Staff

2. Chattanooga Times Free Press
Mark Pace, Tyler Jett, Rosana Hughes, Zack Peterson, Clint Cooper, Pam Sohn, Emmet Gienapp

3. News Sentinel, Knoxville
Staff

Best News Photograph Group I

1. Grainger Today, Bean Station
Tracey Wolfe

2. Smithville Review
Duane Sherrill

3. Carroll County News Leader, Huntingdon
Ron Park

4. Carthage Courier
Eddie West

5. Macon County Times, Lafayette
Craig Harris

Group II

1. The Knoxville Ledger
Adam Taylor Gash

Judge's comments: Great storm photos. Lightning is so hard to capture and the photographer did an excellent job.

2. Hendersonville Standard
Rick Murray

Judge's Comments: Drone technology is still a newer approach to journalism photography and this is a good example of how best to utilize it. The angle is well planned and provides good depth for the subject matter.

3. Stewart County Standard, Dover
Danny Peppers

4. Hendersonville Standard
Phil Stauder

See **WINNERS**, Page 22

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WINNERS, from Page 21

5. Roane County News, Kingston
David Doonan

Group III

1. The Paris Post-Intelligencer
Bill McCutcheon

Judge's comments: Love this detail in the photo. It is news and art combined.

2. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville
Jack McNeely

Judge's comments: The art and impact of this photo makes it a winner.

3. The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
Helen Comer

4. The Daily Herald, Columbia
Mike Christen

5. The Mountain Press, Sevierville
Robert Holder

Group IV

1. Johnson City Press
Becky Campbell

Judge's comments: Really good photos while also wearing both hats and reporting on the same story.

2. Bristol Herald-Courier
Andre Teague

3. Kingsport Times-News
Ned Jilton

4. The Daily Times, Maryville
Joy Kimbrough

5. The Daily Times, Maryville
Joy Kimbrough

Group V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press
C.B. Schmelter

2. The Tennessean, Nashville
Larry McCormack

3. Chattanooga Times Free Press
Doug Strickland

Best Feature Photograph

See **WINNERS**, Page 24



First place award

Best Feature Photograph Group II

*Dallus Whitfield –
The Wilson Post, Lebanon*

THE WILSON POST
WILSON COUNTY'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2019

EARLY VOTING
WHERE:
Wilson County Election Commission
221 E. Main Street in Lebanon
Mt. Juliet Community Center
277 Church Community Prwy.
McIntosh Community Center
801 N. Main St. in Ft. Belknap
Shelbina Community Center
90 Mt. Dewey Rd.
LightHouse Church
2201 Sycamoreville Rd., Mt. Juliet

WHEN:
Each location will be open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. The LightHouse Church location will close at 2 p.m. on Friday.

BRING WITH YOU:
Voters are required to show a Tennessee or nationally-issued photo ID. For more information, call (615) 444-2222 or go to www.tn.gov.

Early voting kicks off in Wilson County on Wednesday
SAYVER SMITH
Early voting kicks off Wednesday throughout Wilson County for several counties. Voters will have an option to vote in person at their local polling location as well as in Washington, D.C.

'Develop the whole child'
Cedars Prep's education plan creates much success in its 20 years
SARINA GARRETT
The Cedars Preparatory Academy, now commonly known as Cedars Prep, celebrated its 20th anniversary in September.

Run to help Wilson County couple in adoption process
SAYVER SMITH
Preston and Sarah have a 10-year-old son and a 10-year-old daughter. They are currently seeking to adopt a child with Down syndrome.

Special school board meeting will address 'weighted grades'
SAYVER SMITH
The Wilson County Board of Education will hold a special public work session and meeting Tuesday, Oct. 22 at 8 and 9:30 p.m., respectively, to address and possibly reverse a decision that the board made earlier this year.



First place award

Best Feature Photograph Group III

*Courtney Pedroza –
The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville*

THE LEAF-CHRONICLE
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2019 • THELEAFCHRONICLE.COM • CLARKSVILLE, TENN. PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

'They,' 'He' and 'She'
BORN FEMALE AND TACKLING GENDER ON FOOTBALL FIELD

Water town returns to state volleyball journey

MI's Halloween in the Park

Obituaries

THE WILSON POST
www.wilsonpost.com

THE LEAF-CHRONICLE
www.leaf-chronicle.com

Ready for boys? They are highly entertaining

Spring has sprung. Fall has fell. Winter's here and it's cold as....

Well, you get the idea. That little rhyme is brought to you by a childhood spent with boys. You don't even want to hear the songs my brothers and their friends sang about Popeye, the sailor man. All cute, and none uttered within earshot of our mother.

Being raised with a passel of boys has given me a rare appreciation for the species. I know I rag on guys a lot, but they are easy to get along with and highly entertaining.

One of Sean's classmates has given birth to a baby boy, and it brings back memories as I watch her storybook of motherhood unfold on social media. The little tyke is just a couple of months old, and the posts have already gone from, "My beautiful baby boy" to "Dear God, if I don't get some sleep my head is going to explode."

I don't know if the girl has any brothers or if she was ever around many boys growing up, but I could give her a timeline for how her life is going to unfold over the next 30 years.

In a couple of months, her little bundle of joy is going to become mobile, and then her life will be more hectic than anything she ever imagined.

For one thing, boys are pack animals. I only had two brothers, but there always seemed to be at least half a dozen boys hanging around our house. Our mom just treated them all as her own. She fed them if they were hungry, lectured them if they needed it and bandaged them when required.

They learned never to wear a hat to my mother's dinner table. Consequences were swift and painful. They also learned never to drop an f-bomb in her presence. They would be carried back to



First place award

Best Personal Humor Column Group II

Donna S. Wallace –
Hickman County Times, Centerville

their own mothers in a body cast. But I digress.

It is better to know that you are going to have a boy ahead of time. There are skills you need to master to survive the coming ordeal and be an effective mother. First of all, learn to suppress your gag reflex. Your female mind cannot fathom the multitude of things your son will do and say that will make you want to vomit. It is wise to steel yourself before emptying their pockets, because boys put all manner of things in their pockets, and three-day-old dead frogs don't mix well with your spring fresh laundry detergent.

Along those same lines, a colander in a boy's hands is not a pasta strainer, but a crowd catcher or an army helmet, often on the same day. Keep bleach on hand at all times.

Learn to laugh at flatulence. Your life is about to be full of it, and to your son it is the funniest thing in the world. He gets extra points toward manhood if he can unleash it in public and cause you to have a ministroke.

Be prepared to hear the alphabet being belched and the national anthem played on that most noble of instruments... your son's armpit.

Make peace with dirt. Your house will never be clean and uncluttered for more than 15 minutes as long as there is a male child on the premises.

As your son ages, these behav-

iors will continue, but he will add more madness and mayhem to his repertoire. Everything, and I do mean everything, is a brutal contact sport. Boys can make a violent competition out of anything.

If you've never spent an evening in the ER because of an Easter egg hunt, chances are you're not raising boys.

Boys do tend to have a great capacity for humor. However, their sense of humor peaks at about age 12 and never develops any further. So, once again, learn to laugh at flatulence.

Be prepared to spend a lot of money on clothes and food. Boys eat like a Hoover vacuums. They also go through lots of clothes. They don't care what they look like, so you don't have to buy brand names, but little boys never outgrow their clothing. They shred it. (See previous paragraph regarding brutal contact sports.)

So to all of you new mothers of sons: Be prepared for the onslaught that is motherhood. Be patient. Be firm. Learn to laugh. Lower your standards...a lot. Keep lots of bandages, peroxide and antibiotic ointment on hand.

Make friends with your local ER doctor; you're going to be spending a lot of time with him, and if he likes you he might just give you that much-needed prescription for Valium.

Also, if you could learn to belch the alphabet, you'll be the most popular mom on your block.



First place award

Best Feature Photograph Group V

Larry McCormack –
The Tennessean, Nashville



Young CBS, 14, of Chattanooga underwent deep brain stimulation surgery Sept. 14 at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. (Lynn Coleman / The Tennessean)

Daring surgery, promising results

Young CBS, 14, of Chattanooga, has an eye-opening battle with a brain of plastic surgery. CBS, 14, of Chattanooga, has an eye-opening battle with a brain of plastic surgery. CBS, 14, of Chattanooga, has an eye-opening battle with a brain of plastic surgery.

Nashville offers new opportunities, tepid wages

THE GREAT RECESSION IS FAR FROM OVER

Job seekers looking for a temporary reprieve, a job that better aligns with their education and one that also offers a good amount of money, will often find themselves in a bind. They are prepared to be working nearly a decade after finishing a master's degree.

See NCR2019, Page 11A

Coming Monday

When the recession hit, these Nashville job-seekers found opportunities.



WINNERS, from Page 22

Group I

1. Carthage Courier
Eddie West

Judge's Comments: The contrasting photo backgrounds - one light, one dark - really shows the capabilities of this photographer. The photos are crisp and show excitement on faces. Great job.

2. The Collierville Herald
Staff

Judge's Comments: The depth of field on this photo and the lighting is great. There were a lot of theater shots entered in this contest - and it's easier to get great lighting with the spotlights. But using great depth of field really forces the reader to focus on in the main character.

3. Hamilton County Herald,

- Chattanooga
David Laprad

4. The Gallatin News
Josh Cross

5. Herald & Tribune,
Jonesborough
Josh Bruni

Group II

See WINNERS, Page 25



First place award

Best Sports Photograph Group I

James Webb – Chester County Independent, Henderson



First place award

Best Sports Photograph Group II

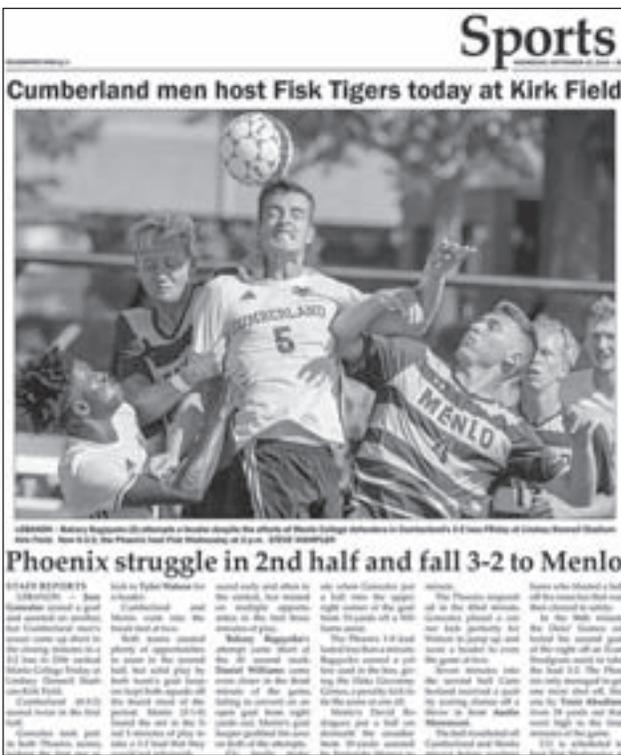
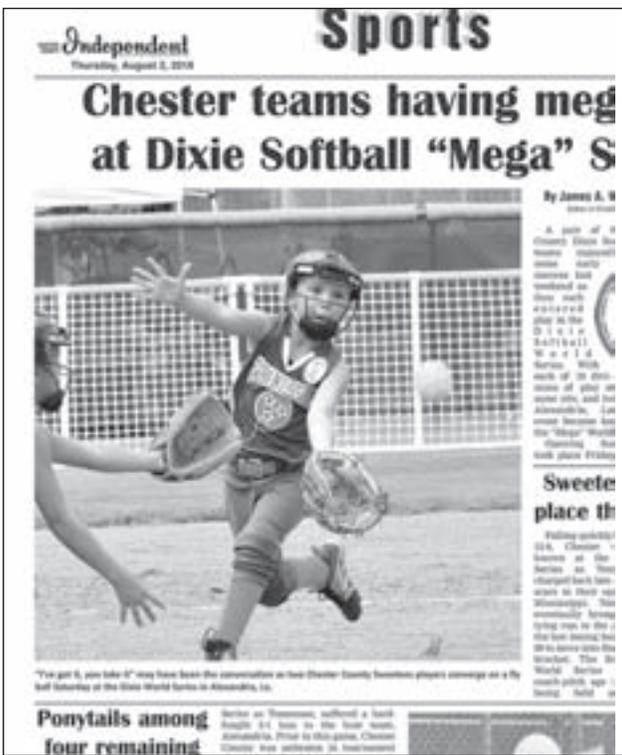
Steve Wampler – The Wilson Post, Lebanon



First place award

Best Sports Photograph Group III

Jeffery Simmons – Southern Standard, McMinnville



Prine is great but Rock Hall isn't the right fit for him

John Prine is an American treasure. People should be naming their pets – and maybe their secondary kids – after him.

But he shouldn't be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Prine, in case you don't know (it's your loss if you don't), is a singer-songwriter who grew up around Chicago but now wisely makes Nashville his home. He's one of 15 nominees for the 2019 Rock Hall class, including Def Leppard, Janet Jackson and the Zombies.

About the others I will say nothing, other than to note that Prine is far and away my favorite of the bunch.

So why oppose his Rock Hall induction? For the same reason I'd oppose his induction into the Polka Hall of Fame (yes, there is one): It doesn't suit him.

And, perhaps more important: He doesn't need it.

As a singer, Prine won't be



First place award

Best Personal Humor Column Group III

Joe Rogers – The Ledger, Nashville

confused with Roy Orbison or Freddie Mercury, especially since a diagnosis of, and treatment for, squamous cell cancer in his neck in 1998 altered his vocals.

But his songs. Oh, his songs...

I started to quote some lyrics, but a short sampling doesn't do him justice. So, get on YouTube or dig into your personal collection and listen to a few.

Maybe start with "Sam Stone." Try "Hello in There," if you need your heart tugged. "Dear Abby," for a hoot. Anything from his new album, "The Tree of Forgiveness." I'll wait.

There. See what I mean? But ask yourself this: Do any of them sound even vaguely like rock and roll? Did you drum your fingers or nod your head to the beat? Feel an urge to dance? No.

Here's how one fellow described Prine's body of work:

"Prine's stuff is pure Proustian existentialism. Midwestern mindtrips to the nth degree. And he writes beautiful songs."

That fellow was Bob Dylan.

As to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, in Cleveland, I enjoyed my one visit there some years back, especially the Dave Clark 5

exhibit, but it is what it is: a private business, a tourist attraction, that trades its induction "honors" as a means to draw attention to itself and visitors to its exhibits. At \$26 general admission.

Putting Prine in the lineup would be trading on his artistry without adding significant honor to him.

My friend Tommy Goldsmith, a musician himself and a former music writer for The Tennessean, thinks Prine should go into the hall.

"In his nearly 50 years of master-class songs, there's work that's as country as Hank Williams, as folkie as Bob Dylan and Woody Guthrie, as intelligent as Randy Newman and Leonard Cohen, and as pop as the Everly Brothers and Cat Stevens," Tommy says.

"They're all in the hall, and Prine fits as well as any of them."

He, adds, parenthetically: "If nothing else, Prine's sometimes abrasive, cut-through-the-crap

work certainly beats closer to the heart of rock and roll than that of 'sensitive' inductees such as Jackson Browne and the Eagles. Ha!"

Tommy isn't the only one who disagrees with me. Among the others is apparently Prine himself.

"I started out in the folk music world only because of the way my songs were written and performed, with just an acoustic guitar, but I always related to the rock and roll lifestyle," Billboard quotes him as saying. "So that'd be great to be in there, no matter what year they want to put me in."

That doesn't dissuade me. Of course, he's not going to say he wants no part of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Why pick a fight with people purporting to honor you?

That's my job.

By the way, Prine's also up for another induction, into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. My comment to that hall is much shorter:

What took you so long?

Feeding the birds? It's for the squirrels

I've taken up a new hobby in the past couple of years — feeding the squirrels.

Yep, you read that right. Well, I feed squirrels. Via bird feeders.

It didn't start out that way, and I did everything possible to prevent it. I wanted a distraction from my day, and I wanted that distraction to bring a smile to my face. So I decided to get bird feeders.

If you've ever ventured into that hobby, you know that quality bird feeders aren't cheap. Of course, being penny-wise, I bought what I thought was a middle-of-the-road feeder to hang on shepherd's hooks with the thought, 'There's no way a squirrel can climb that slick pole to get to the feeder.'

Go ahead and laugh. I know you want to. I was wrong.

Boy, was I wrong. Those dang things climb up the pole, reach over and grab the feeder and hang upside down to get to the seed.

I was beating my head against a wall after an obviously large family of squirrels and their extended families decided my bird feeders were easy targets when food in the woods was scarce. Or maybe they're just lazy. Who knows.

The first few weeks I'm not even sure any birds were able to get to the feeder because of all the squirrels that scurried up those metal poles, jumped over to the feeder and chomped away as the feeder swung back and forth. And it amazed me how well they recovered from jumping off the feeder as I ran out the door screaming at them.

I read up on the subject — something I had done prior to this new hobby, but I was certain squirrels were not going to bring me the same frustration others had experienced — and tried a few tricks.



First place award

Best Personal Humor Column Group IV

Becky Campbell – Johnson City Press

First was spreading petroleum jelly on the pole holding the feeders. All that seemed to do was get gunk on my hands, and it didn't do a thing to slow those darn squirrels down. I tried cooking spray. That didn't really help either. I never tried the slinky trick, which is supposed to prevent the squirrel from getting up the pole because they grab onto the slinky and just bounce up and down with the slinky. The video on Facebook is pretty convincing, but I never tried that method.

I did, however, buy "squirrel proof" feeders.

Did you know that squirrels can defeat "squirrel proof" bird feeders? I have one that's shaped like a red barn. It has little triggers on the perch so if something heavier than a large bird grabs hold, it pushes down and closes the little food holes. Well, squirrels know how to hang from the bottom of that feeder and get their stinking faces into that hole.

Don't even get me started on the tray feeders.

Yes, they're great for bigger birds like blue jays, doves and mockingbirds. But that thing is just a squirrel's seed buffet. They sit right in the middle and stuff themselves as fast as they can. I even put up squirrel feeders, and while they like those — particularly the Adirondack chair in which they sit

back and chill while munching on a corn roll — they seem to like the bird seed better.

The only feeders the squirrels don't seem attracted to are finch socks and hummingbird feeders. So, the hobby I took up to lessen my stress was just shooting my blood pressure up every time I saw a squirrel.

Finally, I decided to let it go. If the birds are OK with squirrels joining in the feast, well, who am I to say no? I won't let the squirrels dissuade me from continuing my bird feeding hobby. In fact, I've come to even enjoy those four-legged creatures as well. Actually, it's pretty darn funny to watch their ingenuity in figuring out a new way to outsmart me. I guess it doesn't take much.

Even with all the trickery I tried, I just couldn't keep the squirrels away.

The birds did come, and I can count on a wide variety every morning and evening — cardinals, blue jays, mockingbirds, doves, downy woodpeckers and finches of all types. And yes, they bring a smile to my face. As for the squirrels, I gave up. I'll continue to fill the bird feeders and "allow" the squirrels to keep coming to the buffet.

But if they start inviting the bears, then the bird feeders will go away.

The photographer expressed great care during the selection process. An impactful lead-in image followed by a significant detail that emphasizes one of the many challenges faced.

2. The Nashville Ledger
Lyle Graves

3. Southern Standard, McMinnville
Lacy Garrison

4. Herald-Citizen,



First place award

Best Sports Photograph Group IV

Joy Kimbrough – The Daily Times, Maryville

Unable to stem the Tide

Fast start helps No. 1 Alabama trounce Vols

MEMPHIS — Alabama's offense rolled in a dominant performance against the Tennessee Volunteers on Saturday night. The Tide's offense was efficient and accurate, leading to a decisive victory in this annual rivalry game.

The Crimson Tide rolled to a 35-10 victory over the Volunteers in the Iron Bowl. Alabama's offense was efficient and accurate, leading to a decisive victory in this annual rivalry game.

The game was a dominant performance for Alabama, who rolled to a 35-10 victory over the Volunteers. The Tide's offense was efficient and accurate, leading to a decisive victory in this annual rivalry game.



Vols must do it the right way

This was always going to be a hard game to win. Even the most optimistic fans had to know that. The Volunteers had a long way to go to catch up to the Crimson Tide. The game was a dominant performance for Alabama, who rolled to a 35-10 victory over the Volunteers.

The game was a dominant performance for Alabama, who rolled to a 35-10 victory over the Volunteers. The Tide's offense was efficient and accurate, leading to a decisive victory in this annual rivalry game.

Cookeville
Jim Herrin

5. The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
Helen Comer

Group IV

1 Cleveland Daily Banner
Autumn Hughes

Judge's comments: Hilarious photo and a good catch. Love the similar expression on both of their faces.

2. Johnson City Press
Joe Avento

3. The Greeneville Sun
Sarah R. Gregory

4. Kingsport Times-News

Jeff Bobo

5. Johnson City Press
Brandon Paykamian

Group V

1. The Tennessean, Nashville
Larry McCormack

Judge's comments: Strong opening image to the series, great access, interesting subject, strong closing portrait.

2. News Sentinel, Knoxville
Saul Young, Brianna Paciorka, Calvin Mattheis, J. Miles Cary

3. Chattanooga Times Free Press
Robin Rudd

See **WINNERS**, Page 27

WINNERS, from Page 24

1. The Wilson Post, Lebanon
Dallus Whitfield

Judge's comments: This should be a feature photo contest poster! Great photos.

2. The Tullahoma News
Zach Birdsong

3. Farragutpress, Farragut
Michelle Hollenhead

4. Murfreesboro Post
Jason Reynolds

5. Roane County News, Kingston
Staff

Group III

1. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville
Courtney Pedroza

Judge's comments: A story many would consider difficult to tackle.

When a simple period is plenty

Relax, please. No exclamation points were harmed in the production of this column.

In fact, this might be the only thing you'll ever read about exclamation points that doesn't actually contain one. I believe that Sunday should be a day of rest for the overworked punctuation mark, the one I like to call "the period in a party hat."

Last week The Wall Street Journal featured an excellent article by Katherine Bindley under the headline: "The Tyranny of the Exclamation Point ...". The essence of the piece was in the subhead: "We have become addicted to the exclamation point in emails and texts."

Lordy, yes.

Nowadays, young people think you are being mean or insensitive if you don't pepper your texts and emails with exclamation points. A mere period at the end of an upbeat sentence is considered rude. Excuse me, but this is mass hysteria.

Every time I see an exclamation point, I want to pound it down with a hammer. This becomes expensive when you are dealing with computer screens.

Hopefully, things will begin to cool down soon.

When I was a young man, the exclamation point was a back-of-the-drawer tool that you only pulled out for special jobs. I think a good rule of thumb is you should use an exclamation point about as often as you throw confetti.

I once told a young reporter to stop using exclamation points in



First place award

Best Personal Humor Column Group V

Mark Kennedy –
Chattanooga Times Free Press

her copy. In fact, I gave her a book of paper matches and told her they represented her lifetime supply of exclamation points.

Every time she used an exclamation point, she was to remove one of the matches and toss it away.

"Then, when they are gone, they're gone, kid," I said.

I hope our talk lives on in her mental archive of "crazy-things-editors-have-said." All journalists keep such a mental log. For instance, I once heard an editor caution someone, "Don't turn a deaf eye to that."

Professional writers and editors have a reverence for punctuation that borders on obsession. There are anguished debates about proliferation of long dashes in place of commas. Locally, whether or not to hyphenate Choo-Choo in Chattanooga Choo-Choo was the subtext of a long-running copy-desk civil war.

But back to today's topic: the exclamation reclamation.

Consider that the exclamation point might actually be embarrassed by its current misappropriation. It is easily the most emotionally fragile punctuation mark we have. What other symbol is so

prone to hysterics, so riddled with anxiety, so predictive of swear words and tears?

Pity the poor exclamation point. After all the overuse, it may require years of therapy to regroup. What if it turns out that an exclamation point is really just a question mark with an eating disorder? How will you all feel then, people? Ashamed, I hope.

Alas, I fear the population will not easily give up its exclamation point addiction. In the words of the poet: "Turn down for what?"

A life without exclamation points would no doubt be chilling to some people.

Sometimes, I think I'd like to lock a bunch of real estate copy writers in a room with no exclamation points and watch them descend into madness: "Gorgeous view. Brand new roof. Award-winning schools."

See? Painful, isn't it?

Still, part of me fears that the worst is yet to come. What if the exclamation point is just a gateway drug to a vastly more diabolical addiction: ALL CAPS.

OMG, DELIVER US FROM THAT EVIL.



First place award

Best Sports Photograph Group V

Robin Rudd –
Chattanooga Times Free Press



Meigs County softball players embrace after the final out of the program's third state championship in three years in Murfreesboro.

Continued supremacy

Meigs adds Class AA softball state title

BY KELLEY SHIMONE
Staff Writer

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. — Meigs County won its third consecutive state TSSAA state softball championship Friday at Sturgis No. 2. And while coach Jeff Davis said it's not really the same as the first win, it's awesome, he said —

The Lady Patriots had forced a second final by defeating Meigs 3-1. At the end of last season, after helping Meigs win its second consecutive Class A title, pitcher Ashley Rogers was asked how many innings she had left in her arm. "I probably have zero," was her answer.

So could she have gone for more this time? "That one felt great," Rudd said. "I had been struggling a little bit at the state tournament. I wanted to go out at least contributing something



WINNERS, from Page 26

Best Sports Photograph Group I

1. Chester County Independent, Henderson
James Webb

Judge's comments: Great action shot with solid composition and juxtaposition.

2. The Leader, Covington
Jeff Ireland
3. Carroll County News-Leader, Huntingdon
Jim Shiner

4. Brownsville Press
Chris McCain, Oscar Esquivias
5. Carthage Courier
Mary Baker

Group II

1. The Wilson Post, Lebanon
Steve Wampler

Judge's comments: This photo has every quality I like to see in a team-sport image. A dramatic moment, displaying athleticism, great facial expressions in a renaissance painting-like motif, a good edit, and ball in frame.

2. The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
Dale Gentry
3. Hendersonville Standard
Don McPeak
4. Murfreesboro Post
Ethan Scott
5. Farragutpress, Farragut
Carlos Reveiz, Ashley Wathen

Group III

1. Southern Standard, McMinnville
Jeffery Simmons
2. Shelbyville Times-Gazette

- Chris Siers
3. Southern Standard, McMinnville
Jacob Dodd
4. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville
Ben Craven
5. Shelbyville Times-Gazette
Chris Siers

Group IV

1. The Daily Times, Maryville
Joy Kimbrough
2. Johnson City Press
Tanner Cook

3. Bristol Herald-Courier
David Crigger
4. The Daily Times, Maryville
Tom Sherlin
5. Citizen Tribune, Morristown
Shilante Carter

Group V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press
Robin Rudd

Judge's comments: Solid post game celebration photo with good

Celebrating Sunshine Week: One open records request was a game-changer for Town of Mason

This week, journalists all over the country are celebrating Sunshine Week, a national initiative spearheaded by the American Society of News Editors to educate the public about the importance of open government and the dangers of excessive and unnecessary secrecy.

You may not think this is an important issue, but having a transparent government is important on every level.

Here in Tipton County, the members of our news team attend public meetings where major decisions that affect you are made. Under Freedom of Information laws, we can make requests to inspect and obtain documents – such as tax forms and personnel files, meeting agendas and information related to decision-making – to help us in our ultimate duty as the government’s watchdogs.

Sometimes the access to this information exposes wrongdoing.

Three years ago, several new Mason aldermen were frustrated with the mayor and his wife, who was a municipal employee, because they were not given access to employee records. They were curious about the public works superintendent’s salary because they were told he was making quite a bit more than the small town’s other employees.

Doing our due diligence, we requested salary information for every Mason employee. The mayor’s wife begrudgingly handed it over, asking what we planned to do with it.

At the time, we just wanted to make sure they’d comply with a Freedom of Information Act



First place award

Best Personal Column Group I

Echo Day – The Leader, Covington

request. If they didn’t, then we’d plan our next move, but when we saw the figures we knew something wasn’t right.

The original report seemed to indicate the superintendent was making a lower wage than the mayor’s wife, who was an employee in his department. We ran a story about this, not knowing we’d opened Pandora’s box.

That week, a utility clerk, whom we’d later come to understand was dating the superintendent, told us we had the figures incorrect. She let us know he was not only paid an hourly wage but a salary from two other departments.

It was at this point Brian Blackley, our now former publisher, and I realized something definitely wasn’t right.

At best, we had an erroneous report from a municipal employee. At worst, somebody was lying about the town’s finances or stealing from taxpayers.

From there, we requested W-2s and found the superintendent in a town of 1,000 people was not just making more than every town employee, he was, in fact, making more than the director of the public works department for the entire county.

What followed were three dozen resignations, an investigation by the district attorney’s office

and the state comptroller, the superintendent’s indictment for theft and official misconduct related to unauthorized overtime, termination of several contracted employees, suspicions of theft by other employees and a complete upheaval for the board and the town’s finances.

Thanks to their shoddy book-keeping, more indictments could not follow his.

Three years later, almost everyone on the board is new, there are new department heads, new employees, new policies and procedures in place to keep employees honest and restore the community’s faith in its government. They are trying to rebuild their reputation and be as transparent as they know how to be.

All of this resulted from one simple request for records, which is the public’s right, and the media’s right, thanks to Sunshine Laws.

Open government is important, and not just on the federal or state level. Participation in local government is, in the words of Pam Fine, Knight Chair for News, Leadership and Community, the greatest ammunition we have against government secrecy.

Let the Town of Mason’s example be a reminder that one request can be a game-changer.

Little moments a constant reminder: ‘I am fearfully and wonderfully made’



First place award

Best Personal Column Group III

Chris Menees – Union City Daily Messenger

Little moments a constant reminder: ‘I am fearfully and wonderfully made’

It’s often the little things that touch our hearts and lives in the biggest ways.

A week ago, our family was blessed with the birth of my granddaughter’s twin girls.

The girls didn’t want to wait until their due date in early August, though, and made their big arrivals late Friday night at a tiny 3 pounds, 10 ounces and 3 pounds, 4 ounces.

They look so fragile in their incubators in the neonatal intensive care unit.

But the moment I placed my hand through the incubator doors and they grasped my pinky finger with their tiny wrinkled hands, they had a hold on my heart as well.

As little as the girls are right now, I’m constantly reminded that our God is bigger.

In fact, God has made His presence known many times, and in many ways, in the past week.

Some people call them “God winks” — those moments when we feel touched by Him in a unique and unexpected way, reminding us that He’s always with us.

For me, the first one came last Friday night, not long after the babies were born.

I had “a moment” over a Coke bottle. Yes, a Coke bottle, of all things.

We had been sitting in the hospital waiting room with family a couple hours when my husband grabbed a soft drink from a vending machine. At the time, Cherry Coke was one of those “name” bottles featuring a girl’s first name on the label.

Thirty minutes later, as we stood in my granddaughter’s hospital room, she pointed to the bottle and said, “The name.” It was only then that we noticed “Michelle” — which is the middle name of the oldest (by 14 minutes) twin girl, as well as my middle name.

The name means “gift from God” — and both baby girls are exactly that.

Things like that don’t “just happen.” It was a God thing.

But He wasn’t done reminding me of His constant presence.

I had another “moment” reading my Sunday School lesson last Saturday.

I know, I know. You can’t help but be reminded of God when you’re reading a Sunday School lesson. But it wasn’t just any lesson. Last Sunday’s children’s lesson focused on Psalm 139:14 — “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” The verse before that tells how God created us and formed us in our mothers’ wombs.

It’s no coincidence that those verses popped up on that particular day.

As I read and re-read the verse last weekend, I kept thinking of those tiny babies lying in their incubators. Although they are small, they have the most perfect little faces and fingers and toes. They are, truly, wonderfully made by our Creator.

Even now as I think about that verse, other images from the past week flash through my mind.

I can still see my granddaughter’s 4-year-old son standing beside his baby sisters’ incubators (or “containers,” as he calls them), ever so softly singing the first line of “Baby Mine” and whispering, “I love you. I’ll always be here.”

There are countless images of the babies’ mama and daddy gently cradling them against their chests, allowing the girls to hear their heartbeats as they form that special bond while being weaned off medical equipment.

Each moment is a reminder from God that He is in control and that His love is unending.

And, because of that, I will praise Him — for I, too, am fearfully and wonderfully made.

WINNERS, from Page 27

emotion and composition.

2. **The Tennessean, Nashville**
Andrew Nelles

3. **Chattanooga Times Free Press**
C.B. Schmelter

Best Special Issue or Section

Group I

1. **The Leader, Covington**
Echo Day, Alan Ervin, Jeff Ireland, Andy Posey, Carbo Cousar

2. **The Courier News, Clinton**
Kim Webber, Ken Leinart, Gale Engelke

3. **The LaFollette Press**
Crystal Huskey

4. **Independent Appeal, Selmer**
Staff

5. **The Advocate & Democrat, Sweetwater**
Tommy Millsaps, Jessica Kent, Michael Thomason, Marie Millsaps, Sharon Livingston

Group II

1. **The Standard Banner,**
See **WINNERS**, Page 30

Remembering Mister Rogers

Hi, neighbor: After 40 years of interviewing hundreds of TV and film celebrities, mostly over the phone, I happily confess that none touched me as deeply as the gentle Fred Rogers, known to millions as Mister Rogers.

The modest man behind the long-running children's TV series left this world 15 years ago on Feb. 27, 2003, but his legacy of nurturing continues to bless youngsters today just as he did when "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" premiered 50 years ago on Feb. 19, 1968.

Among his most famous words likely were these: "There's no person in the whole world like you, and I like you just the way you are."

To honor, perhaps the greatest children's communicator three generations have known, PBS debuts "Mister Rogers: It's You I Like," at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 6, on Nashville public television station, NPT-Channel 8.

Michael Keaton, who worked as a stagehand and appeared on the series in the 1970s, hosts the special. Joe Negri (Handyman Negri), David Newell (Mr. McFeely) and Joanne Rogers, Mister Rogers' widow, will share their personal stories.

On March 23, the dedication ceremony for the first date of issue of the Mister Rogers Forever stamp will be held in Pittsburgh, Pa., where "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" was filmed and first went on the air.

A documentary film, "Won't You Be My Neighbor," will be released in June, and, to round out the golden anniversary year of the TV series, Tom Hanks plans to step into Mister Rogers' sneakers this fall and make a feature film, "You Are My Friend."

I suspect Mister Rogers' reaction to all the fanfare would be simply a smile.

I was fortunate to chat with him about his life and career in 1993 and 1998. The first words I heard over the phone were these: "Hello, Ken: This is Fred Rogers. How are you today?"

His honesty, warmth and sincerity came through like that of an old best friend. As he responded to my questions about his life and career, it was as if we were sitting face to face across a table.

Fred Rogers was raised an only child in an affluent family in Latrobe, Pa. He shared with me



First place award

Best Personal Column Group II

Ken Beck –
The Wilson Post, Lebanon

that he was a lonely boy with an overprotective mother and that he struggled with allergies. What pulled him through those early years was his empathetic grandfather, who told him he was unique for simply being himself.

"My grandfather was very important to me. He seemed to know how to help me feel good about who I was," said Mister Rogers. "We would visit him on his farm every Sunday. He would let me do all sorts of things, climb brick walls. Where most people would say, 'Oh, you're gonna fall and get hurt,' he would say, 'Let the kid walk on the wall.' His name was Fred McFeely."

As for how he sought to present himself when the first of nearly 900 episodes of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" went on the air, the ordained Presbyterian minister said, "I just wanted to give myself. I felt this was an adult neighbor who was offering a half-hour a day of his attention to those who wanted to be with him. I think the greatest gift we can give anybody is the gift of our honest self."

Mister Rogers told me he remembered the very first time he saw a show on TV. It was 1951. He recalled, "I watched this new thing called television, and I saw people throwing pies in each other's faces, and I thought this could be a wonderful medium for the broadcast of grace throughout this land, and I would like to try my hand at it ... I think I got into television because I didn't like what I saw."

He was strongly of the opinion that from generation to generation, children are the same; however, he believed it was the factors which influence them that change.

"I still think that the developmental needs of human beings remain very much the same. We all long to know that we are lovable and are capable of loving. We also long to know that those whom we care about, when they go away, they'll come back. And there're all sorts

of developmental tasks that a child must go through to have a healthy adulthood. We try to address those tasks on the 'Neighborhood' in as imaginative a way and creative a way as we know how," he said.

Mister Rogers was awarded a Presidential Medal of Freedom, a Peabody Award and scores of honorary degrees. "TV Guide" listed him as No. 35 in their list of Fifty Greatest TV Stars of All Time, and he is in the Television Hall of Fame.

But I believe what he cherished most was family, friends and the "Neighborhood" of children who gleaned positive feelings of self-worth through his words of kindness.

Back in the mid-1990s, Mister Rogers received 5,000 letters a year from children and parents. He told me, "I sign them all, and I read them all. Some are so personal, I actually answer them by hand."

If you think he sounds too good to be true, I believe you would be mistaken.

David Newell, who played Mr. McFeely on "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" for more than 30 years, told me of his friend, "What you see is what you get. That is who he is. Fred is not an actor. He's a communicator. He listens. He gives you his undivided attention with everybody."

Indeed, during my initial conversation with Mister Rogers in 1993, he asked about my children, who at the time were in elementary and junior high school.

Just before we hung up, he said, "Now, Ken, when you get home tonight, I want you to hug your children for me and tell them how fortunate they are to have you for a father."

I obeyed Mister Rogers' commands, and now, 25 years later, as I reread his instructions, tears flow, and I am thankful for an extraordinary man named Fred Rogers and pray that I can come close to being the kind of grandfather that he had as a boy.

A Christmas moment at the checkout counter



First place award

Best Personal Column Group IV

Cameron Judd –
The Greeneville Sun

About three years ago I spent several months working a cash register in a retail discount store. The closer Christmas came, the busier things got at the registers and the more people poured through the doors.

Many were families, and sometimes you could tell which were just looking to top off their Christmas stockings with low-cost extra filler items, and which probably were there because their situations required them to scrimp every dollar.

I remember a December evening when a family who appeared probably to be of limited means (based purely on my perception at the time) came through my checkout line. Five or six people as I recall, ranging from the youngest, a girl of maybe five, at the front of the family line, on through some older kids to the parents at the end of the line.

The little girl, a sweet and appealing child with a soft voice and sincere gaze, came close to the counter and carefully, even sneakily, handed me the item she was going to buy. It was a simple woman's hairbrush, total cost \$1.

She asked me to ring it up and quickly double-bag it. She kept glancing back to where her parents were. They were talking to one another at that moment and not looking back at her.

Double-bag a lightweight plastic hairbrush? A heavy gallon of bottled water, maybe, but a hairbrush weighing a few ounces at most?

I was almost ready to tell her I really shouldn't do that because we were encouraged not to use up our supply of bags too quickly during the Christmas season — and then something came to me.

I comprehended why the little girl wanted that humble brush double-bagged. And for some reason — my mood that day? the sincere sweetness of the little girl?

I don't know — it hit me emotionally to the point I almost got tears in my eyes on the spot. Later, alone and thinking back on it, I actually did.

I had realized that sweet little child was buying that brush for her mother's Christmas gift, and she wanted it to be well-hidden when she carried it out to their car, so she could surprise her with it when the big morning came.

One dollar for a priceless gift

A \$1 plastic hairbrush. A meager gift to most of us, but not the eyes and heart of that child from a family that probably had to watch its pennies closely. She was doing what she could do for a mother she loved.

I double-bagged that hairbrush gladly and handed it over to the little girl, who rewarded me with a smile that seemed to brighten the entire store.

That extra bag was not wasted.

I hope that, when that little girl's mother received that hairbrush Christmas morning that year, she realized that its worth far exceeded the \$1 it had cost — that extra worth added by the obvious love with which it was given.

I'm betting that mother understood it completely. Maybe got a tear or two in her own eyes, and hugged that wonderful child who had given a fine Christmas present to her.

Little girl, I don't know who you were or where you are now, but I want to wish you and your family the best and brightest of Christmases, and many blessings in the year ahead of us.

Thanks for coming through my checkout line that December evening and reminding me that the value that really counts doesn't always have dollar signs attached.

'God put us together'

John McFalls, 92, wakes up every morning at 6 a.m. at his ranch house off Lee Highway.

He pours himself a cup of coffee, walks his 15-year-old Shih Tzu named Chuck around the block, and then drives across town to visit with his wife, Vivian, who died on Feb. 21, 2014.

McFalls is a familiar figure to morning motorists on Bailey Avenue, who can't help but notice the sweet old man's daily visits to the Chattanooga National Cemetery.

What most of the motorists don't know about, of course, is the 74-year love story that compels McFalls' daily visits.

"People can't understand why I like to go see Vivian every morning," McFalls said. "Well, we talk. We sing together. We've been doing that for 74 years.

"... I still think I'm-a looking after her. Is that crazy, or not?"

The workers at the cemetery certainly don't think he's crazy. Hardly a morning passes that one of them doesn't walk over, take off his work gloves and shake McFalls' hand. Sometimes they'll even join him in song, or read scripture while standing alongside plot 390.

"The boys down at the cemetery, they look after me," McFalls explained.

John McFalls (who goes by Jay) and his late wife, Vivian, were dirt-poor children of the Great Depression who fell in love as 15-year-olds, married at 17 and loved and cherished one another for more than 70 years before Vivian died of brain cancer four years ago.

Their bond is so strong that McFalls has chosen to ignore the wedding vow imploring newlyweds to stay together "until death do us part." To him, Vivian is still a palpable daily presence in his life. There's no "parting" to it.

To understand that, you must understand where they both came from.

McFalls was the son of a Rhea County sharecropper, the eighth of 12 children born on the cusp of the Great Depression. Poverty was so pervasive back then that people didn't even know they were poor, he said. They barely even knew they were hungry.

Before he dropped out of school



First place award

Best Personal Column Group V

Mark Kennedy –
Chattanooga Times Free Press

after seventh grade, John would come home from his one-room schoolhouse and his mother would give him a pan and tell him to go pick a "mess of wild salad." Other times, his brothers and sisters would harvest walnuts from the woods to survive.

When he was 11, John was "farmed out" to another family as a field worker for 75 cents a day. By the time he was 15, he left home and came to Chattanooga, where he lied about his age and got a job working at a hosiery mill on Main Street.

One day at work, he saw a pretty, 15-year-old girl eating her lunch on a concrete slab. She was taking bites from a sandwich while sipping from an orange soda, which she'd spent her last nickel to buy.

With his rough country manners, McFalls thought nothing of walking up to the young woman, bending over and stealing a sip of her drink.

Unhappy, Vivian Pell gritted her teeth and frowned at him.

No softie, she had lived a hard-scrabble life, too, moving 21 times before she was 12 and dropping out of school after seventh grade, McFalls said. They immediately formed a bond.

"And we've been together ever since," McFalls said, refusing to use the past tense.

In the early 1940s, John would walk from his dollar-a-week boarding house in Highland Park down to Vivian's apartment on Fourth Street (site of a present-day Unum parking lot). Then they would stroll back to Warner Park, where Vivian would lace up her roller skates. They were just children, really, yet both living on their own.

If they were flush — with, say, 75 cents between them — they'd continue their date at a downtown drug store, where they'd split a BLT sandwich and a malted milk

with two straws.

In the 1940s, John did what most men of his age did — he got married and volunteered for World War II. He spent two and a half years in the Pacific theater. After the war, John got a job in Ohio making car motors, but Vivian soon begged him to move back South, and after a year the couple returned to Chattanooga.

"When I come back out of the Army, we didn't have anything," McFalls recalled. The two were so poor all their belongings fit into a sack.

In their quiet hours, Vivian would breathe hope into her husband.

She'd say, "Jay, one of these days we're going to have a home. We're going to be different. I know where you come from, you know where I come from. But we're going to be different."

John found work at Foundry Pattern Service making patterns for water valves and auto parts. He loved the work, but one day his boss told him his seventh-grade education made the job unsustainable for him.

"It broke my heart," he said. "I could do things with my hands, but I didn't have anything in my head."

Back home, his young wife wasn't going to let her husband give up without a fight.

"Jay, you keep pushing," she said. "I'll go back and get my GED, and we'll learn together."

So, that's exactly what they did. A few weeks later, touched by the couples' determination, John's boss told him not to worry.

"He said, 'Go home and tell Vivian that as long as I've got a shop, you've got a job.'"

In the 1940s and 1950s, John and Vivian made their contribution to the baby boom generation, welcoming three children in 12

See **KENNEDY**, Page 31

WINNERS, from Page 28

Jeferson City

Steve Marion, Kimary Clelland, Dale Gentry, Gayle Page, Shane Cook, Kim Cook

Judge's Comments: Your "Community" tab was head and shoulders above the rest of the submissions. From cover to cover the piece was well written and designed. The flow of the book worked well for the reader, whether they lived in the area or first-time visitor. Tons of locally written articles on topics that appeal to most all readers. Advertising was great as well in addition to beautiful photos throughout the book.

2. Hendersonville Standard

Zack Owensby, Cassandra Newman, Randy Moore, Ginger McClendon, Mary Anne Ferrell, Sherry Mitchell, Jennie Slowey

3. The Wilson Post, Lebanon

Brian Harville, Sabrina Garrett, Zack Owensby, Carrie Tomlin, Dallus Whitfield, Mary Anne Ferrell

4. The Lebanon Democrat

Charity Toombs, Jordan Hunter, Kyndyll Lackey

5. farragutpress, Farragut

farragutpress Editorial, farragutpress Production

Group III

1. The Daily Herald, Columbia Staff

Judge's Comments: "Honoring 150 Years of Service" was an outstanding piece. From cover to cover, this milestone keepsake was well planned, designed, written and executed. In addition, your photographs were consistent throughout the book and excellent.

2. The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro

Mealand Ragland-Hudgins, Nancy DeGennaro, Helen Comer, Scott Broden, Mariah Timms, Holly Meyer

3. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville Staff

4. Shelbyville Times-Gazette

Terence Corrigan, Sadie Fowl-

er, Mark McGee, Amy Todd, John I. Carney

5. Union City Daily Messenger Kevin Weaks

Group IV

1. Bristol Herald Courier

Nate Hubbard, George Stone, Tim Hayes, Allen Gregory, Missy Hale

2. Johnson City Press Staff

3. The Daily Times, Maryville Staff

Group V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Stephen Hargis, Matt McClane

3. The Tennessean, Nashville Design Studio Staff

Best Website

Group I

1. Smithville Review

Duane Sherrill, Angie Meadows, Nikki Childers

2. The Leader, Covington Echo Day, Jeff Ireland

3. Cheatham County Exchange, PleasantView

Jennie Slowey, Nick Gould, Elliott Wenzler, Ivan Aronin, Michael Gallagher, Casey Patrick, Dave Gould

4. Portland Sun, Gallatin

Jennie Slowey, Sherry Mitchell, Sam Gould, Zach Womble, Dave Gould

5. Carroll County News-Leader, Huntingdon

Daniel Richardson, Lindsey Bell

Group II

1. Murfreesboro Post

Jennie Slowey, Monte Hale, Michael Gallagher, Nicholas Gould, Ivan Aronin, Jason Reynolds

2. Hendersonville Standard

Jennie Slowey, Sam Gould, Sherry Mitchell, Tena Lee, Zach Womble, Michael Gallagher, Mary Anne Ferrell

See **WINNERS**, Page 31



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Randy Boyd, UT interim president, presents first-place plaque for Best Education Reporting, Group II, to Sinclaire Sparkman, The Lebanon Democrat.



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Randy Boyd (left), UT interim president, presents first-place plaque for Best Business Coverage, Group I, to David Laprad, Hamilton County Herald, Chattanooga.



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Doug Horne, TPA president, presents first-place plaque for Best News Photograph, Group V, to Cody Schmelter, Chattanooga Times Free Press.



Photo by Donn Jones, Donn Jones Photography

Doug Horne, TPA president, presents first-place plaque for Best News Reporting, Group V, to Natalie Alund, The Tennessean, Nashville.

KENNEDY, from Page 30

years, two girls and a boy.

Eventually, they made good on Vivian's vow that they would have a permanent home. The couple bought a lot in a 1960s era subdivision off Lee Highway called Midfield Acres, where the neighborhood motto is "Cooperate, Appreciate, Beautify." The brick ranch house in the suburbs was a stretch purchase for the couple, but John had never seen his wife as proud as the day they moved into that new house.

The next happiest day was a few decades later when Vivian called John aside and showed him the papers from their paid-off mortgage. The girl who had been forced to move 21 times by age 12 wasn't going anywhere.

The McFallses pinched pennies, never letting on to their children

that sometimes they had to juggle bills month to month. They both agreed that it's impossible to "sacrifice" for their children; providing the best life possible was a joy, not a sacrifice.

At 62, after the children had all left the house, John retired from work.

"I had gotten up for work every morning for 51 years," he said. "I just thought it was time."

The couple settled into retirement with a shared commitment to make one another comfortable. They were different people with different interests, yet they made it work.

John liked to go to bed at 9 p.m. and Vivian liked to stay up to watch "The Tonight Show" and sleep late in the morning. Yet every night they would meet at the kitchen sink before John went off to bed to express their deep love

and appreciation for one another.

In 2013, when Vivian was diagnosed with a brain tumor, the doctor said she might live a few weeks. Yet she lingered for 11 months.

John refused to admit her to a nursing home and tended to her at home, with the help of some heroic hospice nurses.

In her final days, when she could barely talk, Vivian admonished her husband.

"Jay, please promise me two things," she said, according to her husband. "Promise me that you won't give Chuck away and that you won't stop being Jay. ... Just keep being Jay."

The day she died, McFalls remembered her last breath.

He counted in his head, waiting hopefully for her to inhale.

10 seconds ... 15 seconds ... 25 seconds

Eventually, he stopped counting.

On Sundays, John McFalls arrives at the Chattanooga National Cemetery with a lawn chair in tow. It's his day to linger at his wife's graveside.

"Sometimes I stay an hour and a half or more," he said. "I sing a song or two. We worship together. Usually two or three people show up and walk over."

One Sunday, a woman walked over and started to vent.

"I understand you come here every day," she said, her hands on her hips. "Don't you realize everybody here is dead?"

McFalls turned to the woman and felt his response gathering like steam in his brain.

"Ain't nobody dead here," he said, in no mood to be lectured.

Next, he gestured across the cemetery, where more than 50,000

souls are laid to rest.

"Just look," he said. "Every one of these [gravestones] is a story. It represents a life. Somebody's mamma. Somebody's daddy. Somebody's brother.

"... Somebody's beloved wife."

McFalls' favorite song to sing to Vivian at the cemetery is a 1969 song called "I Love You Because ..." recorded by singer Carl Smith.

One of the verses goes like this: "No matter what the world may say about me,

I know your love will always see me through.

I love you for the way you never doubt me.

But most of all I love you 'cause you're you."

"She didn't leave," McFalls said. "She's still part of me, and I'm still part of her. There was no space between us. God put us together."

WINNERS, from Page 30

3. The Connection, Springfield

Cheri Reeves, Michael Gallagher, Jennie Slowey, Sam Gould, Phil Stauder, Dave Gould

4. The Elk Valley Times, Fayetteville

Sandy Williams, Lucy Williams

5. The Herald Chronicle, Winchester

Linda Stacy, Sam Cowan, Brian Justice, Seth Byrd

Group III

1. The Newport Plain Talk

Seth Butler, Duay O'Neil, Matt Winter, Alison Brooks, Dennis

Barker Jr.

2. The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville

Staff

3. The Daily Herald, Columbia

Staff

4. Crossville Chronicle

Caroline Selby, Missy Wattenbarger, Cheryl Duncan, Rebekah K. Bohannon Beeler, Gary Nelson, Michael R. Moser, Michael Lindsay

5. Herald-Citizen, Cookeville

Don Foy, Lindsay McReynolds, Kate Cook, Scott Wilson

Group IV

1. Bristol Herald Courier

Don Foy, Lindsay McReynolds, Kate Cook, Scott Wilson

Judge's Comments: Clean and easy to use, with a clear hierarchy to the content with a mix of video, audio and other assets. When used in a long form story "Isaiah 117 House" provides a comprehensive reader experience.

2. The Greeneville Sun

Brian Cutshall, Sarah R. Gregory, Michael R. Reneau, Kelly Pickering

3. Citizen Tribune, Morristown

Seth Horn, John Gullion, Jean Henderson, Cliff Hightower, Sherry Collins, Jan Ramsey, Jen-

na Lawson

4. Kingsport Times-News

Rain Smith

5. Cleveland Daily Banner

Trena Bailey, Carrie Pettit, Patty Hawkins, Donna Kaylor, Gwen Swiger, Autumn Hughes, Ralph Baldwin

Group V

1. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Staff

Judge's Comments: The standout winner in this category, with a sense of flavor, attention to detail and projects that dive deep.

2. News Sentinel, Knoxville

Staff

3. The Tennessean, Nashville

Staff

Sunday Editions

1. The Tennessean, Nashville

Design Studio Staff

2. News Sentinel, Knoxville

Staff

3. Chattanooga Times Free Press

Staff

4. The Daily Times, Maryville

Staff

5. Bristol Herald Courier

Staff

2019 Headline Writing Winners

Circulation Group I:
The Courier News, Clinton

The Courier News 75¢
Wednesday, April 11, 2018

Other States' newspaper of choice in Clinton, Tennessee • Volume 121 Issue 26

No taxation without relaxation

Six bucks and a jar of peanut butter

HEART BREAKER

Knox West pulls out 13-7 win from Clinton in OT



Circulation Group II:
The Tullahoma News

THE NEWS

Pigs squeal on pot growing operation
Deputies seize plants worth \$100K



Planning commission passes gas

Community throws animal shelter a bone
Call for food donations gets results

Circ. Group III: **Southern Standard, McMinnville**

Southern Standard

Hot wheels



Those are the brakes



BUZZING WITH EXCITEMENT

Hobby great for bee-ginners



Circulation Group IV:
Bristol Herald Courier

BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

PANHANDLING



Begs the question: To give or not to give?

Ooze and ahs

12-year-old entrepreneur bringing 'slime' convention to



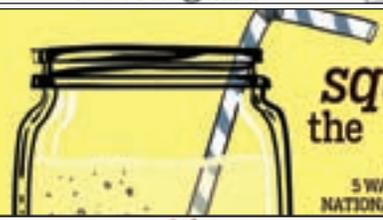
BREWS & MOOS

Brewery gives spent grains as cow feed to farm that supplies beef for brewery

Circulation Group V:
Chattanooga Times Free Press

Fixin' to be BILINGUAL

Yes, it's possible to speak Southern and English



squeeze the DAY

5 WAYS TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL LEMONADE DAY

CHILLY DOGS