

INSIDE

Vass: Time to close generation gaps

Page 2

News

Page 4

Tracks

Page 5

Reader trust in local news is risky business

Page 6

TPA joins with Paulson on '1 for All Campaign'

Page 7

Zinser: NLRB has final OT rule for salary exemption

Page 8

2019-2020 TPA chairs and committees announced

Page 9

Henninger says farewell

Page 10

Obituaries

Page 11

2020 TPA Winter Convention set for Feb. 12-13 in Nashville

ROBYN GENTILE
Tennessee Press Association
November 10, 2019

The Tennessee Press Association's 2020 Winter Convention will again be a two-day, one-night event, and it will focus on the senatorial candidates, TPA business, government affairs and students. The convention will return to the DoubleTree Hotel on Fourth Avenue in downtown Nashville, Feb. 12-13.

Opening Reception—legislators invited

Members of the Tennessee General Assembly will be invited to attend the Feb. 12 convention opening reception; however, the TPA Government Affairs Committee also asks you to extend a personal invitation to your state legislators and to plan to attend yourself.

Governor Bill Lee invited to be luncheon speaker

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee has been invited to deliver the traditional Governor's address to



TPA file photo

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee spoke at the 2019 TPA Winter Convention and has been invited back to be keynote speaker for the 2020 Convention luncheon.

TPA members during the Thursday luncheon for members and students, but at press time had not yet confirmed.

Senatorial Candidate Forum

A senatorial candidate forum will be held on Thursday, Feb. 13. Other

sessions for the breakfast and morning will be announced by Dec. 12.

The Tennessee Press Association Foundation has provided funding for 40 students to attend the convention on Feb. 13.

Convention attendees may make hotel reservations directly with

the DoubleTree by calling (800) 222-8733. The TPA rate is \$239 plus tax and parking per night. The deadline for hotel reservations is Jan. 8. Registration materials will be available online at www.tnpress.com on Dec. 12.

Convention schedule: Wednesday, Feb. 12

1 p.m. TPA Government Affairs Committee Meeting

2 p.m. TPA Board of Directors Meeting & Concurrent Business Session

3 p.m. TPA Foundation Board of Trustees Meeting

5 p.m. Opening Reception (all state legislators to be invited to attend)

7 p.m. Dinner on one's own

Thursday, Feb. 13

8 a.m. Breakfast, program to be announced

9:15 a.m. Program to be announced

10 a.m. Senatorial Candidate Forum

Noon Luncheon (Governor Bill Lee invited speaker)

TFP names new directors for advertising, audience development

DAVE FLESSNER
Chattanooga Times Free Press
November 1, 2019

Two news media veterans have joined the Chattanooga Times Free Press as the newspaper continues to grow and adapt across its digital and print platforms.

Scott Embry, formerly president of the digital marketing agency King & Columbus in Charleston, S.C., has been named director of advertising for the Times Free Press. Hampton Rogers, a former regional sales manager for the Gannett/USA Today Network in Texas, is the new director of audience development at the Chattanooga

newspaper.

Jeff DeLoach, president of the Times Free Press, said the new executives bring decades of diverse experience in the media industry to their new jobs and will be instrumental in continuing the digital transformation of the Times Free Press in serving readers and advertisers in the changing media landscape.

"This is our 150th year, and I feel very fortunate to be a part of our organization during such an anniversary celebration and to be adding these key individuals to our executive team," DeLoach said. "Our intention is to make sure we are doing today the things we need



Embry

to do to ensure another 150 years of serving our community."

Embry joined the Chattanooga newspaper in October after previously serving as advertising director for The Post

and Courier newspaper in Charleston, S.C. and The Fayetteville Observer in N.C. In those roles, Embry helped establish and lead two digital advertising agencies — Liberty Point Media in North Carolina and King & Columbus in South Carolina.



Rogers

A native of Bowling Green, Ky., Embry said he has always worked to be a valuable consultant to business and help with each client's overall marketing needs. Embry said a newspaper with

its online and print presence is a valuable part of that strategy.

"We want to provide our clients a solution that works and the truth is that you need a multi-media approach to be successful today,"

See **CHATTANOOGA** Page 3

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CONTACT THE MANAGING EDITOR

TPAers with suggestions, questions or comments about items in The Tennessee Press are welcome to contact the managing editor. Call 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 January 2020 issue is Tuesday, January 7.

Newspapers can reach more readers by closing gaps between generations

Journalists watching a video of a high-energy concert, led by an exuberant woman whose back-up singers mirrored her dance moves perfectly, soon were tapping their toes to “Steamy Windows,” a song they first heard decades ago.

The music was familiar. So were the singer’s signature spiky wig and raspy voice.

But not everyone was familiar with the artist.

“Who was that woman?” asked a 20-something reporter. The question drew chuckles from his colleagues in their 40s, 50s and 60s. (Oh yeah, that was Tina Turner on the screen! Pushing 70 and redefining what it means to age).

The question and reaction were among several light-hearted moments in Chuck Underwood’s “Generational Strategies for Newspapers” seminar at the Chattanooga Times Free Press earlier this fall.

TPA, the Tennessee Press Service and Tennessee Press Association Foundation offered Underwood’s training sessions for advertising and newsroom staffs in four locations — Jackson, Nashville, Chattanooga and Morristown, at no cost to members. The idea was to expand access to Underwood’s insights on how newspapers can leverage generational strategies to boost revenues and readership, which he had presented during the TPA summer convention in July.

Underwood, considered a pioneer in the field of generational study, insists that understanding generational diversity — in our workplaces and in our audiences — can make a difference in securing newspapers’ bottom lines and reader relevance.

“Journalism is the centerpiece of our democracy, and it’s not cheap to produce,” he said.

Understanding the unique and common core values of each generation, he said, is key.

The foundation of every generation is the development of shared core values, which are the result of what we are taught by our parents, teachers and faith leaders, as well as the major events we experience and witness, he said. For the first time, thanks to all kinds of advances in health care and science, the U.S. has five living generations: the Greatest Generation — 93+ years old; the



YOUR PRESIDING REPORTER

CHRIS VASS

Silent Generation — 74-92 years old; the Baby Boomers — 55 to 73 years old; GenX — 38-54 years old; and the Millennials — 18-37 years old; (the so-called Gen Z has yet to gel, Underwood warns). All of these generations have audiences — readers — newspapers can serve.

Of course, most folks appreciate the contributions of the country’s oldest generation, the Greatest Generation, which launched what became known as “America’s century.”

Not surprisingly, Underwood described the Silent Generation, which followed the Greatest Generation, as a rich source of readership and advertising opportunity. They are loyal and avid newspaper readers. Too many newspapers have squandered the opportunity this demographic presents, Underwood said.

“They will rush to content about them because they have been famously overlooked by the news media,” he said.

Just as important are the Boomers, who grew up appreciating the fact that newspapers are trustworthy. Growing up, Boomers watched a nightly ritual in their homes: TV news (on the same station every night), Dad sitting in his chair to read the paper, and Mom warning the children “Don’t bother Dad when he’s reading the paper!”

Boomers’ social activism — evidenced by their passionate involvement in the Civil Rights and women’s movements, war protests, sexual revolution, etc., — remains vibrant. They value empowerment and engagement, which is where newspapers can meet them and help them make a difference, Underwood argues.

Gen Xers the generation that has trust issues with people and institutions as its members watched the middle class falter and watched the country deal with extreme highs and lows, nonetheless offer interesting opportunities for newspapers. Having grown up as the

“latchkey generation,” Gen Xers today are changing workplaces with their “family-first” orientation.

And finally, the Millennials, the most supervised, over-parented children in American history. They are optimistic about their future, but uncertain about the nation’s future. They respect their elders, are team players and are socially active. They want to be empowered, engaged and want to participate (Where have we heard that before?).

The underlying core values of each generation exert remarkable influence on lifelong decisions-making, decisions about where to live, what to buy, what career to pursue, their lifestyle choices.

Editors and sales teams need to think creatively about how to reach out and tap into these audiences.

Newspapers that produce content that connects our audiences to the events and issues that helped form those core values will thrive.

“Package it, publish it if it’s relevant to them, and you will hook them and keep them coming back.” Underwood said.

What does this look like? How about applying a “generational filter” to planning for stories, special sections or events. Is there a generational angle to a story or event or service or product or advertising campaign? Be sure to involve your millennials, Gen Xers, Boomers and Silents in the planning. Remember, each generation is bringing different perspectives and expertise to the planning; those differences can enrich our coverage.

There are historic or anniversary articles to highlight and retell stories and events of the past that appeal to Boomers and Silents, written in ways to highlight what the impact is for people today of all generations.

This year, for example, has been the 50th anniversary of one of the most culturally significant years in American history. Woodstock, the moon landing and the “Miracle Mets” winning the World Series all happened in 1969. And if you use an ATM, shop at Walmart, fly on a 747, watch “Sesame Street” or

Editors, publishers urged to lobby, campaign for legislation to let papers negotiate collectively with Google, Facebook

BUCK RYAN
UK School of Journalism and Media
October 7, 2019

Newspaper leaders across the American heartland, especially those with personal relationships with elected representatives in Congress, were urged Sunday afternoon, Oct. 7, to call, write letters and publish an op-ed in support of an antitrust “safe harbor” bill designed to recapture revenues from Facebook and Google.

There is “absolutely” a sense of urgency around passage of the bill to support the struggling newspaper industry, Danielle Coffey, senior vice president of strategic initiatives and counsel for the News Media Alliance, told editors and publishers at the annual joint meeting of the Inland Press Association and the Southern Newspaper Publishers

Association, which are merging.

It’s an issue that has even entered the Democratic presidential primary election campaign, Coffey said, noting a conversation with U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.). “Warren came to us and said, ‘We want to help you,’” Coffey said.

Bipartisan bill for journalism and competition introduced

Another candidate, U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), introduced the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act of 2019, along with U.S. Sen. John Kennedy (R-La.), on June 3 as S. 1700.

The bill aims “to provide a temporary safe harbor for the publishers of online content to collectively negotiate with dominant online platforms regarding

the terms on which their content may be distributed.”

In the House, Rhode Island Democratic Rep. David Cicilline, and Georgia Republican Rep. Doug Collins, introduced the bill as H.R. 2054 on April 3.

“We want it to be bipartisan,” Coffey said. “It will have a better chance in the Senate if it comes out bipartisan in the House.”

Of Cicilline and Collins, Coffey said, “They’ll spar on impeachment, but not on this.”

Asked what passage of the bill would mean to newspapers, Coffey replied, “Money.” The act would provide publishers a four-year exemption from anti-trust laws to negotiate revenues with the large tech companies. “When money is on the table, people come together quickly,” she added.

How desperate are newspapers for revenue? “Some of us

are on suicide watch,” said Chris Reen, president of The Gazette in Colorado Springs, who led the discussion with Coffey at the conference’s opening session.

Coffey mentioned two other benefits if the bill becomes law. Publishers would gain access to more data on their readership for editorial and advertising purposes, and more knowledge of how their news stories surface in readers’ online searches.

If editors and publishers can create “a groundswell” of support in their communities, Coffey said, then the odds of passage will improve. “The co-sponsors need help,” she said.

This story was originally published by the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community News, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky.

CHATTANOOGA from Page 1

Embry said. “I’ve developed thousands of digital marketing campaigns with clients, and the majority of those campaigns were improved by having a well-executed print strategy.”

Rogers, a journalist by training whose office is in the newsroom, will work to grow and serve the

audience for the Times Free Press and its websites, newsletters, events and magazines.

“While we are in a time of transformation, I strongly believe that a good newspaper remains an important asset in a city and helps build community,” said Rogers, who grew up in Tupelo, Miss., reading three daily newspapers. “Our whole role as a company is

to gather, verify and report news that connects our readers to our community. I see on a daily basis how valuable that is for our readers, advertisers and community.”

Rogers joined the Times Free Press in January after working for Gannett in Corpus Christi, Texas. He previously served as director of circulation and marketing for the Victoria Advocate in Texas for

eight years and circulation director at Journal Inc. in Tupelo, Miss., for seven years.

“I do have experience in a number of other markets, but I think the quality of journalism and content that the Times Free Press produces on a daily basis is second to none and is as good as any newspaper,” Rogers said.

VASS from Page 2

use the internet, you have 1969 to thank.

There are rich opportunities for stories that resonate with the Boomers who lived through these events, and as they did, helped shape America as we know it.

Another option is a “generations” column.

How about engaging with readers in creative ways via contests, quizzes (real ones, folks, not clickbait!), inviting people into your newsrooms or consistently taking your news meeting out into a community? Consider a “remember when” feature or ask readers to write their memories of a particular big event, including a significant local event. Or think about stories that focus specifically

on generational changes happening right now.

For example, Underwood said Boomers will continue to work “until the day they drop,” and Millennials could live past 100. So, what does that mean for the workplace? For health care? For retirement planning? He said today’s teens — the future Gen Z — are experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety, so how does that play out locally, and are parents and teachers prepared to help them?

Millennials, according to Underwood, want good-for-you food. That’s why fast food restaurants are offering healthier options, a trend he said would influence Gen Z. It might be worth speaking to local pediatricians on the possible positive implications of this shift.

There’s a wealth of stories here for the taking. All of this is not complicated; it does, however, take

some intention and perseverance. So why not try it — right after you revisit Tina Turner’s smash “Private Dancer” album!

Email Tennessee Press Association President Chris Vass, of the Chattanooga Times Free Press, at cvass@timesfreepress.com.

Upcoming deadlines

Public Notice Journalism Contest—Dec. 31

State Press Contests—Feb. 21 (Newsroom)

Ad/Circ Ideas Contest—Feb. 28 (Advertising, Circulation, Marketing & Niche Products)



FOR YOUR CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2019

31: **Deadline:** TPA Public Notice Journalism Contest

JANUARY 2020

8: **Deadline:** Hotel Reservations TPA Winter Convention

FEBRUARY

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

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

11-14: College Media Association Spring National College Media Convention 2020, New York Marriott Marquis, New York City

APRIL

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

23-28: 2020 International News Media Association (INMA) World Congress of News Media, Paris, France

JUNE

18-19: TPA Summer Convention, State Press Awards, Advertising & Circulation Conference, Pigeon Forge

18-21: 2020 Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) Annual Conference, Gaylord National, National Harbor, Md.

OCTOBER

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

JULY 2021

24-26: 2021 Tennessee • Arkansas • Mississippi Press Associations Tri-State Convention, Memphis

The value of simplicity should permeate advertising

Statisticians disagree on the number of commercial messages we are exposed to each day. Some say 1,000. Some say as many as 3,000. Others claim the number is closer to 20,000.

With estimates all over the map, all I can say for sure is that we live in an over-communicated world that has a short attention span. There is no way that anyone can notice and digest every single message.

This presents a challenge. How can we break through the clutter when we're creating ads? How can we gain – and hold – favorable attention?

1. The first step is to simplify the essential message. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, "In all things, the supreme excellence is simplicity." Apple's first marketing



Ad-LIBS®

JOHN FOUST

brochure in 1977 quoted Leonardo da Vinci: "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication." Simplicity was more than a slogan to Apple's Steve Jobs. It was a requirement. Years later, when he was overseeing the design of the iPod, Jobs insisted that each prototype pass a strict test. If he wanted to access a song or a function, he wanted to get there in no more than three clicks.

Smart salespeople know that it is better to communicate a simple

concept than a complicated one. And successful advertisers know that simply stated points have more consumer appeal than long explanations.

I remember a radio spot that featured the sound of a car with a dead battery. For 25 seconds, listeners heard the groaning "errrrrr" of a battery which was fading. The only words were in the voiceover at the end: "This wouldn't have happened with a DieHard battery." Additional words would have killed the drama. The message was simple and clear.

2. Next, use your audience's language. I remember visiting someone in the hospital and hearing a conversation between two doctors on the elevator. Although I wasn't trying to eavesdrop, I couldn't help but hear what they were saying.

It wouldn't have mattered if it had been confidential, because I didn't understand a single word of their technical discussion. When the elevator stopped at their floor, I remember saying to myself that they would have to speak in plain language when they met with their patients.

It's the same in marketing. We must speak in terms that our target audiences can easily understand.

3. Then eliminate unnecessary words. Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do." In other words: edit, edit, edit.

The most effective advertising slogans capture the essence of their products in only a few words. "Snap, Crackle, Pop" works better for Rice Krispies than "Our cereal

is well known for its distinctive sound." "Nothing runs like a Deere" is more memorable than "John Deere equipment operates more efficiently than the others." And Nike's famous "Just do it" slogan has more impact than "Get into action instead of just thinking about participating in sports."

Simple messaging should not be limited to national advertisers. Local businesses need it, too.

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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

NEWS

Mauney is new District 3 director

Paul Mauney, general manager of The Greeneville Sun, has been appointed as a Director of District 3 on the Tennessee Press Association (TPA) Board of Directors. His appointment by TPA President Chris Vass was effective as of November 1. He was appointed to fill the unexpired term previously held by Carl Esposito, who was publisher of The Daily Times, Maryville, and retired on Nov. 1.



Mauney

TPA
Nov. 1, 2019

Entries sought for TN Public Notice Contest

The Tennessee Press Association is seeking entries for the fifth annual Tennessee Public Notice Journalism Contest.

The contest recognizes journalists that use public notice, or the lack of required public notice, to raise awareness of its importance.

The award is intended to encourage reporters and editors to incorporate public notices into their reporting and writing.

A prize of \$200 will be awarded to the winning journalist or divided among a team of winning journalists.

Entries are due to the Tennessee Press Association via info@tnpress.com no later than Dec. 31, 2019.

Information on the criteria and

entry requirements is available at www.tnpress.com.

Staff reports
Nov. 10, 2019

TPA Board met on Nov. 7

The following are significant actions taken by the Board of Directors at its Nov. 7, 2019 meeting.

- The Board approved a budget for Fiscal Year 2020. It also approved a dues increase for members. Metro newspapers will see a 15% increase over 2019 dues while non-daily and smaller daily newspapers will have a 5% increase.

- The 2018 and 2019 audits will be done as one audit. The firm selected is Burke & Schindler at a cost of \$13,000. TPA's Constitution & Bylaws require an annual audit.

- Recommended changes to the 2020 State Press Contests were approved. These include an increase of \$1 per entry fee, making the fees \$10 per entry. The increase will cover the creation of a website where the winning 2020 content will be viewable for all TPA members.

- Pigeon Forge was approved as the location

for the 2020 Summer Convention. Additional information will be available in future editions of The Tennessee Press.

- Annual contracts were reviewed. The Board approved continuing with Hollow & Hollow, LLC to provide legal counsel and also to continue providing the widely-used TPA Legal Hotline. In addition,

Lane Government Relations was again approved to provide lobbying efforts on behalf of TPA.

The full minutes of the meeting with be shared with publishers in December. Any TPA member may request a copy of the minutes by reaching out to Robyn Gentile, member services manager, at rgentile@tnpress.com.



TPA photo by Robyn Gentile

The TPA Board of Directors met Nov. 7. Among those present, left to right, were Keith Ponder, The Daily Herald, Columbia, Director of District 1; Jack McNeely, Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, Director of District 2; Darrell Richardson, The Oak Ridger, Vice President for Dailies; Dennis Richardson, Magic Valley Publishing, Camden, (a member observing the meeting); Daniel Richardson, Carroll County News Leader, Huntingdon, Vice President for Non-Dailies; Joe Hurd, The Courier, Savannah, Secretary; and Daniel Williams, The Paris Post-Intelligencer, Director of District 1.



Tennessee Press Service Advertising Placement Snapshot

	ROP:	Networks:
October 2019	\$135,062	\$12,065
Year* as of Oct. 31	\$1,286,220	\$146,427

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

Come hail or high water: UT journalism students delve into extreme weather

AMY BLAKELY
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
November 12, 2019

Melanie Faizer, senior lecturer in UT's College of Communication and Information's School of Journalism and Electronic Media, encourages her digital news reporting students to sleuth out hard-hitting stories on significant news topics.

This fall their mission has been to report on extreme-weather issues, and the students are writing about everything from mosquito-borne illnesses to future fire risks in the Smokies to the way tobacco farmers are converting their fields to hemp.

Their stories, with accompanying infographics, were to be presented online. Associate Professor Nick Geidner's "Social Journalism" class is creating a Facebook page to promote the work, too.

Last year, Faizer's students focused on the issue of evictions and housing affordability, and the website bearing their stories won the Tennessee Associated Press award for best college website.

Faizer said she is especially interested in social and socioeconomic issues in relation to extreme weather events.

"These topics are important, and no one in the community is really covering them," she said.

To brainstorm ideas, Faizer and her students culled through reams of weather-related data—heat trends, tornados, hailstorms, droughts and other phenomena.

Faizer also brought in some outside experts: Kelsey Ellis, associate professor of geography, who spoke about nighttime tornados in this



Submitted photo

Senior lecturer Melanie Faizer confers with a student.

area; renowned science journalist and former NOVA executive producer Paula Apsell, who recently completed a weeklong residency in JEM; and Lindsey Gilpin, founder of Southerly, an e-magazine dedicated to ecology, justice and culture in the American South.

Faizer urges the students to find and interview UT and community experts, making sure they explain complicated topics in understandable ways. Whether or not the students are aspiring journalists, the class teaches skills that translate well to any career – how to talk to people, process information and communicate it effectively.

"The most common complaint I hear is that they feel like they are out of their comfort zone," Faizer said. "And that is about the most authentic journalistic experience I can give them."

Ainsley Kelso, of Medina, Tennessee, a junior in journalism and electronic media as well as editor-in-chief of the online campus publication Tennessee Journalist, wants to be a multimedia journalist.

"I am studying La Crosse encephalitis, a mosquito-borne illness that typically affects children under the age of 15," Kelso said. "East Tennessee and some of the surrounding areas have more cases of this disease than anywhere else in the country."

"This story has required a lot of time and heavy research," she said, adding that she wants to "tell a story that is educational, not panic-inducing, and interesting to read."

J.T. Russell, of Knoxville, also a junior in journalism and electronic media, hopes to be a sports journalist. He is writing about the City of Knoxville's sustainability plan



Submitted photo

Alex Abernathy, a senior in Sport Management, talks with Faizer about his project.

and focusing on its task of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by the year 2050.

"It's been an opportunity to reinforce my research and writing skills as well as develop a higher standard of professionalism," he said. "The people I need to talk to are very busy individuals, so it's been hard to balance being respectful of their time with the need to collect information in a timely manner. It has also given me more keen awareness of the issues that are being addressed by our city government."

Peyton Martin, of Chattanooga, a senior in journalism and electronic media, aspires to be a radio host of a sports program. His story is focusing on future wildfire prevention in the Great Smoky Mountains near Gatlinburg.

"To have a daily show, I will

have to do research just about every night before programming – and that is probably my biggest takeaway from this class," he said. "This class has taught me how to do quality research, like how to navigate Google quicker and fine-tune my searches. We have also worked on professional-looking charts and Microsoft Excel sheets, so I think this class has at least scratched the surface in how to use those two tools in the 'real world.'"

"I have learned that it takes time to cultivate a feature story outside of the sports world," Martin said. "Sometimes it takes weeks to get the right research and the right sources to make the best story you can tell. The first interview might not be the best one, but if you keep digging the best story and quotes will reveal themselves in your research."

TRACKS

Nave retires from Star

Shirley Nave joined the Elizabethton Star in February 1970 as an employee in the composing room. That was before computers had made their way to newspapers. Her duties included layout and makeup of the newspaper pages. She also did ad layout and makeup, becoming quite accom-



Nave

plished in each. She later became a member of the sales team, selling both classified and retail ads. She worked her way up to sales manager and for the last years of her working career handled inserts and special accounts.

Shirley began her career under the late publisher Frank Robinson and had worked under six publishers. She credits Robinson with giving her the opportunity to work in sales, and he taught her much about the operation of the newspaper.

Shirley retired in September to spend more time with her husband, Melvin, and granddaughter, and great-grandchildren.

Elizabethton Star
Nov. 12, 2019

Morgan named regional editor for Advocate & Democrat, DPA

The editor of The Daily Post-Athenian has taken on a new title. DPA Publisher Jeff Schumacher has announced the creation



Morgan

of a regional editor position at the paper and has named DPA Editor Dewey Morgan to that role.

In this position, Morgan will oversee the editorial portion of both The DPA and the Monroe County Advocate & Democrat.

"Dewey has shown his abilities as a leader here at The Daily

Post-Athenian, and I am confident he will continue that same professional leadership in his new role," Schumacher said. "I look forward to having Dewey as part of the Advocate & Democrat's team."

The Advocate & Democrat, which covers the entirety of Monroe County, publishes a paper every Wednesday and regularly updates its website to keep readers informed throughout each week.

"I am honored by this an-

See **TRACKS** Page 9

People might not trust local news that much after all — and the way to improve it increases the risk

“A small reservoir of goodwill exists toward local news organizations because they are local, but this could quickly dry up if Americans perceive more political bias in coverage.”

CHRISTINE SCHMIDT
Nieman Lab
October 29, 2019

Local news is more trusted than national news, yes. But that’s largely because national news is not very trusted, especially by Republicans, according to a new study from the Knight Foundation and Gallup.

The 2010s’ media industry has been particularly brutal to local news outlets, slicing staffs and closing many newsrooms around the country with devoted efforts to help the remaining outlets transition to digital. Local news is important to save for many civic reasons — see the Local News Lab’s research roundup — but another off-cited reason is because local news brought more harmony and faith in journalism to its communities. People trusted it, a word that’s at the core of journalism’s problems today (but not the only one).

“The shorter the distance between our neighbors and our news, the stronger our community. There is strength in local, and local leads to trust,” Knight president Alberto Ibarguen said at the Knight Media Forum in February, announcing the foundation’s doubled-down commitment to local news efforts.

There is still strength in local, this new study finds, but local doesn’t necessarily lead to trust. Local news is the second-least trusted local institution, just ahead of local government (topped by libraries, law enforcement, businesses, churches and more). And respondents to the three surveys as part of this study said that while local news does a good job with highlighting the local sports teams, it can do more with holding local officials accountable. But that’s precisely where local news could also fall into the trap of losing trust — by trying to improve coverage of more nationally inflaming topics on a local level, the researchers found.

“The study findings present a dilemma for local news. The data suggest that moving into more aggressive coverage of social and political issues could further polarize views — and possibly lead to an erosion of trust. However, these are not issues that local news organizations can abandon without abdicating some of their mandate to help democracy flourish,” the report states. “The more it wades into coverage of national issues, the more vulnerable it may be to accusations of bias and a loss of community trust.”

“Local news outlets don’t exist in a vacuum, as this study emphasizes. The same forces that have eroded trust in the national media are now beginning to filter down to the local level,” Knight’s director of learning and impact John Sands wrote. “While more Americans trust their local news outlets more than national, that trust is more fragile than previously understood — and vulnerable to the same perceptions of partisan bias that threaten confidence in the national media.”

“Local news” is a pretty broad term — the researchers asked respondents to list their news sources rather than define local news for them, and the answers vary from “Bret Baier” to “YouTube” to “the Chicago Tribune,” though the top results were Fox News, CNN, and

“local newspaper (non-specific).” At another point they identify local news as “a local newspaper; local television station; website or app produced by a local individual, group or organization; local radio station; local magazine” (all followed by “[in print, online or on an app]”).

The study also unpacks the public’s view on trust from different political corners and uses of local news. Some highlights:

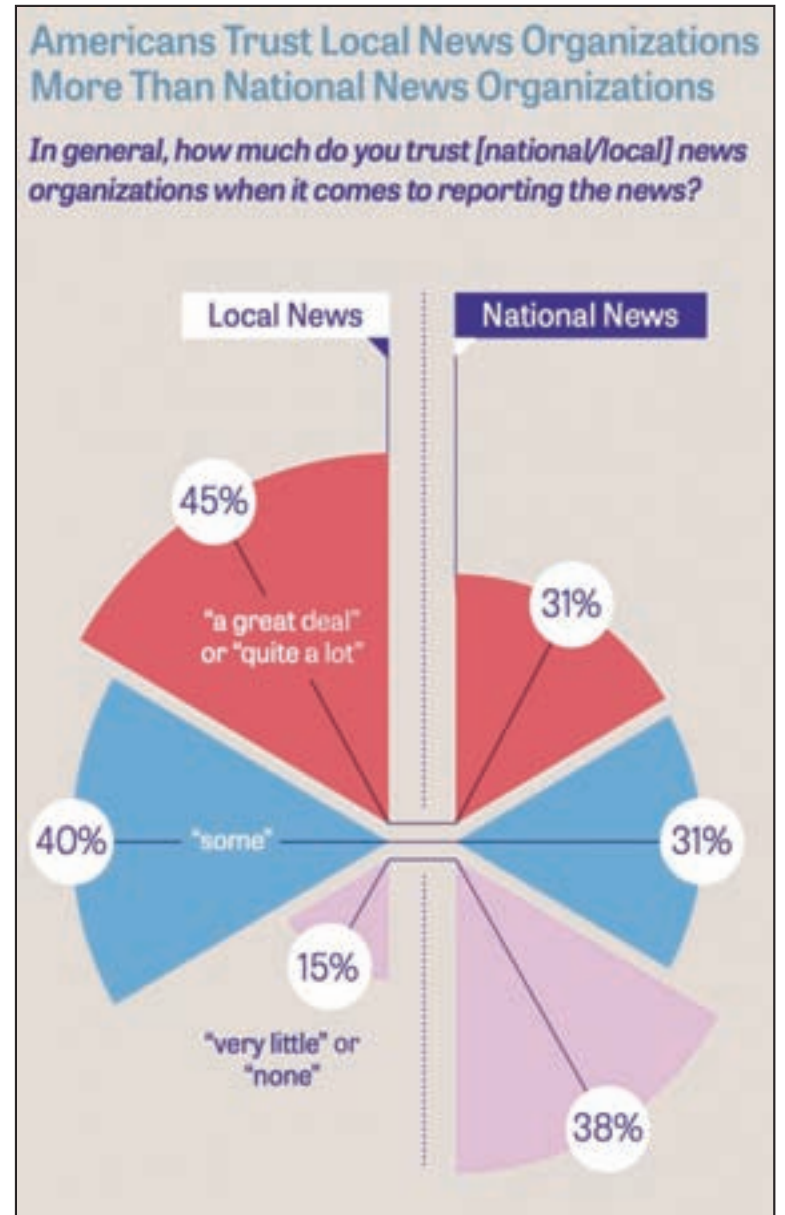
Majorities of Americans say local news is doing an “excellent” or “good” job in fulfilling many of its responsibilities. The most notable exceptions are making people feel inspired and holding local leaders accountable for their actions — 52 percent and 60 percent, respectively, feel local news does only a “fair” or “poor” job of these tasks.

The largest partisan gap emerges over providing factual local news reports, with 75 percent of Democrats saying local news organizations are doing an “excellent” or “good” job, compared with 54 percent of Republicans. Less than half of Democrats, independents or Republicans say local news does a good job holding leaders accountable for their actions....

Overall, the local-national trust gap is driven by Republicans and, to a lesser degree, independents, but this gap is more a function of Republican and independent distrust of the national news media than of high levels of trust in local news media.

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to trust local news to perform their roles, but the gap is especially wide when it comes to

See **LOCAL NEWS** Page 7



% "A great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in ...	Age			Race/Ethnicity		
	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Law enforcement	37	50	69	60	34	50
Schools	43	44	50	48	25	45
Courts	32	38	52	44	28	39
Churches, etc.	38	47	57	50	46	44
Businesses	60	61	71	68	44	65
News organizations	28	36	45	38	44	25
Government	20	24	39	30	24	25
Libraries	72	71	76	73	70	74



LOCAL NEWS from Page 6

getting the facts right. Although 51 percent of Americans do not perceive that their local news has become more biased in recent years, those who believe it has are more likely to see a shift toward liberal views.

That last data point is the highest risk for local news — aside from, you know, finding a sustainable way to support itself — going forward. If you lose the public's trust and utility for you as a news outlet, what do you have left?

Gallup researchers tried to answer the question of “Do Ameri-

cans trust local news more simply because it is local?” with an experiment that compared respondents' reaction to a news item identified as from a local or national publication. Good news: Respondents did trust the article when it was identified as local versus national. According to the report: “These differences in ratings of the ‘local’ versus ‘national’ news story are modest but statistically significant and indicate a small gain in trust merely from identifying a story as being from a local news organization rather than a national one . . . A small reservoir of goodwill exists toward local news organizations

because they are local, but this could quickly dry up if Americans perceive more political bias in coverage.” (Emphasis mine.)

That's also a reason why the widely reported growth of Sinclair Broadcast Group — the conservative company known for injecting its ideology into its broadcasts — carries extra risk for local news. Whether a TV viewer agrees or disagrees with Sinclair's politics — or even if she never watches that station at all — its mere presence can increase perceptions of bias and decrease trust for the entire local news ecosystem.

The crux of this issue: Perceptions of whether local news is more politically biased today than in the past offer a window into how Americans' attitudes toward the local news media may shift in the future. An increase in perceived bias may forewarn of a deterioration in trust of local news organizations.

About as many Americans perceive shifts in the ideological leanings of local news organizations compared to five years ago as indicating there has been no change. A slim majority, 51 percent, say local news coverage has stayed about the same, while 37 percent see movement in a more liberal direction and 11 percent in a more conservative direction.

The partisan differences of perceived shifts in the ideological leanings of local news are substantial. Six in 10 Republicans say news organizations in their local area have moved in a more liberal direction, compared with 16 percent of Democrats who say local news organizations have moved in a more conservative direction. Two-thirds of Democrats perceive no change in local news ideology. Among independents, nearly half (47 percent) say news organizations in their local area have stayed the same, 38 percent say they have moved in a more liberal direction and 13 percent say a more conservative direction.

Trust in local news hasn't crashed and burned as much as that in national news; but just as “local” isn't a one-size-fits-all kind of word, neither is finding a solution for rebuilding “trust.”

This article was reprinted with permission by Nieman Lab/Christine Schmidt. All artwork was also submitted by Nieman Lab. This reporting package is also available at <https://www.niemanlab.org/2019/10/>

TPA collaborating with Paulson to roll out ‘1 for All Campaign’

STAFF REPORTS
Tennessee Press Association
November 10, 2019

Editor's note: Tennessee Press Association has been working with Ken Paulson, director of the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee State University, to roll out the 1 for All Campaign focusing on the First Amendment. This campaign is first being launched in Tennessee and then across the United States.

This is an exciting opportunity for Tennessee newspapers. The folks at the 1 for All Campaign will not only supply print and digital ads, they will also customize ads for your local paper. Plus the 1 for All Campaign has ads that feature celebrities that you can also use. Please read through the letter from Ken Paulson shown below and reach out to him directly to get started on your own local ads or to find out how to download the celebrity ads for your paper. Soon, the general ads will be available on TPA's website as well.

Paulson:

Say it loud. At a time when officials at every level of government decry your work as “fake news,” and public confidence in news media is taking a beating, it's time to vocally and visibly remind all Americans of the good and noble work you do and the role it plays in preserving and protecting our democracy.

I've had the privilege of being the editor or managing editor of five newspapers, and I know firsthand the extraordinary commitment to communities and ethical journalism embodied in America's local newspapers.

But we live in an extraordinarily partisan time and those who aspire to report the news fully and fairly inevitably get attacked by the most partisan forces in our communities. According to a recent Gallup-Knight Foundation survey, Americans believe that a majority of mainstream media coverage is biased. We also know from this year's Freedom Forum Institute State of the First Amendment Survey that only 22 percent of American's recognize freedom of the press as being part of the first Amendment.

At the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee State Universi-

ty, we're striving to address this constitutional illiteracy and lack of understanding of the role of a free press through a national campaign promoting freedom of the press and the other four freedoms of the First Amendment in a highly



Paulson

engaging and educational way. The project is called ‘1 for All,’ celebrating the one amendment that serves all Americans every day.

In partnership with the Tennessee Press Association and the Tennessee Association of Broadcasters, we're developing a pilot program in Tennessee that uses the reach and credibility of Tennessee's news organizations to make three important points:

1. The First Amendment has five freedoms – press, speech, religion, assembly and petition – and no one of those freedoms can stand alone. Protect one. Protect them all.

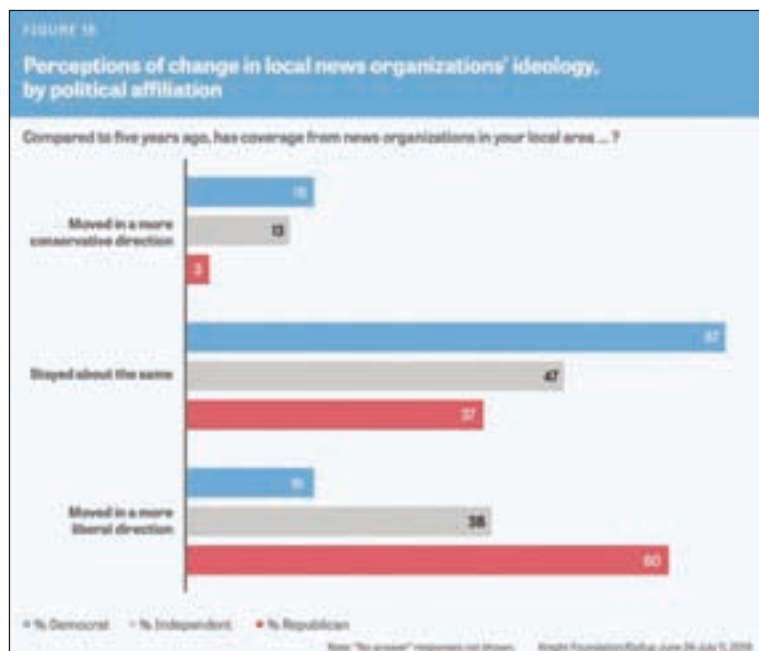
2. Each of us uses these freedoms in our own unique way, and collectively our free expression rights allow us to be the unique individuals we are. Any encroachment on these principles diminishes us all.

3. The first generation of Americans demanded a free press before they were willing to ratify the Constitution. They looked to journalists as a check on government overreach and abuse of power. That job hasn't changed.

A national marketing campaign on behalf of the First Amendment will be rolled out in 2020, but we're beginning here in Tennessee with a print and broadcast campaign featuring prominent Tennesseans such as Jason Isbell, Tanya Tucker, children's author Ruta Sepetys, Billy Ray Cyrus and many more.

Here's where you come in: We need your commitment to run these ads in print and online. We will also help you customize these ads for your own communities.

These would include local celebrities and members of your own staffs. You'll find examples



NLRB announces final overtime rule increasing salary threshold for OT exemption

On Sept. 24, 2019 the U.S. Department of Labor (“DOL”) announced its Final Rule to increase the salary threshold for the overtime exemption of Executive, Administrative, and Professional employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Rule increases the salary threshold from \$23,660 per year (or \$455 per week) to \$35,568 per year (or \$684 per week). January 1, 2020 is the effective date. This new proposed salary threshold is far less than the \$47,476 per year threshold in the Rule proposed by the Obama administration that was permanently enjoined nationwide by a federal court in Texas.

Significantly, the proposed Rule does not call for automatic annual adjustments to the salary threshold; does not create different salary levels based on region of the country; and does not make any changes to the duties’ tests.

In addition to increasing the salary threshold, the Final Rule would permit employers to count nondiscretionary bonuses and incentive payments (including commissions) paid to employees to satisfy up to 10 percent of the salary threshold. The proposed new Rule also modifies the “highly compensated employee” exemption, increasing the annual compensation threshold for that exemption from \$100,000 to \$107,432



LEGAL UPDATE

L. MICHAEL ZINSER

per year.

While the Final Rule has been published with an effective date of January 1, 2020, many expect unions and worker advocates to mount legal challenges to the Rule. Even though the Final Rule may be challenged, it would be wise to be developing a plan now to address this huge budgetary issue. This column will focus on the standard salary threshold, which will have the most dramatic impact on your newspapers. I recommend the following action plan to address the standard salary threshold increase:

1. Identify all employees currently classified as salaried exempt, but paid less than \$35,568 per year (or \$684 per week). Every Employer will need to make a decision regarding whether to reclassify these individuals as non-exempt under the new Rule or increase their salaries to \$35,568. If you have employees whose duties have changed or who have possibly been misclassified as exempt, now is a good time to

reclassify them. You can blame the reclassification on the Rule change.

2. Develop a new compensation plan. If your company chooses to reclassify the employees as non-exempt, consider tracking their hours to determine just how many hours per week they currently work. Will post-conversation pay and working hours replicate an employee’s current situation, or will you need to restrict schedules at or near 40 hours? Will you need to reassign certain tasks to other employees?

Consider a cost-neutral solution, under which you set the employee’s hourly rate at a level that assumes a certain amount of overtime, resulting in the same annual compensation currently earned by that employee.

3. Train the reclassified employees. These employees will have to be trained on timekeeping procedures at your Company. They have not been accustomed to tracking their time. Now, it will be crucial legally that they do so. Be sure to explain to these newly reclassified employees on your policies concerning unauthorized overtime work, meal and rest breaks, and the use of mobile devices after working hours.

4. Carefully consider the consequences of your actions. If you convert a current salaried Manager to an hourly employee, what is the

psychological impact? Will he/she identify more with non-supervisory employees and quit thinking like a Manager?

Another possible consequence is a change in benefits by moving from exempt to non-exempt. Do not forget about the discrimination laws. For example, a plan that increased the current male Managers’ salaries but converted female

Managers to hourly would draw fire as discriminatory.

If you take a Supervisor who is now salaried exempt and reclassify him or her as a non-exempt hourly employee, it will also adversely impact you at the National Labor Relations Board. When litigating whether one is or is not a Supervisor for purposes of the labor law, if the person is hourly and eligible for overtime, that is a factor indicating employee/non-supervisory status.

5. Develop a communication strategy now. Chances are good that many of your current salaried employees have anxiety about whether they are going to get a pay increase or get reclassified as hourly employees. A good communication plan identifies who will deliver the news to the employees, and when the news will be delivered. Also, give consideration to the format for delivering your plan. Will you use e-mail, one-on-one meetings,

or video presentations? To ensure a consistent message, develop talking points and FAQs for your Management team.

Bottom line, I would begin the process of reviewing the individuals currently classified as salaried exempt and determine what action your Company is going to take if the individual’s salary currently is not at least \$35,568 per year.

Union Employees Denied New Holiday

After a profitable quarter, the Employer granted only its non-union employees a one-time paid day off to show its appreciation for its employees. A union filed an unfair labor practice. The represented employees were excluded for two reasons:

1. The Employer was not inclined to encourage the union to bargain over granting this additional benefit because the union had in the past refused to agree to the Company’s requested midterm contract changes.

2. Unilaterally granting the benefit would violate the National Labor Relations Act.

The NLRB Ruled that it “has long recognized that an Employer has the right to treat represented and

See ZINSER Page 11

It’s a buyers’ market for community weeklies, but buyers are needed

Most days this (past) summer, I wrote a story about goings-on in Midway, a small Kentucky town where my University of Kentucky students and I publish the Midway Messenger. When students aren’t around, I pick up the slack, but it’s a labor of love, to provide coverage for a proud community that once had a paper of its own and has adopted ours, even though after 11 years I’m still something of a parachute publisher.

I’ve been in the newspaper business most of my life, but never as an owner, and our mainly online, non-commercial enterprise is as close as I am likely to get. But there are plenty of opportunities out there.

“It’s a buyer’s market right now for weekly newspapers,” former weekly publisher Gary Sosniecki writes, in a package of stories that we’re publishing to attract potential



ABOUT COMMUNITY WEEKLIES

AL CROSS

owners to community newspapers. This article introduces that package.

You might have chuckled at the “buyer’s market” line, since all the bad news about metropolitan newspapers may lead you to think that a newspaper is no longer a good investment. That’s not true of most community newspapers, because they are the sole, reliable source of news about their communities, and most of them “are doing fine financially,” says Kevin Slimp, the leading consultant to community

papers. The Economist so reported last fall.

“In areas where decreased population, diminished area businesses and other forces beyond our control are at work, it might not be viable to sustain a local newspaper,” Slimp acknowledges. “Having said that, I’ve worked with many newspapers in the past year in towns with fewer than 600 residents who are finding ways to be successful.”

Couple found success with 3 newspapers in small Midwest towns

Gary and Helen Sosniecki found success with weeklies in three Midwest towns, the first with only 900 people. “If the population is stable, if most storefronts on Main Street are filled, if the town has its own school and the all-important

sense of community, the prospects for a weekly newspaper succeeding long-term are good,” he writes.

But this is a buyer’s market with not enough buyers. When the West Virginia Press Association voiced concern that some newspapers in the state might close because their owners couldn’t find buyers, Maryanne Reed, then dean of the West Virginia University College of Media and now the university provost, got some foundation money and started a program called “NewStart” to develop the next generation of community newspaper owners.

The program’s director, Jim Iovino, writes in this package about the success that Michael E. Sprengelmeyer found in a New Mexico weekly, the Guadalupe County Communicator, after the closing of the Rocky Mountain News in Denver, where he was a

political correspondent and had the byline M.E. Sprengelmeyer.

Jim Iovino says his first group of fellows in the program are expected to start in June 2020.

That will be none too soon for the Texas Press Association, which has seen a rash of closures and mergers, and hears talk of more. As in West Virginia, buyers are hard to find. We suspect it’s much the same in most of the country. “Many owners of our generation waited too long to sell and – unable to find buyers – are shutting down their papers,” Gary Sosniecki writes.

Two groups of potential newspaper buyers: local business owners and laid-off metro journalists

See CROSS Page 10

2019-20 TPA committees and chairs announced

Whatever your area of newspaper expertise, TPA could use you on one of its committees! Committee membership is open to any newspaper or associate member.

Most of TPA's committee chairs are appointed each July by the new TPA president.

Advertising

This committee is charged with the planning and execution of the advertising sessions in conjunction with the Summer Convention. This committee will work jointly with the Circulation Committee on the Ideas Contest as well as the



Wehenkel

Summer Convention planning.
• Artie Wehenkel, Chair, The Greeneville Sun
Committee to be announced in the next edition. Please contact Artie Wehenkel to join the committee.

Annual (Summer) Convention

This committee is charged with the planning, promotion and execution of the annual summer convention, including securing sponsorships to offset the cost to the general membership. This committee will work with the Advertising and Circulation and Contests Committees to incorporate their plans for their respective portions of the event.

- Daniel Richardson, Chair, Carroll County News Leader, Huntingdon
- Jana Thomasson, The Mountain Press, Sevierville
- Chris Vass, Chattanooga Times Free Press



Daniel Richardson

Audit



Barnes

The Audit Committee meets with the auditors, independent of TPA staff, to review the audit process.

- Eric Barnes, Chair, The Daily News, Memphis
- Tommy Campbell, The

Rogersville Review

- Joe Hurd, The Courier, Savannah

Circulation

The Circulation Committee will monitor and develop information for distribution to TPA members relating to changes and trends in the circulation field. They will develop and execute an annual circulation sessions in conjunction with the Summer Convention. This



Long

committee will work jointly with the Advertising Committee on the Ideas Contest as well as the Summer Convention planning.

- Dale Long, Chair, The Greeneville Sun

Committee to be announced in the next edition. Please contact Dale Long to join the committee.

Contests

This Committee is charged with overseeing the annual UT-TPA State Press Contests. Included in its activities is the development of rules and categories for presentation to the membership each year.

This committee will work with the Annual Convention Committee to incorporate its plans for the awards presentation.

- Alison Gerber, Chair, Chat-



Gerber

tanooga Times Free Press

- Joel Christopher, Knoxville News Sentinel
- Marcus Fitzsimmons, APG Design Center Maryville
- Lindsay McReynolds,

Herald-Citizen

- Heather Mullinix, Crossville Chronicle

- Daniel Richardson, Carroll County News-Leader

- Sam Watson, Johnson City Press

- Tracey Wolfe, Grainger Today

Ex-officio:

- Charles Primm, University of Tennessee

- Chris Vass, TPA President

- Carol Daniels, TPA

- Robyn Gentile, TPA

If you are interested in serving on a TPA committee, please contact the chairman.

Government Affairs

This committee coordinates the Winter Convention. This committee monitors and properly reacts to any and all efforts to curtail the free flow of information in Tennessee or on the national level. It also is deeply involved with the legislative activities that might relate directly to the



Gerber



Darrell Richardson

newspaper industry as a business in Tennessee.

TPA's junior vice president will co-chair this committee per policy set in 2012.

- Alison Gerber, Co-Chair, Chattanooga Times Free Press
- Darrell Richardson, Co-Chair, The Oak Ridger

- Chris Vass, Chattanooga Times Free Press

- Eric Barnes, The Daily News, Memphis

- Jim Charlet, Honorary TPA Member, Brentwood

- Mike Fishman, Citizen Tribune, Morristown

- W. R. (Ron) Fryar, Cannon Courier, Woodbury

- Sara Jane Locke, The Herald-News, Dayton

- Victor Parkins, The Milan Mirror-Exchange

- David Riley, Marion County Newspapers, South Pittsburg

- Joel Washburn, The McKenzie Banner

- Michael Williams, The Paris Post-Intelligencer

- Adam Yeomans, The Associated Press

Ex officio:

- Richard L. Hollow, Hollow & Hollow LLC, Knoxville

- Carol Daniels, TPA

Membership

The Membership Committee was established in 2017 to make recommendations on how to implement procedures regarding the membership's vote to allow qualified free circulation newspapers to apply

for membership. The committee will also be tasked with reviewing all member applications prior to review by the Board of Directors.

- Keith Ponder, Chair, The Daily



Ponder

Herald, Columbia

- Charlie Crawford, The Democrat-Union, Lawrenceburg

- Jack McNeely, Herald-Citizen, Cookeville

- Daniel Richardson, Carroll County News Leader, Huntingdon

Nominating

The Nominating Committee is comprised of past presidents of the Tennessee Press Association who are still actively involved in the newspaper industry in the state. They are responsible for developing and

presenting a recommended slate of officers and directors to the membership each year. The committee is chaired by the Immediate Past President.

- Doug Horne, Chair, Republic Newspapers, Knoxville

- Eric Barnes, The Daily News, Memphis

- W.R. (Ron) Fryar, Cannon Courier, Woodbury

- Jeff Fishman, The Tullahoma News

- R. Jack Fishman, Lakeway Publishers, Morristown

- R. Michael Fishman, Citizen Tribune, Morristown

- Dale Gentry, The Standard Banner, Jefferson City

- Gregg K. Jones, Adams Publishing Group., Greeneville

- John M. Jones Jr., Greeneville

- Victor Parkins, The Milan Mirror-Exchange

- Janet Rail, Independent Appeal, Selmer

- Scott Whaley, Chester County Independent, Henderson

- Joel Washburn, The McKenzie Banner

- Michael Williams, The Paris Post-Intelligencer

political science from Lee University in 2005. Morgan is a 2001 graduate of the former College Heights Christian Academy, which was located in Hendersonville. He is an Etowah native and is the son of Quay and Joanne Morgan.

The Daily Post-Athenian
Nov. 1, 2019

TRACKS from Page 5

nouncement and appreciative to Jeff for having the confidence in me to take on this new role," Morgan said. "However, the staff at both The DPA and the Advocate & Democrat are the keys to both papers' ability to keep readers

informed with local content.

"Staff writers Andy Brusseau and Cam Belk and sports writers Scott Power and Gabe Garcia at The DPA, as well as staff writer Shane Duncan and correspondents Jessica Kent and Michael Thomason at the Advocate & Democrat are invaluable to each publication."

Morgan has been an employee of The DPA since September 2012. His primary role on the news staff prior to becoming editor was covering crime and courts, as well as government coverage of the cities of Niota, Calhoun and Etowah. He was promoted to editor on July 9, 2018.

Prior to being hired by The DPA, Morgan was the sports editor for five years at the Loudon County News-Herald — a sister paper of The DPA.

Morgan holds a master's degree in teaching from Lee University in Cleveland, graduating in 2012. He earned his bachelor's degree in

Allow me to leave you with this: I love you guys

I've been a consultant for 30 years . . . a newspaper editor and manager for 20 years before that. At the end of this year, I'll retire — officially, and for good. It's been a wonderful, exciting ride and I've been blessed in so many ways. But now it's time for me to walk away from that part of my life and turn my attention to Julia, family, friends and guitar.

So, here's my last column for you, reprised from a few years back. For you I can't leave my life as a consultant behind me without telling you once again how much you matter to me.

Thank you. Ed.

Editor's note: Look for more reprised columns from Ed in future editions of The Tennessee Press. He has graciously given us permission to continue reprinting some of his past columns at our discretion, knowing that so much of what he has written about continues to pass the test of time.



**By
DESIGN**

ED HENNINGER

There's a special moment in the movie "Hoosiers," where Coach Norman Dale (Gene Hackman) huddles with his players just before the state championship game.

He takes a brief moment, looks them in the eyes, and says: "I love you guys."

It's a quiet moment. No blaring trumpets. No whirling action. Just a few seconds that bring another, higher level of meaning to the relationship between the coach and his players.

And . . . that's how I feel about all of you who work at community newspapers.

Many of my happiest moments

during my 30 years as a consultant are those I've spent in the newsrooms and conference rooms of community newspapers.

And it's because of you. Who you are. What you believe in. What you do.

YOU'RE COMMITTED to your community. You want to see your town do well. You're ready to defend it when it's threatened, by policies, by poor planning, by people who would tear it apart to advance their own agendas or promote their own profit.

YOU BELIEVE in something bigger than yourselves. God . . . yes. Church . . . yes. Community . . . yes. Schools . . . yes. Sports . . . yes. All of those. But you also believe in the people and the spirit of those you serve with your reporting and advertising efforts.

YOU WORK HARD. "Work ethic" is a phrase that doesn't apply for you — because you are so far beyond that in your dedication and your efforts. You're often the first

one in and the last one out. And . . . you'd be happy to stay even longer and work even harder if it means putting out a better paper.

YOU'RE LEARNERS. You're eager to know if there's a better/faster way of doing what you do. You want to publish a better product. You're always on the alert for methods that will help you do that — and you're ready to spend the time, money and effort it takes.

YOU'RE DEMANDING. You expect the best from yourself and from those who work with you. You want nothing but maximum focus and maximum effort. But . . .

YOU'RE ACCEPTING. You understand that no one can run full-speed all the time. You know that those who work with you have families and lives away from the office — and that those carry obligations and responsibilities more important than any story or any ad.

YOU APPRECIATE the efforts of your managers and staff, and you show it. A small office party here,

a bonus there, tickets to a game, an expenses-paid trip to the press association banquet — all of those are ways to tell your folks: "Well done!"

YOU'RE POSITIVE. You believe in your success and the success of those who work with you. You understand that when one door closes, another opens. You know how to keep at it, constantly striving, occasionally in the face of daunting circumstances. You succeed because failure is not an option.

YOU ARE COURAGEOUS. You know when you have to take a stand — and you do it. Perhaps your editorial is the lone voice of dissent on an important issue. Still, you say what needs to be said. Perhaps you're personally threatened by someone who wants you to keep a story out of your paper. But you know you have to run that story — and you do. That takes courage. And you understand that real cour-

See **HENNINGER** Page 12

CROSS from Page 8

Those of us in this informal group see at least two potential groups of buyers who need to be recruited: local business people who never thought about becoming publishers, but know their communities and the value of a newspaper; and the thousands of journalists who have been laid off by metro newspapers.

"It's a conundrum that independently owned weekly newspapers are closing for lack of buyers

at the same time that journalists who would make good weekly-newspaper owners are being laid off in record numbers by metro newspapers and national newspaper groups," Gary writes. "The challenge for our industry is to convince these unemployed journalists to explore the joys and rewards of owning a small-town newspaper."

Down to the nitty-gritty

Helen Sosniecki gets down to the nitty-gritty of that in another

article, giving advice on buying a newspaper and the experience.

"It won't be all fun and games," she writes. "The hours are long. The financial payback may be less than your corporate salary. But the rewards in your accomplishments as a community newspaper owner can overshadow those drawbacks.

. . . You live there. You chronicle the town's history. But you're also one of them. It's your town, too. It will fill you with pride when the school basketball team wins that first state championship. It

will bring you to tears when you and your neighbors bury that young volunteer fireman with the pregnant wife who died along with another volunteer on the way to a brush fire. It will be your job, your business and your life — and you'll likely love it more than anything you've ever done."

Kevin Slimp and I agree that the keys to success as a community newspaper publisher are the right market, the right management and the right content. "Job number one is to put out a good product," he

told The Washington Post recently. He told me in an email, "It's time we began to focus on publishing the best newspapers we can."

There are thousands of Americans who could put out a good newspaper. They need to give themselves the chance. We're here to give advice if you need it.

This column was originally posted Aug. 20, 2019. Al Cross edited weekly newspapers before working for the Louisville Courier Journal and the Institute for Rural Journalism.

Free webinars for TPA members

Dec. 6

Mobile Apps for Journalists

Visit www.OnlineMediaCampus.com to register.

Contact rgentile@tnpress.com for the coupon code.

300 archived webinars are available

PAULSON from Page 7

below, including the founder of the Thistle Farms project in Nashville and a Circuit Court judge from Brownsville speaking up for a free press. (Thanks, Victor Parkins at the Mirror-Exchange, Milan.)

Here's all you have to do: Identify one or more of your journalists and community figures who are willing to take a stand for the First Amendment. Then secure permission and send us a photo and up to 45 words that explain how a First Amendment freedom enriches their life or work.

We would like each ad to reflect

the views of a featured Tennessean, but we hope that most will mention the five freedoms and adopt one of the themes noted above.

We need you to make this happen. The newspaper industry does not have an army of lobbyists to protect its rights.

What we do have is a means to communicate with millions of Americans about a matter of incredible importance to the nation's future.

After the Tennessee pilot, we'll expand this nationwide. Just imagine millions of impressions supporting your work and the freedoms that make it possible. Think "Got Milk?" Some messages need to

be repeated over and over again for Americans to truly embrace them.

This is a nonpartisan educational campaign that we hope will help bridge the partisan divide. After all, there's nothing more conservative than embracing the words of (our) nation's founders and nothing more liberal than believing that every form of free expression should be protected.

We need your help. If you're willing be a part of our efforts, please drop me a note at ken.paulson@mtsu.com or call me at 615-898-5829. You'll also want to check out our work at lforall.today.

Thanks for your good work. Please join us.

OBITUARIES

Jack Campbell

Jack Campbell, owner of Folsom Printing Co., and former advertising director for the Elizabethton Star, died June 14 after a brief illness.

Campbell, 78, was diagnosed earlier this spring with cancer and had been undergoing treatment at the Mountain Home Veterans Hospital.

Before becoming owner of Folsom, Campbell had served as a long-time advertising representative and later as ad director for the Star. He served under both Publishers Frank Robinson and Charlie Robinson.

A Hampton native, Campbell was a graduate of Hampton High School and had served in the U.S. Army.

When he began his newspaper career, Campbell did so as an ad-

vertising rep, soon working his way up through the ranks. His job was selling words to readers and readers to advertising.



Campbell

Like so many career newspaper people, Campbell liked the smell of ink and reveled in seeing a special edition roll off the printing press.

“He not only was a good salesman, but he was a good layout and make-up person,” said former co-worker Shirley Nave. “Jack was among the best when it came to designing an ad. He would spend hours on a double-truck auto ad. He was very artistic and knew how to catch the

eye of the reader.”

Nave described Campbell as laid back and easy going with a good sense of humor. “In all the years that I worked with him, I never saw him get upset or angry” Nave said.

Campbell was a man of few words, and could work two or three hours on designing an ad, and never say a word. Give him a cup of coffee and a cigarette, and he was satisfied.

Another former co-worker, Judy Richardson, said Campbell loved fried apple pies and shuck beans, which she often shared with him. “If I wanted to tell someone something and didn’t want anyone else to know, I could tell Jack, knowing he would take it to the grave with him.”

*Submitted
June 17, 2019*

ZINSER from Page 8

unrepresented employees differently, so long as the different treatment is not discriminatorily motivated.” The Board found the Employer’s justifications were lawful. If the unions were “unwilling to entertain proposed midterm modifications and insisted on adhering to the terms of the contracts. . . . the unions were going to have to live with the limitations of their contractual benefits along with their advantages.” The Board agreed that unilaterally granting the holiday would constitute a unilateral change and a violation of the Act because the parties’ Collective Bargaining Agreement specifically addressed holidays.

In conclusion, the Board decided that the Employer’s decision to exclude the union employees was simply a reflection of the “competing forces and counteracting pressures that were a part of the collective bargaining relationship.”

Withdrawal of Union Recognition Made Easier

Often an Employer will learn during the term of an existing Collective Bargaining Agreement that the employees no longer wish to be represented by the union. What is an Employer to do? Can the Employer withdraw recognition? When can the Employer do that?

During the Obama administration, the NLRB General Counsel was hostile to withdrawal of recogni-

tion and had a policy requiring an Employer to file an election petition. In a new case decided July 3, 2019, the current NLRB rejected that policy and formulated new rules of the road.

If an Employer has objective evidence that the union has lost majority support, the Employer may withdraw recognition on an anticipatory basis, but no more than 90 days before the contract expires. Once an Employer announces that it is withdrawing recognition anticipatorily, the union may file, within 45 days from the date of that announcement, an election petition. If such petition is filed by the union, the incumbent union’s representative status following contract expiration will be determined by an NLRB-conducted secret ballot election. If no such petition is timely filed, the Employer may rely on the disaffection evidence effecting withdrawal. That evidence—assuming it establishes actual loss of majority status—will be dispositive of the union’s lack of majority status at the time of actual withdrawal.

The new rule eliminates “dual signers” signatures and the Board’s prior precedent, the “last in time” rule. Under the prior precedent, the union could show reacquired majority status by relying on dual signers. Such employees signed both an anti-union petition and, subsequently, a union authorization card or pro-union counter petition. Under prior precedent the Board always relied upon the most recently signed

card. This is now out the window. Now the union must file an election petition if it wishes to contest the withdrawal of recognition.

Employer Free Speech Rights Upheld

The United States Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit refused to enforce an order of the National Labor Relations Board, finding it was not supported by substantial evidence. The case involved an Employer who directly communicated to employees the possible adverse effects of unionization. In a plant-wide letter, the Employer cautioned employees that contract negotiations would begin “from scratch.” A PowerPoint presentation stated that “the culture will definitely change,” “relationships suffer,” and “flexibilities replaced by inefficiency.” While the NLRB had found those statements were unlawful, the Court of Appeals reversed, holding that this was protected free speech.

The Court criticized the Board’s opinion for suggesting that the Company had a duty to present both the pros and cons of union representations. The Court stated that the Supreme Court precedent does not require the Company to provide the counter argument to its own argument.

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

Thank You!

These TPA members served as judges for the Texas Press Association’s Contest in October/November. We thank you for your time and assistance, which supports TPA’s Contests!

Mike Alexieff
Christy Armstrong
Crystal Burns
Elena Cawley
Tony Christen
Joel Christopher
David Critchlow Jr.
Brian Cutshall
Jason Davis
Maria De Varenne
Sandy Dodson
David Doonan
Krista Etter
Marcus Fitzsimmons
Dave Flessner
J. Todd Foster
Don Foy
Kaitlin Gebby
Dale Gentry
Alison Gerber
Nathan Gomillion
Nichole Heck
Michelle Hollenhead
Jeff Ireland
Jessica Kent
Ken Leinart
Cary Jane Malone
Bradley A. Martin
Brooke McCain
Chris McCain
Matt McClane
Lindsay McReynolds
Angie Meadows
David Melson
Heather Mullinix
Shirley Nanney
Rick Norton
Mealand Ragland
Daniel Richardson
Darrell Richardson
Sarah Riley
Robin Rudd
Clay Scott
Cindy Simpson
Tim Siniard
Chase Smith
Chris Smith
Gwen Swiger
Glenn Tanner
Chris Vass
Ken Walker
Rob Walters
Sam Watson
Lucy Williams
Michael Williams
Tracey Wolfe

The Lebanon Democrat
Cleveland Daily Banner
Trenton Gazette
The Manchester Times
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Knoxville News Sentinel
Union City Daily Messenger
The Greeneville Sun
The Mountain Press
The Tennessean
The Bledsonian Banner
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APG Design Center, Maryville
Chattanooga Times Free Press
The Daily Times, Maryville
Herald-Citizen
Cleveland Daily Banner
The Standard Banner
Chattanooga Times Free Press
Pulaski Citizen
Grainger Today
farragutpress
The Leader
The Advocate & Democrat
The Courier News
Pulaski Citizen
Hickman County Times
Brownsville Press
Brownsville Press
Chattanooga Times Free Press
Herald-Citizen
Smithville Review
Shelbyville Times-Gazette
Crossville Chronicle
Carroll County News Leader
Cleveland Daily Banner
The Daily News Journal
Carroll County News-Leader
The Oak Ridger
Knoxville News Sentinel
Chattanooga Times Free Press
Volunteer State Community College
The Mountain Press
Cleveland Daily Banner
The Bledsonian Banner
The Leaf-Chronicle
Cleveland Daily Banner
The Paris Post-Intelligencer
Chattanooga Times Free Press
The Paris Post-Intelligencer
Bristol Herald Courier
Johnson City Press
The Elk Valley Times
The Paris Post-Intelligencer
Grainger Today

Are community papers akin to a circus?

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

There are times when producing a community paper can seem like being in a circus. One moment you are the acrobat balancing your way across a high wire and the next you're the featured clown.

I learned, while attending seminars in Massachusetts recently, that the small tent and arena circus and community papers have much in common.

The revelation hit me during a panel discussion featuring four of the nation's leading small show circus producers. You probably wouldn't recognize any of their names, but the panel included former Ringling stars Jeanette Williams and Bello Nock. Both can trace their roots back to family-owned European circuses.

What immediately drew me into the discussion were the opening words of the first speaker: "The circus is not dead," he shouted passionately to the crowd. He went on to say that public perception was there was little or no interest in the circus now that Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, often referred to as "the big one" had closed.

His statement echoed that of the similar uneducated "Newspapers are dead" cry we often see hurled at our industry. It's a statement that is often followed by examples of huge metro papers closing or cutting back.

Outside pressures and single-minded organizations are making major changes to the circus, the producers agreed. Today's audience doesn't seem to want animals in the circus, for example. But Cirque Du Soleil's many

productions with their central storyline and human performers are attracting huge crowds.

The performance program may have changed, the producers agreed, but those who love the human desire for live performances and work in the business "have an obligation to see that the circus survives."

And the same is true of the publishing business. Our audience may have changed, and a generation may even have seemingly turned in other directions for their limited news, but the majority of people living in most local communities still want and embrace their hometown paper. Like those individuals struggling to maintain the circus, we who love the printed paper have an obligation to keep it going.

A question of supply and demand

Making it in the circus world, the producers said, is simply a question of supply and demand. The closing of RB&BB can be seen as an opportunity by some. That two-headed giant, the red and blue units, often exhausted a family's available entertainment budget for that kind of entertainment. The absence of Ringling in metro communities promises greater audiences for shows playing smaller towns and the rural areas.

In the same way, metro papers reducing their number of publication days or area of distribution opens new opportunities for hometown publishers.

But here are the four key points of the circus producer's message. It could be a survival treatise for all of us in the publishing business.

1. "We need to find new options

for the circus," one stated. "If we can't attract a following with elephants and tigers, what should we feature?"

2. "We have to give consideration to packaging," said another. "The theme, costuming, lighting, music and spectacle is as important as the content."

3. "We must return to what the circus once was," was a third comment.

4. "Attending a circus is still about adding quality to life," shared another.

I sat there with my heart warming as I heard suggestions for the revival of the circus that also apply to our publishing industry.

Like the circus, we need to find new editorial and revenue options. Many local publishers are growing their online and social platforms, but those are not creating the financial return possible from a well-supported newspaper.

To that end, we must revise our content and coverage to provide the information most important and interesting to our subscribers. That means less canned news releases and more original hard news coverage of the local government agencies, sports coverage, school news, business news and well-written pieces on local people and places.

Packaging, too, is a must if local newspapers are going to survive and grow. The number-one reason readers give for preferring a printed paper over the internet is the convenient gathering together of material. Subscribers can find the information they want — sports, social news and council news — nicely edited and interestingly

presented in the printed paper. More importantly, the pages are designed in a way that draws the reader into the material with many re-entry points that keeps the reader interested. With the internet, it is sometimes necessary to search for the information desired and there is often a question of credibility.

The community newspaper as forerunner of social media

Plus, like the circus, we must find ways to return to what the local paper once was. The community paper was the first social media with tidbits of who had Sunday dinner with friends or relatives and who was visiting in town. The hometown paper has always been the only source of detailed information regarding the local school, sports team, church activities and local government issues. Community papers have to truly dig into all that is "local" if the publishers expect to hold on to their readership.

The same is true about advertising. We, as an industry, have sometimes outpriced our value and expected more of our advertisers than we should. In the current multimedia mix and growth of small ad agencies, we must present our story clearly and boldly, offering easy-to-understand-and-use promotions at prices smaller advertisers can afford.

But the best statement I heard at the circus seminar was the one about maintaining the "quality of life."

The local newspaper is the sounding board of the community

sharing balanced ideas from all sides. It is the community cheerleader promoting growth, wise decisions and family values. It is the watchdog, making sure those in authority live up to the standards expected of elected officials. It should have a passion for assuring a "quality of life" for all the people it serves.

What is true about the status of the circus and the community paper is equally true about many small, meaningful enterprises in our city. Many are facing the same threats from the big investors working the internet.

Perhaps some future loss from not being able to obtain goods and services locally will be reversed in the days to come. If so, it will probably be through the new local partnerships and local community marketing ideas.

But, to me, there will always be a need for the community paper. Too often I have seen when a community loses its newspaper everything else eventually seems to disappear.

We, who care about our industry, need to reinvent how the world sees and uses the newspaper.

Want more information and motivation to help you tell your publication's story? Experience more GET REAL straight talk from one of America's leading newspaper and shopper publishers and sales trainers. Ask your group or Press Association to schedule one or more of Peter W Wagner's seminars on selling, producing and growing your community paper. Contact him at pww@iowainformation.com or CELL 712-348-3550. Or contact Peter direct for proven sales training for your staff.

HENNINGER from Page 10

age is not the absence of fear, but the understanding that something is more important than fear.

YOU HAVE A SENSE of humor . . . and balance. You're not afraid to laugh at yourself and your mistakes. And you learn from those mistakes and go on to do better work the next time.

YOU'RE LEADERS. All of the qualities I've mentioned (and there are probably some I've not thought

of) make you a leader in your community. You're not one the "good ol' boys." You're more than that. Whether you're the editor, the publisher — whatever — you're a person others can approach for guidance and support. And you're always ready to help.

Thank you for being all those things.

I love you guys.

And I will miss you.

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