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The Tennessee Press

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TPA Summer Convention moved to Sept. 24-25

ROBYN GENTILE
Member Services Manager
April 13, 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tennessee Press Association has officially postponed the 2020 Summer Convention and has secured the new convention dates of September 24-25.

The event is being planned for Pigeon Forge at the Music Road Resort, the originally contracted location.

The convention will host the Advertising/Circulation Conference, State Press Contests Awards (Editorial) and Ideas Contest Awards (Advertising/Circulation) and a day at Dollywood, but in a different order than originally was planned for June.

Dollywood is expected to be closed on Thursdays in September, so the picnic and day at Dollywood has been moved to Friday, Sept. 25.

The convention postponement

has the benefit of a much lower hotel rate. The new rate is \$129 plus tax, per night. Convention attendees may make reservations now by calling the hotel. However, TPA recommends that you wait until you receive your packet in July to make reservations.

Convention registration information will be available on July 15.

TPA State Press Contests award winners will be notified of an award, but not placement in early June.

The tentative new convention schedule is as follows:

Thursday, Sept. 24

(Schedule tentative as of 4/20/20)

Noon Registration Opens
1:00 p.m. TPA Board of Directors Meeting & Concurrent Business Session

2:30 p.m. Tennessee Press Service Stockholders Meeting

3:00 p.m. TPA Foundation Board

of Directors Meeting
6:00 p.m. Reception
7:00 p.m. State Press Contests Awards Dinner
9:30 p.m. Post-banquet reception

Friday, Sept. 25

8:30 a.m. Welcome
9:00 a.m. Ad/Circ Conference
9:00 a.m. News/Editorial sessions (Until noon)

Noon Luncheon with Ideas Contest Awards Presentation

1:30 p.m. Ad/Circ Conference sessions (until 3:00)

5:00 p.m. Picnic dinner at Dollywood (Families and guests may go any time that day. Convention attendees can meet up when their sessions end. Dollywood is open until 9:00 p.m.)

Watch tnpress.com in July for convention details. Contact Robyn Gentile with any convention questions at rgentile@tnpress.com.



COVID-19 COVERAGE: See Page 12 for samples of front pages from TPA member newspapers that participated in the Common Page "We Are There For You" initiative. More than 60 papers took part in the campaign conceived by the Chattanooga Times Free Press, with the design created by TFP Presentation Editor Matt McLane.

COVID-19 takes its toll on local news coverage

Three handy tips for coping with COVID-19: Wash your hands frequently. Wear a mask outdoors. And subscribe to a local newspaper or website.

When this crisis is over, we'll return to the rhythm of our usual work and play, but in many cities across the country, local news organizations may be gone or badly diminished.

I've written about the need to fund local journalism before, but this time there's a special urgency. The economic factors – revenue streams destroyed by digital disruption – that endanger local news organizations have accelerated with COVID-19. The advertisers that still support local news – bars, restaurants and entertainment venues – aren't advertising when their doors are shut, yet newsgathering



GUEST COLUMN

KEN PAULSON

and distribution costs remain.

Most vulnerable are alternative weeklies.

On March 19, Joshua Benton of the Neiman Lab offered this assessment: "This has, without a doubt, been the single worst week in the history of America's alternative press. They're facing a double blow: Not only have their main advertising sources dried up, so have their main points of distribution. (Where do you pick up an alt-weekly? At a bar, at a restaurant,



at a theater — all the places that have gone dark.)"

Local community weeklies and dailies face the same challenges.

"I'm hearing 40% to 60% drops in revenue over the last 30 days," Dean Ridings, CEO of the trade association America's Newspapers, told Bloomberg News. "The advertisers are the local mom and pops, the retailers, the restaurants, who

are understandably canceling their advertisements."

"We could be approaching an extinction event for some publishers," industry analyst Ken Doctor told The Philadelphia Inquirer. "It will depend on the condition of those businesses before the virus, and how long this whole thing lasts."

If you have a good local newspaper, you know how your mayor and city council are addressing the crisis. You know what's open, what isn't, and the state of education and government services. You'll see opinion columns and editorials assessing how well the public sector is serving you and how things could still

See **PAULSON** Page 9

The Tennessee Press

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Carol Daniels Editor
Mike Towle Managing Editor
Robyn Gentile Production Coordinator



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

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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 July 2020 issue is June 2.

New ads available for '1 for All Campaign'

KEN PAULSON
MTSU Free Speech Center
April 10, 2020

Editor's note: Starting with our March 2020 edition, The Tennessee Press has been running ads produced as part of the "1 for All Campaign for the First Amendment," which is under the direction of Ken Paulson. In this month's edition we present two newer such ads tied in to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The companion column Paulson references in this story appears in this edition of TTP starting on page 1.

When unthinking people let phrases like "fake news" roll off their tongues, they fail to consider what "no news" would look like.

Those of us who work to help the public understand and appreciate the value of a free press are often left to abstract arguments about accountability and transparency, with frequent mention of James Madison.

But today Americans are facing an unprecedented threat, and the

information you provide is saving lives.

That story needs to be told. The Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee State University has developed a national campaign featuring a diverse group of Americans and this message about journalism:

These ads have been configured for print and online, in multiple sizes and are available for immediate download at <https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/1forall-gallery>.

On the page you'll also find initial ads in the celebrity-driven campaign set for July 4. Each features a prominent artist, author or performer explaining why their work is fueled by one of the five freedoms. We'll have more details and star power as Independence Day approaches.

I've also written a companion guest column you may want to use detailing how COVID-19 is threatening the future of newsgath-

ering (as also seen on page 1 here). The lead: Three handy tips for coping with COVID-19: Wash your hands frequently. Wear a mask outdoors. And subscribe to a local newspaper or website. The column can be found at <https://mtsu.edu/first-amendment/post/605/>

Finally, we hope you're aware of the many resources the Free Speech Center provides for journalists and the public at [freespeechcenter.org](https://www.freespeechcenter.org). Our First Amendment Encyclopedia is the single most comprehensive free reference work on the five freedoms, our news section includes daily updates on the First Amendment and COVID-19 and our reporter hotline at 615-898-2195 offers one-hour turnaround for most journalists' questions.

Our deep thanks to the Tennessee Press Association for its support, and to all who help us convey the essential and noble work you do. And if you do use these ads, please let us know at ken.paulson@mtsu.edu.

PAULSON from Page 1

be improved. Local television has many strengths, but those are not among them.

And if some believe they can rely on social media moving forward, they need to think again. Social media without real local news becomes a festival of cat pictures.

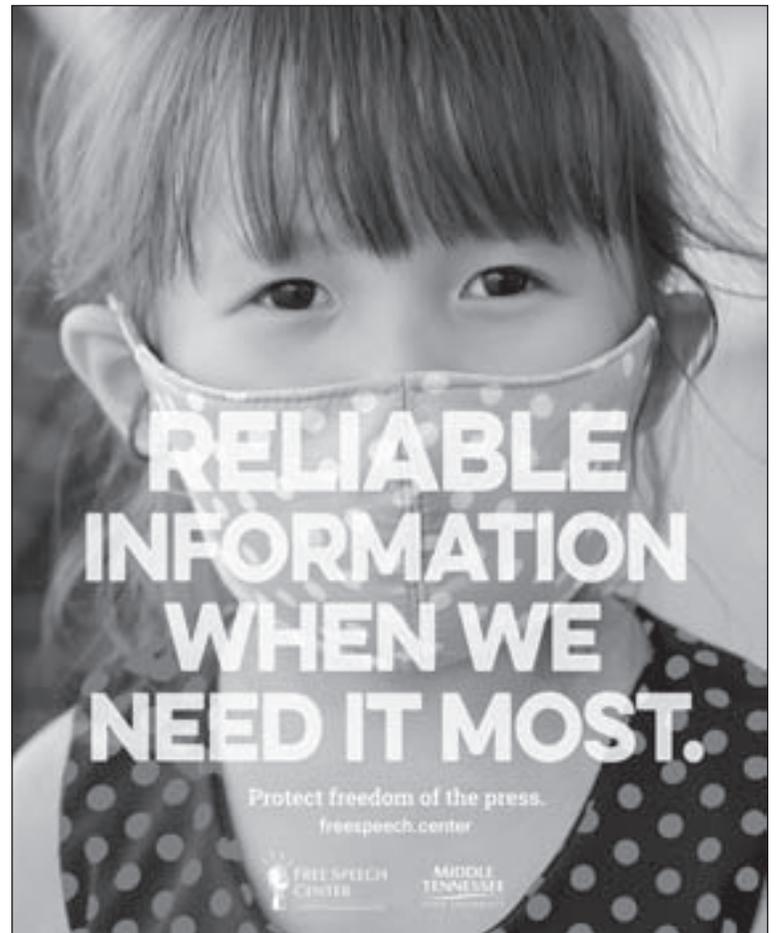
I know newspapers are old-school and it's tough to market a product that was introduced to America in 1690. But maybe you'd find it easier to write a check if we re-brand local news organizations as "information concierges" who will provide a report tailored to your community in real-time and maybe even hand-delivered to your home each morning. Cutting-edge stuff.

We don't want to sit down with our grandchildren one day and say, "You won't believe this, but in the old days, our phones had to be hooked to a wall, we only had four channels of television, and there were people paid to tell us what our government was up to."

America can't afford to lose local news.

Ken Paulson is the director of the Free Speech Center based at Middle Tennessee State University.

Newspapers may download this series of ads at:
<https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/1forall-gallery>



Our mission of keeping people connected has new meaning

Welcome to: social distancing, working from home, figuring out how to work from home, new ways of gathering and reporting local news, tracking which businesses are open or closed, keeping your readers informed, toilet paper shortage, hand sanitizer shortage, new ways of dining out, curbside pickups, global pandemic, a federal aid package like we've never seen before, and a strong message from Tennessee Press Association newspapers to your readers:

WHEN YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN, WE ARE THERE WITH YOU.

I am inspired, I am writing this column the week that Tennessee papers are making a bold statement to readers, **WE ARE THERE WITH YOU**, and I couldn't be prouder. Congratulations to all of you!

Your communities need you more than ever before, people are disconnected, and the newspaper is giving readers a chance to connect. You are their link to their neighbors, to local businesses, to what is going on in their local governments, and to much more. It is something they can "hold on to," literally (in many cases along with a faint smell of Lysol mixed with newsprint). Texting, Twitter or Facebook have nothing on what local newspapers can bring into households across the state.

As I am a rather "social" person, I've organized a weekly "virtual" neighborhood dinner party. I'm convinced the neighborhood I live in was plucked from Mayberry and plopped down here, near



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CAROL DANIELS

downtown Clarksville. Our more than 70 households are all part of a community email list – a list I used to organize the "party." An advantage we have is that three families in the neighborhood own local restaurants, so, one night each week, we all order dinner from one of them. Last week the response was overwhelming!

First, the restaurant was thrilled with the business, then neighbors started sharing pictures of their families around the dinner table. The email chain blew up for about four hours! It was a simple, yet effective way for everyone to feel they were connected. It's an example of how I see you are connecting people in your communities.

My trip to the clinic for treatment yesterday reminded me of how I am inspired by what healthcare workers are doing now to keep patients, visitors (when allowed) and staff safe. As most of you know I have been self-quarantining for seven weeks, yesterday was a very surreal experience. I applaud all of you who are out each day; please be safe while you are performing your essential jobs!

When I entered the hospital, I was immediately scanned with an infrared thermometer and direct-

ed to one of three tables to register. They asked what have become the new normal questions, "Had I traveled, had I been in contact, etc.?" After they confirmed I actually was expected at the clinic, they physically escorted me there. When we got to the clinic, a nurse was at the door doing another screening, confirming each patient was who they said they were before allowing us in. It was weirdly comforting to go through so many hoops. During my visit, all the nurses were wearing some seriously protective gear to protect us all.

Husband Frank, who has been working from home to protect me, could not go into the clinic with me, so, he had the opportunity to go into his office. Although there were only four of his 50-plus team members in the office, he said just to have the chance to chat with someone over a cubicle made him feel more connected. Like you, he communicates regularly, every day, probably multiple times a day, with most of his team, but that personal connection makes a huge difference. If your newspapers can deliver some of that "personal connection," I know your readers will love it!

There is a Washington Post story I would like to suggest as recommended reading. It is about how one newspaper carrier is making connections with readers by delivering groceries with the newspaper. The link is too long to post here, but the story was posted by the Post on March 31 and it's titled "Newspaper deliveryman brings groceries to older custom-

ers on morning route, at no extra charge." Google it, and you should find it OK, although there is a paywall.

You, like our healthcare workers, grocery store clerks (because they are getting the brunt of a lot of anxiety), gas station attendants, drugstore clerks, deserve a huge shout-out for the work they are doing. **THANK YOU!**

Finally, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and the WHO (World Health Organization) have confirmed the receipt of newspapers carries no real risk of catching the coronavirus, calling the risk "infinitely small." They also note that "in other parts of the world, even the worst-hit areas, newspapers have continued to publish in order to maintain the public service."

I know some of you have been getting questions from your readers if the newspaper is safe to read, the answer is YES! That said, we should encourage everyone continue with the guidelines around washing hands, etc. In our house, we spray Lysol on everything that comes through the door and then leave it for about an hour before handling; can't be too cautious.

My husband is now signing off all of his emails this way, and I'm totally stealing it.

Be safe, wash your hands and remain positive.

Carol

Carol Daniels is executive director of the Tennessee Press Association.

NEWS

Star changes print cycle to Wed. and Sat.

In response to the economic challenges presented by the COVID-19 novel coronavirus, as well as the change in recent years as to how its readers consume community news and information, the Elizabethton Star has begun publishing two print editions each week — on Wednesday and Saturday.

While the Star has seen new print subscribers and record traffic to its website, this newspaper, like many other newspapers

across the country, has seen severe declines in advertising by local businesses as non-essential businesses are closed and events are canceled.

"No matter the medium or publication cycle, informing our readers continues to be our top priority," said Delaney Scalf, Star general manager.

"The sharp increase in web traffic on elizabethton.com has indicated that more readers are consuming news digitally than ever before. Reducing print frequency enables us to meet our readers where they are and allows



Scalf

our news teams to focus their efforts on providing news online as it occurs."

Readers will now be able to pick up a print copy of the Elizabethton Star on Wednesday and Saturday, with increased page numbers in each issue. Print and e-edition subscribers will receive the newspaper in their mailboxes or email inboxes these days.

"Producing two editions each

week will allow our staff to create more robust, community-focused newspapers, with all of the content readers have been used to getting in their newspaper, and even more," Scalf said.

"We remain committed to covering all the news surrounding COVID-19 and how we recover as a community from this unprecedented pandemic," Scalf said. **Star.**"

*Elizabethton Star
April 10, 2020*

See **NEWS** Page 4

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

May 2020

5-28: International News Media Association (INMA), (Virtual) World Congress, "Re-Thinking News Media in the Age of Coronavirus."

August 2020

27-30: 2020 Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) Annual Conference, Gaylord National, National Harbor, Md.
30: Deadline for Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame nominations

September 2020

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

October 2020

1-3: National Newspaper Association's 134th Annual Convention and Trade Show, Hyatt Regency, Jacksonville, Fla.
21-25: College Media Association Fall National College Media Convention 2020, in conjunction with Associated Collegiate Press, Atlanta Hyatt Regency, Atlanta, Ga.

March 2021

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

June 2021

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

October 2021

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

Prepare a go-bag to always have ready for presentations

Richard is an advertiser who has seen years of sales presentations. His pet peeve is any salesperson who shows up unprepared. "It's a waste of valuable time to be in a meeting where someone is not ready for the topic at hand," he said.



AD-LIBS®

JOHN FOUST

"I remember a meeting with an ad manager – a manager – and he showed up with no briefcase or folder, no rate information, and nothing to use for note-taking. All he had was a business card. I guess he thought his presence in the room would be enough for me to decide to run ads with his company. When I mentioned that it would be helpful to see a copy of his paper, he said he would have someone bring a copy later. His whole approach was arrogant and lackadaisical. It didn't take long for

me to decide that I could get along just fine without doing business with him."

Although Richard's example is extreme, it illustrates the importance of preparation. There's a lot of truth in the old saying, "Perception is reality." If a prospect perceives that a salesperson is unprepared, that becomes their reality – and the result is a large obstacle for the salesperson to overcome.

Consider the briefcase. In this instance, let's call it a go-bag, a term representing a concept that likely originated in the military, where service men and women have to be ready at a moment's notice to go without warning. People also prepare go-bags of essential items that are needed in case of emergencies. Just pick it up and go.

Here are some basics for your advertising go-bag:

1. **Note-taking device.** It's crucial to capture the things you learn about your prospect. Whether it's a paper notebook or an electronic device, it's important to be ready to take good notes.

2. **Legal pad or sketch pad.** You should always be ready to sketch ideas. Just a few shapes on the page can help an advertiser visu-

alize an ad. "The headline can go here" (horizontal lines). "A photo of your featured product can go here" (large box). "Call-out copy blocks can go here, here and here" (small boxes).

3. **Calculator.** Yes, it's okay to use the calculator on your phone. Just make sure the phone is muted and not distracting.

4. **Ruler.** This will eliminate the need to guess the size of ads on tear sheets and other samples.

5. **Rate information, ad specs, coverage map, etc.** Have enough copies for anyone who might attend the meeting.

6. **Current issue of your paper,** along with copies of any special sections you're selling. You can also consider adding screen shots of key online pages.

7. **Business cards.** Make sure they have no creases.

8. **Folder of samples.** It's smart to have a folder of examples of the use of white space, the difference between serif and sans serif type, and clean layouts.

9. **Folder of ads your prospect has run,** along with relevant proposals and hard copies of emails. Obviously, you'll add these to your go-bag before each appointment.

(c) Copyright 2020 by John Foust. All rights reserved. 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 from Page 3

Standard Banner makes temporary move to Thurs.

The Standard Banner, Jefferson City, has temporarily changed its publication day to Thursday only, due to the impact of the coronavirus.

"With the situation changing daily, and uncertainty over the schedules of local businesses and other institutions in the community, we think it is prudent to shift to one newspaper per week in the short term," said Publisher Dale Gentry. "Like other local businesses, we are trying to figure out the best way to move forward in an ever-changing environment.

"We remain committed to vigorously cover our community, and report information that is critical to our readers and citizens," he added.

The change meant there would



Gentry

be no Tuesday publication for the short term "When things begin to return to normal, we will re-evaluate and hopefully return to a Tuesday-Thursday schedule," Gentry added.

The Standard Banner, Jefferson City March 19, 2020

The Press shifts to weekly edition

One way or another the coronavirus has affected most everyone, and that includes The Weakley County Press and its staff. While the newspaper is continuing to publish — both in print and online — it is with some changes.

After publishing a newspaper



Wagster

twice a week for decades, The Press is printing only on Tuesdays; however, the paper will continue to provide updated news coverage throughout the week via its

website and Facebook.

"Due to the coronavirus and the multitude of restrictions placed on residents locally, in-state and worldwide, we have been forced to re-evaluate how we do business," said GM Lynette Wagster.

The Press also began offering the online version of its newspaper to everyone at no charge on a temporary basis to reach as many readers as possible during the virus outbreak. The website is nwtntoday.com.

The Weakley County Press, Martin March 26, 2020

TPA has new member paper and new associate

On Feb. 12, the TPA Board of Directors accepted The Dickson Post as a member, bringing the total number of member newspapers to 130. The newspaper is owned by Main Street Media of Tennessee. Dave Gould is the publisher. The Dickson Post's membership was recommended after vetting by the

Membership Committee.

An application for associate membership made by Southern Adventist University's Communications program was accepted as well. Students from Southern Adventist University attended the 2020 Winter Convention along with students from a total of 9 colleges. Student participation was sponsored by the Tennessee Press Association Foundation.

Contact information:

The Dickson Post
 Publisher: Dave Gould
 Editor: Ivan Aronin
 (615) 375-8373
 313 E. College St., Suite 3A
 Dickson, TN 37055
 www.dicksonpost.com

Southern Adventist University
 School of Journalism and Communication

Dean: Rachel Williams-Smith
 (423) 236-2330
 P.O. Box 370 Collegedale, TN 37315
 www.southern.edu

Staff Reports April 15, 2020

TN Newspaper HOF nominations due by Aug. 31

The Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame honors those who have made an outstanding contribution to Tennessee newspaper journalism or who have made an extraordinary contribution to their

communities and region, or the state, through newspaper journalism. Nominations for the Hall of Fame are being accepted through Aug. 31, 2020, to be considered for induction in 2021.

Sixty honorees have been inducted since the Hall of Fame was established in 1966 as a joint project of TPA and the University of Tennessee. All inductions are made posthumously. Information about the Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame, biographical sketches of the honorees and nomination information can be found at <https://tnpress.com/hall-of-fame/> or by sending an email to rgentile@tnpress.com. All nominees must be deceased two or more years prior to the nomination. A selection committee of five TPA past presidents will review nominations and announce whether an induction ceremony will be held in 2021.

An extensive renovation to the Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame gallery in the Communications Building of the University of Tennessee was done in 2014-15. Association officials encourage those submitting nominations to consider including as much material about the nominee as possible.

Materials may be submitted electronically by contacting TPA headquarters at (865) 584-5761, ext. 105 or rgentile@tnpress.com.

Staff Reports April 15, 2020



Tennessee Press Service Advertising Placement Snapshot

	ROP:	Networks:
March 2020	\$119,568	\$7,662
Year* as of March 30	\$530,278	\$47,196

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

Coronavirus underscores the breadth of business reporting

The coronavirus pandemic is dominating headlines, generating stories on issues touching nearly every aspect of lives. Reports addressing the health and safety of citizens are obviously center stage. At the same time, the pandemic has spawned a range of stories focusing on our worksites – the places we earn a paycheck as employees and purchase products and services as consumers. Business lockdowns and restrictions have redefined commerce and reshaped daily routines.

Business news from all aspects deserves extra attention during these extraordinary times. This is also an opportunity to think about expanded business coverage during ordinary times. Stories about employers and employees have a big impact on communities. What happens at the workplace might even overshadow a decision of a local governing body. Yet, many newspapers struggle for consistent coverage of employers and employees.

It's impractical in many newsrooms to devote one person to report on business. Editors and reporters still can incorporate business coverage into their everyday regimen of assignments. The first step is to brainstorm stories on a regular basis similar to examining coverage of local government or sports.

Here is one list:

- When's the last time you compared and contrasted local employment with statewide statistics? Take it a step further: identify a feature



COMMUNITY NEWSROOM SUCCESS

JIM PUMARLO

story about specific trends. Present the trends and data in graphically pleasing, easy-to-understand formats. If online, make the data interactive, searchable and alive.

- How are businesses grappling with health care costs, and what is the impact on employees?
- Is your community facing a workforce shortage? What steps are companies taking to attract and retain qualified workers?
- Do companies provide on-site child care? Share the best practices.
- What is the local landscape of in-home businesses?
- How important are exports to the bottom line of businesses? Offer a local perspective into the global economy.
- Who are the winners and losers in the international trade wars?
- What sustainability measures are companies implementing to respond to consumer demand for a green economy?
- Has the role of long-term care facilities changed as people live longer and programs are in place to help them stay in their own homes longer?
- How important is e-commerce to local merchants? Are companies

hindered by lack of broadband access? How are businesses best getting their messages to customers? Facebook? Web? Phone? Video conferencing?

Stories are limited only by staff resources. As with any beat, newspapers will soon discover that the more attention devoted to the broad definition of business news, the more ideas that readers will forward.

Credible and ongoing coverage of employers and employees can lead to increased advertising revenue as well. Be clear, this does not mean saying "yes" to every advertiser's request for news coverage. Newspapers are in the strongest position by maintaining a clear separation between news and advertising. That's in the best interests of both your advertising and news departments.

At the same time, news and advertising departments should explore shared opportunities. Newsrooms are regularly approached to publicize such events as Manufacturers Week or Small Business Week or Nursing Home Week. As you discuss news coverage, think about ways to generate revenue, too. Identify possibilities for a special section, maybe even conduct an event in conjunction with, say, the local chamber of commerce or manufacturers association. Investigate all platforms for news and advertising from print to digital.

Here's a worthwhile exercise for all newspapers: take a quiz in your newsrooms. You all can likely name the members of the

city council or school board, local lawmakers, the county administrator. But how many can name the city's five largest employers, or the names of their CEOs, or the top corporate contributors to the local United Way? Have you ever toured these facilities or met the owners or management team? It's fairly common for the downtown retailers to regularly convene at a local restaurant for morning coffee. Have you ever attended?

Improving business coverage is a shared responsibility. Businesses must be comfortable that reporters can get the story right, and reporters deserve to have all the facts including those that may not be so flattering. Editorial and advertising staffs must have a common understanding of what is worthy of a story and what warrants an ad.

As a first step, begin a conversation within your newspaper and with your business community. Identify the opportunities and challenges, and then make a plan. Building business news into your everyday coverage will spell dividends for news and advertising departments.

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

House ads available to members

TPA has commissioned a series of ads based on the theme, "We are there with you" for use by our members. The ads are in 3x5 and 3x10 formats available on tnpress.com. Please alter the ads and use as you see fit.

The ads are based on these

themes:

- together we can build a stronger community
- together we celebrate our heroes
- together we protect our community
- together we count our blessings
- together we look to the future

Newspapers may download this series of ads at: <https://tnpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/3x10-Together.pdf>

Change in the air: Newspaper not immune to collateral damage brought by pandemic

"The Times They Are A-Changin'"

Wow, was Bob Dylan ever right!

I usually keep it light with these columns. Today . . . not so much.

To put it mildly, these are challenging times for local businesses and individuals, and we at The Daily Messenger, Union City, have not been spared.

Like other businesses, we rely on our great customers to survive — in our case subscribers and advertisers. And with all of the shutdowns and restrictions put in



GUEST COLUMN

DAVID CRITCHLOW, JR.

place to help the country stop the spread of the coronavirus, everyone is suffering in some way.

Sadly, some local businesses have already closed, while some are laying off employees and others are doing everything they

can to make ends meet until this pandemic ends.

As a newspaper, we play a vital role in getting information out to the public, whether it is through our published edition, our website or through social media. As we stated in an editorial at the top of a recent front page, "We are there with you." And we are!

That said, we will be doing so with some changes.

Starting next week, The Messenger will publish a newspaper on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with

See **CRITCHLOW** Page 9

Coronavirus survey results: Cribb, Greene & Cope

SUBMITTED
Cribb, Greene & Cope
April 9, 2020

The coronavirus crisis has forced publishers to move rapidly to reduce print-related costs and transition their business models to more digitally-dependent news and information platforms.

That's one of the clearest conclusions from the results of a Cribb, Greene & Cope Coronavirus Survey of newspaper owners and publishers released April 9.

Seventy-six newspaper executives from across the country participated in the survey.

The COVID-19 crisis is pushing newspaper executives to take unprecedented measures to ensure their sustainability and relevance in a post-pandemic world.

Nearly 50 percent of the survey respondents are projecting ad revenue declines of 30 percent or more in the second quarter of this year.

"Best to make dramatic cuts now rather than slowly," one survey respondent said. "Focus on digital first and push everything through social media."

Several advised colleagues to use the crisis as a time to strengthen relationships with advertisers and readers. "Do everything you can to show that you support local businesses' owners," one said.

To offset top line revenue losses, newspaper executives are:

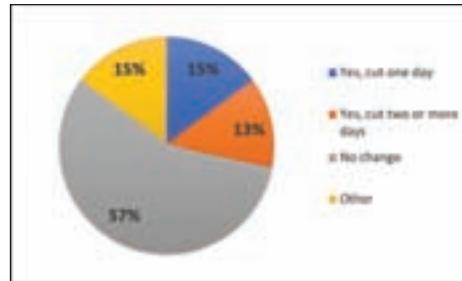
- Aggressively reducing expenses by cutting page counts, single-copy circulation, eliminating TMC products and reducing publication day(s).
- Creatively reducing payroll expense by a mix of furloughs, hourly reductions, and some permanent layoffs.
- Quickly applying for SBA loans or other forms of government financial assistance – 85 percent of respondents said they had applied or plan to apply.
- Beginning a marked industry-wide transition from free online local news to digital paywalls.

The coronavirus crisis is accelerating newspaper executives' plans to "right-size" staffing, capture more digital revenue, and transition to subscription-based revenue models.

The Cribb, Greene & Cope team wants to thank all participants in their coronavirus survey. Here are the individual results of the survey:

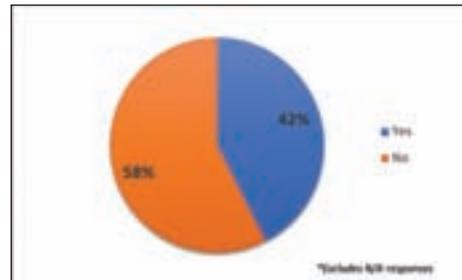
1. Have you adjusted print frequency in the short term?

Fifty-four percent of respondents indicated that they do not plan to change their print frequency in the short term. The other 46 percent are cutting at least one day, or going to a digital-only strategy.



2. Do you believe your publication frequency reductions will be permanent?

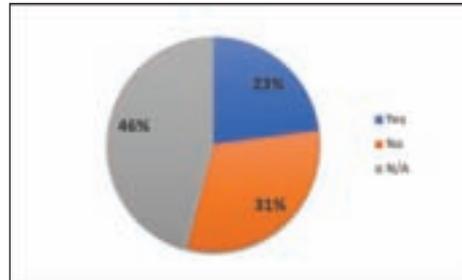
Of the respondents that have or plan to change print frequency, 56 percent believe the reductions will not be permanent, while 44 percent plan to keep frequency at the reduced level for the foreseeable future.



3. Has paid print circulation: increased, decreased or stayed the same?

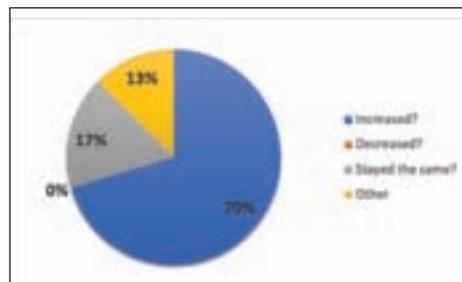
Nearly half (48 percent) of executives surveyed said that their paid print circulation has stayed the same.

Twenty-two percent have seen an increase in paid print circulation.



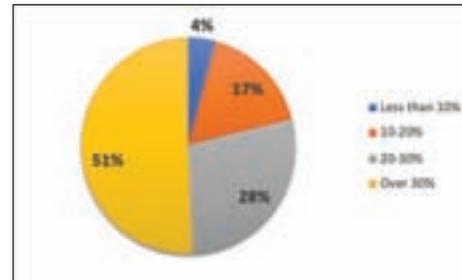
4. Has paid digital circulation/traffic: increased, decreased, stayed the same?

Sixty-six percent of newspaper executives who responded said that their paid digital revenue has increased since the crisis broke.



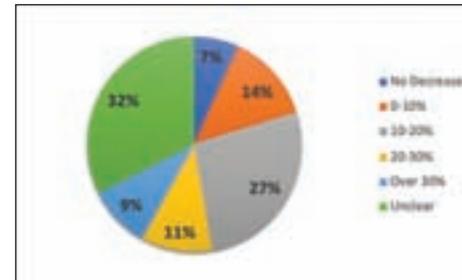
5. Do you anticipate a revenue decrease in Q2 (April-June) and if yes, by how much?

Our purpose in asking this question was to gauge the short-term effects of the pandemic thus far. Forty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they expect at least a 30 percent decline in revenue for Q2. Only 3 percent said they expect no revenue decreases.



6. Do you anticipate a revenue decrease in Q3 (July-Sept.) and if yes, by how much?

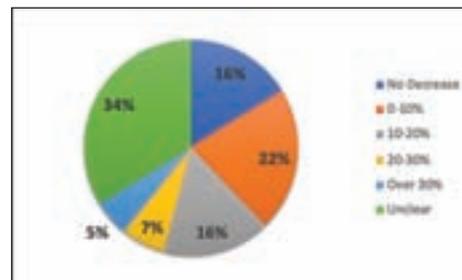
Our purpose in asking this question was to gauge the mid-term effects of the pandemic this year. Forty percent of newspapers executives said that they anticipate a revenue decrease of between 0 and 20 percent, while 32 percent indicated that it is unclear at this time.



7. Do you anticipate a revenue decrease in Q4 (Oct.-Dec.) and if yes, by how much?

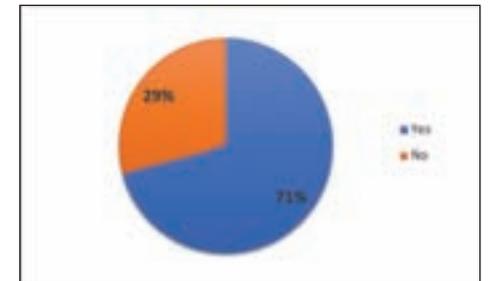
Our purpose in asking this question was to gauge the longer-term effects of the pandemic this year.

One-third of respondents said that it is unclear at this time.



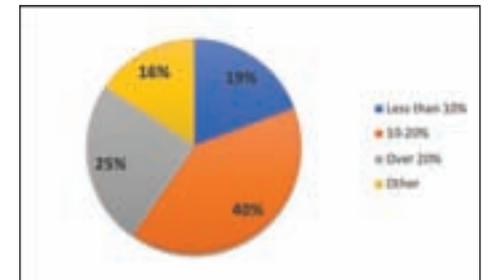
8. Have you reduced payroll?

Sixty-seven percent of those surveyed responded yes.



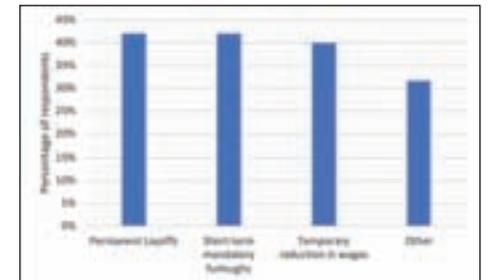
9. If you have reduced payroll, by how much?

Most newspaper executives (31 percent) have reduced payroll by 10-20 percent.



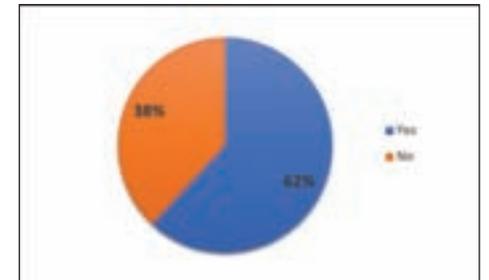
10. What method(s) have you used to cut payroll (select all that apply)?

Respondents are utilizing a mixture of payroll reductions evenly spread between permanent layoffs (43 percent), short term mandatory furloughs (41 percent) and temporary reductions in wages (39 percent).



11. Have you seen an increase in unpaid receivables?

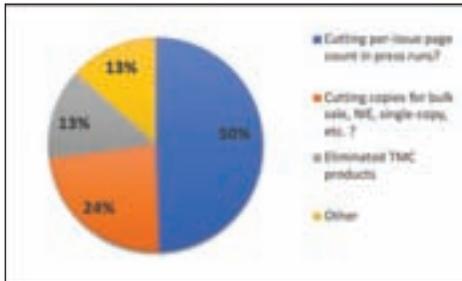
Eighty-four percent of respondents either have seen an increase in unpaid receivables or are expecting to in April.



SURVEY from Page 6

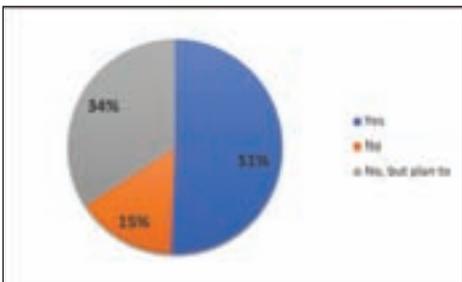
12. What methods have you employed to reduce newsprint consumption?

Nearly all respondents (83 percent) have reduced per-issue page count while 40 percent have cut copies for bulk sales, NIE, single-copy, etc. Twenty-two percent have eliminated TMC products.



13. Have you applied for SBA loans or other forms of government financial assistance?

Over 80 percent of newspaper executives have applied or plan to apply.



14. How have you approached the coverage of Covid-19 pandemic in your newsroom?

Following are some comments/suggestions from survey respondents:

- “Our editorial team is working remotely as much as possible.”
- “We are relying more on websites and social media.”
- “We write an update every week from interviewing local leaders and medical staffs, with an emphasis on timely digital coverage and in-depth print coverage.”
- “Maintained staffing levels for the time being (March-April). Will likely need to adjust in May/June. Dropped paywall initially for all web stories; adjusting now to just COVID stories as a public service.”

- “Trying to look at it from all angles: health, education, local businesses, tourism and event effects, agriculture, natural resources. Bringing in local health experts to do live video interviews.”
- “It’s all C-19 coverage all the time. People are talking about nothing else. We’re a weekly, with a robust web site, and we strive to be first on all local C-19 stories. Reaction has been huge.”

- “Human interest stories. Focus on the good news of our communities. Running a travel series of two local men who spent a month traveling southeast Asia doing research for a novel. Great opportunity and readership for people stuck in their homes.”
- “Our city government has paid to mail the paper to all households for 2 weeks. About 2/3

of our newshole is going to COVID-19 coverage. We are supplementing the weekly print product with daily online stories.”

- “Heavy use of social media platforms for breaking news and health alerts; full staff devoted to first-person reaction/perspective stories; trying especially hard to write feel-good local human-interest stories that have nothing to do with COVID to give community some good news.”

15. What suggestions do you have for fellow publishers to weather this crisis?

Following are some comments/suggestions from survey respondents:

- “Find savings where possible. Grab any revenue dollars – think John Paton’s statement stacking digital dimes but apply to print and digital; stack coronavirus dimes to match pre-coronavirus dollars. Anywhere we find a dollar. This may mean rate reductions, BOGOs, etc. Above all, though, try not to arrive at a permanent solution to a temporary problem.”

- “Hang on to cash if possible.”
- “Cut expense, reduce print frequency, better train for digital sales.”
- “This is a day-at-a-time crisis. Have a longer-term strategy for general guidelines but be willing to alter it on the fly. Push your best people to think and voice opinions on strategy. Work with a high sense of urgency. Be as productive as you can with each of the days, make sure to plan the next, then put it away and get some sleep. You need it.”
- “Don’t be afraid of having conversations

with your local EDC, Main Street and businesses about us needing their financial support if we are to remain in business. We have discounted our rates for advertisers wanting to let people know they are open or if they have changed the way they are doing business. We are having success with this strategy.”

- “Develop better digital niche products.”
- “Provide GREAT journalism for your communities.”
- “Move to digital thinking on subscriptions and advertising. You may only have subscriptions to support your newspaper and will need digital to drive new subscribers and attract advertising.”
- “Best to make dramatic cuts in expenses now rather than slowly bleed out later. Focus on digital first and push everything through social media. Don’t be afraid to ask for donations from readers (we are doing via TownNews’ Support Local Journalism service.”
- “Do everything you can to show that you support your local business owners. We have three different directories of local businesses that give every local business that wants a listing a free listing. Once a day, we put those back to the top of our home page.”
- “Maintain your staff as long as you can. We are negotiating with lenders about going to interest-only payments for six months and looking to reduce costs – especially printing and postage – as much as possible.”
- “This is a new coverage area and one that will be remembered long after things clear up. All coverage will be historical.”

TPA MEMBER COVERAGE SHOWCASE: Paris Post-Intelligencer

Area couple won’t forget birth of baby on side of Highway 79

KEN WALKER
Paris Post-Intelligencer
December 22, 2019

Things were getting intense for Libertie Harrell as her husband, Ryan, drove them through Dover Thursday morning, Dec. 19, 2019.

The expectant mother knew it was just about time for her baby to come. But the Harrells were still 30 long minutes away from the hospital in Paris.

“About the time we were in Dover, the baby started coming hard and fast,” said Ryan Harrell, whose cellphone couldn’t get a signal as he continued to drive in Stewart County along Highway 79 toward Paris.

So, Ryan and Libertie had to make a split-second decision — and they did.

Ryan pulled the vehicle over, knowing Libertie was going to have the baby right then and there.

And, with several things coming together — and perhaps some divine intervention

— everything turned out great for the couple and their newly-born 8-pound daughter, Heartily Libertie.

Seventh child is ‘easiest’

The Harrells live in Big Rock, which is about 10 miles northeast of Dover in Stewart County. They had six children already — ages 10, 9, 7, 5, 3 and 22 months. They didn’t dream their seventh child would be born in such unusual circumstances.

The due date was Saturday, and Libertie Harrell had never given birth early with any of her previous children.

She and Ryan have been married for 12 years, and their past experience with childbirth made Libertie feel secure that they knew what to do when the time came.



Paris Post-Intelligencer photo by Ken Walker
Ryan and Libertie Harrell show off their daughter, Heartily Libertie, at Henry County Medical Center. The baby was born on the side of Highway 79 en route to the hospital Dec. 19, 2019.

But she started having contractions early Thursday morning while at home, and those contractions quickly “started to feel like labor,” she said.

“He (Ryan) didn’t take things seriously until my water broke,” she said.

She had been under the care of Dr. Katherine Whitfield in Henry County Medical Center’s obstetrics/gynecology department at the hospital’s Women’s Center. But that meant they were about 45 minutes away from the hospital where they planned to have their baby.

Ryan Harrell had called 911 prior to

The art of the interview: How to get the goods

The basis for almost all great journalism is the interview, the act of obtaining information from a source.

It sounds simple enough, right? Find someone with knowledge, call or visit them, ask them questions and record their responses.

But like everything in journalism, conducting quality interviews is a craft that requires great commitment, effort and skill to pull off at the highest level. It demands a never-ending process of learning and improving.

Interviews serve several important purposes. They deepen a reporter's understanding of a topic; they provide opportunities to gather detail, color and specifics that enhance storytelling opportunities; they add context, nuance and perspective that documents and data cannot provide; and, ultimately, they generate credibility with readers by strengthening the writer's voice, authority and understanding of a topic.

Effective interviewing is an art form; there is no one way to do it well, and the approach depends on the subject and the topic. Here are some tips to conducting memorable and effective interviews that will generate quality material to make



BETTER WRITING WITH BART

BART PFANKUCH

your reporting and writing shine.

- Consider the Three Ps. Preparation, planning and persistence are critical. Great interviews only result from great preparation. Read up on sources and topics before the interview begins. Never go in cold.

- Be ready for anything; don't let sources take control of the interview. Ask a tough question three different ways if that's what it takes to get a real answer.

- Be patient to get more info. Asking good questions takes skill. Thought, anticipation and analysis are critical elements of asking the right question at the right time. Do not be in a hurry.

- Discomfort is encouraged on both sides of interviews that become intense and go deep; it's OK if you both squirm a bit.

- Think about questions in advance and write them down. On breaking news, think on your feet

and react to the situation to come up with high-impact questions. Maintain a tight focus on the work and don't drift off.

- Ask open-ended questions and those that push the source to go beyond the obvious and make them think deeply and reveal things they might not have intended to. Force them to reveal their feelings in addition to their knowledge.

- Develop a connection with the subject and use a conversational style to lower their guard and make them feel more comfortable revealing the truth. Be open with the source to gain trust and credibility and build a rapport but not a friendship.

- Create a flow for the interview that makes sense and feels right. Easy questions early, hard questions in the middle, follow-up queries at the end. Plan a strategy in advance.

- Listen more than you talk. Avoid questions with long wind-ups. Give the source your full attention at all times.

- Try to meet sources on their own turf. Better yet, be with them when they undertake an activity or go about their daily duties.

- Use the "devil's advocate" ex-

cuse to pose sensitive questions.

- Share a bit of yourself to warm up an uncomfortable, uneasy or inexperienced source.

- Feel free to acknowledge that you don't know something or didn't get it. Ask sources to explain complex topics in the simplest terms possible.

- Always seek opportunities for photos and video. Do the full interview, then re-ask a good question while taking a photo or short video.

- On breaking news, interview both the blowhards and the quiet people who stand on the edge of a scene. Find the highest ranking officer on the scene and question them. Never stop asking questions of authorities until they walk away or tell you to stop. Have business cards handy to give to people and ask them to call you later. Act and think fast because opportunities are fleeting. Stay a little longer than you think necessary.

- In press conferences, never ask your best question amid the pack. Try to get private time with the source or call them later with the gangbuster inquiry. Always break away from the pack.

- Be kind and respectful at all times, and don't be afraid to use

tasteful humor to break down barriers with an uncomfortable or new source.

- Record interviews for accuracy, even if transcription takes more time and is painful. For phone interviews, put your phone on speaker and tape the call on a micro-recorder. When a key fact or great quote comes along, write down the time on the recorder in your notes to expedite finding it later.

- Always keep open the opportunity for a follow-up interview. Arrange to speak again to clarify facts or run new findings by them. Get the cell phone number of all people you interview.

- Put the phone down and turn the radio off while driving after an interview (windshield time is thinking time.) Right after an interview, go back and tidy up the notes and write up the information in story form.

- Practice makes one proficient; becoming a student of the interview process and reviewing past results leads to constant improvement.

Bart Pfankuch is the content director for South Dakota News Watch, a non-profit online journalism group. Contact him at bart.pfankuch@sdnewswatch.org.

BABY from Page 7

losing his cellphone signal and knew an ambulance was going to be waiting to meet them at Paris Landing.

After traveling through Dover, the contractions picked up, and the couple pulled over on Highway 79 where it meets Highway 230, which goes north to Piney Campground about five miles away. After they stopped, Libertie knew the baby was coming.

"Everything happened so fast. He got out and ran around to my side of the car but by then I had already pushed her out," Libertie said. "And, he picked her up and put her on top of me so I could hold her. This actually was the easiest baby we've had."

A series of fortunate events

About that time, a truck with three construction workers in it pulled in behind the Harrells'

vehicle. A park ranger and a Stewart County sheriff's deputy soon showed up to help, quickly followed by four paramedics. Ambulances from Stewart County and Henry County arrived at the scene, too.

But the hardest part had already happened. And Libertie's experience with childbirth was helpful.

"It probably helped a lot that I knew what that feeling was, and how to push," she said.

Ryan Harrell is a federal civilian firefighter at the Fort Campbell Army base, so he has had plenty of experience in emergency situations, too.

"I do wish I had brought a few more towels and blankets, though, when we left home," he laughed.

Adding to their love story

The birth of their seventh



Submitted photo by Ryan Harrell

Libertie Harrell holds her baby, Heartily Libertie, as paramedics work to load her onto an ambulance after she gave birth on the side of Highway 79 on Thursday morning, Dec. 19, 2019. Libertie (Army) and her husband Ryan Harrell (Navy), who are both armed services veterans, are now the parents of seven children. At the time of Heartily Libertie's birth, the other six children ranged in age from 10 years to 22 months.

child was the latest chapter in a love story that began for the Harrells in 2006.

Ryan Harrell was in the Navy then, and Libertie was in the Army. They were both serving in Kuwait when they met at a chapel there. They were members of a praise team that performed Christian music — Libertie was a singer

and Ryan was a drummer. They married in 2007.

They gave Heartily her name because of a Bible verse in Colossians that states "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."

As Libertie rode in the Stewart County ambulance into Paris, happily nursing her child, another moment of faith came to her.

The couple had learned via dispatchers that the emergency room at Henry County Medical Center was full, and the new mother couldn't help but think about another December baby when she thought "there's no room at the inn."

Hospital workers were able to clear out a space for them by the time they arrived, however.

"We've got to give God all the glory for the timing of everything, with the construction workers showing up when they did, and the labor going as easily as it did in that situation," he said.

CRITCHLOW from Page 5

new stories posted online for subscribers on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

As announced a couple of weeks ago, the online version will remain free for a while as we continue to inform the community about the coronavirus pandemic — sharing updates as well as features. The website is nwtnto-day.com.

From a news standpoint, our staff — which I'm proud to say was just notified of nine awards in a statewide contest — will continue to cover hard news as well as the many inspirational stories locally.

The last few weeks have proven the staff's ability to do just that, as COVID-19 updates have been

covered in detail, while heartwarming stories of generosity and kindness have been featured with more to come.

Moving forward, all of the pages presently offered each week will continue, with both publications including sports, editorial, society and classified pages. Tuesday's newspaper will also feature agriculture, business, education and court news.

Thursday's newspapers will be highlighted with the weekly Friends and Neighbors feature page, as well as health, religion and outdoor news.

Despite these changes, we are still committed to delivering "All The News While It's News," which has been The Messenger's slogan since the late 1920s, and we expect to have larger papers

packed full of local news.

And we welcome suggestions, so if you have a story idea, please email us at ucdm@ucmessenger.com. Our advertising department is also just a phone call away at 885-0744 or by email at advertising@ucmessenger.com.

For existing readers, subscriptions will be extended, while new subscribers will get a lower rate.

Through all of this, we ask that you please be patient with us, because it's all new to us, too.

In the meantime, wash your hands and keep your distance; it could save a life!

Editor David Critchlow Jr. may be contacted by email at dgc@ucmessenger.com. This column was originally published in The Daily Messenger, Union City, on April 3.

Herald's Newbold wins TPA's 2019 Public Notice Journalism Contest

STAFF REPORTS
Tennessee Press Association
April 15, 2020

Becky Newbold, managing editor of the Lewis County Herald, Hohenwald, has won the Tennessee Press Association's 2019 Public Notice Journalism Contest.

The contest recognizes journalists that use public notice, or the



Newbold

lack of required public notice, to raise awareness of its importance.

The judge wrote, "The Lewis County Herald wins the 2019 TPA Public Notice Journalism Contest for its comprehensive coverage of the failure of the Hohenwald City Council and other local governing bodies to adequately notify citizens of upcoming public meetings."

"Becky Jane Newbold exposed the city's practice of not using the local newspaper to notify residents of upcoming matters. Instead of using the dominant local source of information, the city posted flyers at select public buildings and sometimes on its Facebook page.

"The Council changed its 9-month public notice policy after citizens showed up at a Council meeting to complain about not being told that the Codes Appeal Board was discussing plans to store 2,000 gallons of racing fuel in their neighborhood. They missed the flyers at the library and city hall but not in The Herald which reported it later."

The judge also awarded an honorable mention to Tracey Wolfe of Grainger Today, writing, "After Grainger Today reported in June (2019) that the Town of Bean Station 'may have violated' state purchasing laws by not advertising a notice for competitive bids to build \$12,500 in new parking spaces, Bean Station, as quickly as July 17 adopted its first-ever purchasing policy."

Newbold's entry has been advanced to the national contest, which is now part of the National Newspaper Association's contest and sponsored by the Public Notice Resource Center. The TPA plaque and prize of \$200 is scheduled to be presented on September 24 as part of the TPA State Press Contests Awards dinner in Pigeon Forge.

This marked the fifth year of the TPA Public Notice Journalism Contest.

TRACKS

Tomahawk's Hewett retires after 30 years; Wallace replaces her

Rita Hewett, a longtime advertising manager for The Tomahawk, Mountain City, retired March 31 after 30 years in the business. Bill Thomas, the newspaper's publisher, said that Hewett's experience and expertise will be missed.

"During my 30 years of being in the newspaper business, I have never experienced a more dedicated advertising manager," Thomas said. "Rita Hewett has been focused, committed, and delivering results at the highest level for The Tomahawk since her first day of employment. She will be missed."

After graduating from high school, Hewett worked in retail, eventually becoming the buyer's assistant for a chain of pharmacies. "I took over the duties of creating and putting together their quarterly sales flier, which was an eight-page tabloid full of a product he would buy on closeout and have a big quarterly sale at his pharmacies." It was in this capacity Hewett worked closely with the sales rep at the St. Petersburg Times, who let her know of an opening in the advertising department.

"I started to drive people crazy until I got the position," said Hewett.

Hewett rose through the ranks within the advertising department of the Tampa Bay Times, when it was still known as the St. Petersburg Times, a Pulitzer Prize-win-



Hewett

ning newspaper published in St. Petersburg, Florida. She remained there until 2007, when she decided to move to the mountains of East Tennessee.

While driving through Atlanta headed toward Mountain City, where she and her husband had purchased property in 2002 and built a home in 2005, Hewett recalls receiving a call from Bill Thomas, publisher at The Tomahawk. "We worked something out," Hewett said. "I don't think it could have been a better situation for both of us."

Rick Wallace took Hewett's place with The Tomahawk. Wallace, who was born and raised locally, attended Appalachian State University.

"It's a team in here. I picked up on that on my first day," Wallace said. "I can go to anyone here. I'm grateful for the opportunity."

Wallace worked at the Appalachian State campus post office for nearly 27 years and was in a leadership position for 15 of those years. He retired from App State in 2016 and focused more on his business, Silverstone Hams. He considered

getting a new job for around a year before seeing a job opening that he thought stood out.

The Tomahawk, Mountain City
March 26, 2020

Bowdens retire from Courier

Bill and Betty Bowden retired from The Fentress Courier at the end of March. Bill Bowden, who was publisher, had worked for the newspaper and its predecessor since 1963. Betty joined the staff in 1986.

Bill Bowden first stepped foot into the office of the Fentress County Leader-Times as an employee on Monday, Oct. 28, 1963, "about as green as an employee could be."

"I was working two jobs — days at Burden Drug Store and nights as a cook for my brother-in-law, at the Rebel Drive In from 5 to 10 p.m.

at that time," Bowden recalls. "Betty Boles Ellison, the editor of the Leader-Times and a frequent customer at the Rebel, told me that there was an opening at the paper that would pay a whopping \$50 per week, which was more than I was then making working both my other jobs."

In June of 1964, the Leader-Times was purchased by Austin Jennings and Robert Pigg, two veteran newspapermen from Woodbury.



Bill and Betty Bowden



Wallace

Free webinars for TPA members

May 7
What Makes Something Newsworthy?

May 23
Diving Into the Sales Techniques Behind Selling Response

Register at
www.OnlineMediaCampus.com
Contact rgentile@tnpress.com
for the coupon code.

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

Adapted from a story by Betty Bowden from Oct. 16, 2013.

Is your 'designer' actually a designer or just a page assembler?

Editor's note: Ed Henninger retired in 2019 after 30 years as a newspaper design consultant. This column, originally published in the December 2017 edition of The Tennessee Press, is reprinted here with Ed's permission.

During a recent phone conversation with a publisher, she told me: "We have a designer who does that."

I had seen her paper. She doesn't have a designer.

What she has is a person who assembles pages. And there's a difference. A person who assembles pages finds ways to make things fit. There's no design involved. It's just shoehorning stuff into holes and getting the paper done — sometimes on deadline.

So . . . how do you tell if your "designer" really is a designer? Here are some of the things I'd look for:

TREATS TEXT with respect, never going off the baseline grid and never tracking too tightly.

UNDERSTANDS that headline hierarchy is more than just size.

UNDERSTANDS and appreciates the value of deadlines . . . and meets them.

KNOWS WHAT a color wheel is . . . and how to use it.

MEASURES in picas and points



**By
DESIGN**

ED HENNINGER

. . . not inches.

USES THINNER rules when rules are called for in a design.

USES COLOR with a purpose, not whimsically.

KNOWS HOW to fill space when a story comes up short . . . without it ever looking like he/she has filled space.

NEVER WHINES about the space he/she is given to design in.

CAN EXPLAIN a page design or a design element to someone who really doesn't understand design.

KNOWS what is meant by the term "optical center."

UNDERSTANDS and appreciates the value of planning.

UNDERSTANDS and appreciates the value of visual elements.

UNDERSTANDS and appreciates the value of design consistency.

UNDERSTANDS and appreciates the value of negative space.

UNDERSTANDS and appreciates the value of deadlines—and meets



Illustration by Ed Henninger

A designer can tell you why the nameplate at top works well . . . and why the one at bottom is awful.

them.

KNOWS HOW to get or prepare a chart.

KNOWS HOW to get or prepare a map.

KNOWS HOW to get or prepare a graphic.

KNOWS HOW to get or prepare an infobox or by-the-numbers box.

COMMUNICATES design ap-

proach clearly to others.

COMMUNICATES the value of design to those in other departments — especially circulation and advertising.

INSISTS on being involved in discussions of special reports and special sections.

UNDERSTANDS that great design is not the practice of putting

more things into a page . . . but in taking things away.

WHEN ASKED about a design decision, never says: "I don't know . . . it just felt right."

FOCUSES on the needs of readers. Always.

So . . . does your design staffer do these things? If so, you are blest. If not . . .

Knox County Sheriff's Office 'wrongly denied' people's access to open records

TYLER WHETSTONE
Knoxville News Sentinel
April 13, 2020

Open government advocates won a major victory Monday, April 13, when a Knox County chancery court judge ruled the Knox County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) cannot charge people to inspect public records.

KCSO argued in court earlier this year that it could assess charges to inspect public documents, including arrest records and emails, that required redaction.

Chancellor John Weaver disagreed and ordered KCSO to create a system where Tennessee residents can access redacted arrest records on a current basis.

The practice of charging for inspection became the central strand of a closely watched open records lawsuit filed by a University of Tennessee professor who

requested documents and emails related to the county's controversial 287(g) program, which enlists local police agencies to enforce federal immigration law.

After months of not receiving an appropriate response to her requests, Meghan Conley sued the sheriff's office under the state's Open Records Law in April 2019. Closing arguments were made in January.

In his opinion — released April 13 — Weaver wrote that Conley should receive a copy of everything she previously requested and was "wrongly denied" and that the sheriff's office should pay all of Conley's court costs.

The records portal is necessary, he wrote, because the sheriff's office's current policy falls short of state statute that says public records should be available for inspection at all times during business hours.

"If there is no reasonable way

for the public to access the public records, the public cannot use them to oversee governmental activities," Weaver wrote.

He also wrote that "there are problems with KCSO's practices concerning public records" and that the sheriff's office's redaction policy "has been problematic."

Further, Weaver said there is "an abundance of evidence in the case that the KCSO may have frustrated Professor Conley" in her attempts to obtain access to the public records, calling "balls and strikes" with her specific requests.

Those requests began under then-Sheriff Jimmy "J.J." Jones and continued under Spangler, who declined to comment through a sheriff's office spokesperson.

"Sheriff Spangler has not had the opportunity to review or discuss the Chancellor's ruling with the Law Directors office yet," Kimberly Glenn said.

In an email to Knox News, Con-

ley said she spent a year and half trying to get records and ended up with only a fraction of what she expected.

"The experience was incredibly frustrating," she said. "If I hadn't been making these requests as part of my professional research, I might have given up. It makes me wonder how many other people have been denied access to records without recourse, because they didn't have the same legal support that I had."

Deborah Fisher, executive director of the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government, wrote the ruling was an "important win" for public records in an email to Knox News.

"In Tennessee, the law specifically supports that inspection is free, and it's something the public overwhelmingly supported when it came up back in 2015 in a study by the Office of Open Records Counsel," she wrote.

How we got here

During the trial, Weaver repeatedly cited a 2008 state comptroller's report that says government agencies can charge for the cost of making a copy and staff time if the records custodian has spent at least one hour on the request. If the requester wants only to inspect the documents, there is to be no charge under state law.

County Deputy Law Director Amanda Morse, however, asserted the sheriff's office could charge for documents prepared for inspection if they required redaction. She pointed to a line in the comptroller's report that says charges couldn't be assessed "unless otherwise provided by state law."

Morse said that because the sheriff's office is required under state law to redact some docu-

Newspapers are essential to our American dream

PETER W. WAGNER
N'West Iowa Review
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One of the reporters in our Sheldon office received an e-mail a week ago stating his child was no longer qualified to be taken care of by the local day-care facility. The e-mail came on Friday and the change went into effect on Monday. Never mind that the reporter's spouse works at the local hospital and 4-month-old has been in the care of the facility since January.

The care facility, the e-mail said, "will begin to restrict care only to those families that meet the state qualification of an essential function in the workforce."

The e-mail goes on to identify essential fields as "hospital staff, all health-care providers, those who provide critical government services, food service workers including grocery store and limited restaurant workers and others approved by the Director of Human Service."

I don't have a problem with the child-care service making such a decision. Maybe they were suddenly short-handed by the coronavirus pandemic or overcrowded by a sudden influx of additional charges. Perhaps they had become concerned that the number of children in their building created an opportunity for the COVID-19 sickness to invade their space. Only they know why the sudden decision.

What does concern me, however, other than the short notice provided our writer, is the presumption that newspapers are not an essential business.

In those states that have already determined that residents must be a "safe in place" for an indefinite time, media companies and newspaper printing plants have been declared essential businesses. Their state governments expect them to stay open and keep the citizens informed.

Hometown newspapers such as The N'West Iowa REVIEW and our Sheldon Mail-Sun, Sioux Center News, Hawarden Independent/Ireton Examiner and South O'Brien Sun are depended upon by their readers for accurate reporting of all aspects of what is happening in their area.

Why? Because we all want to know what is changing and how others in the community are reacting to the information.

We can easily get the national updates moment by moment from cable's many news channels but none of those report on what is happening right here where we live, have families, do our primary shopping, go to church, have children in school and are invested in agriculture and business ventures.

To say we don't need newspapers because we have the internet is like saying we don't need farmers because we have supermarkets.

Newspapers are the first recorders of our personal, professional and community history. From the time a person is born and listed in the birth report to when their obituary is published the hometown newspaper is the only media, local or national, to track and preserve the details of that person's life.

Newspapers are the glue that holds the community together. The printed paper is where the community looks for credible reporting on everything from city hall to the school system, hospital and retail community to the local baseball field.

Newspapers also continue to be the best source for those pictures mothers and grandmothers like to hang on the refrigerator.

Newspapers are the first place a political candidate stops when visiting a community, and it is where entertainment operations turn to when they need to announce a postponement or cancellation of an earlier announced program.

Most importantly, the local paper is the local media turned to when there is a need to create consensus in a community. Through the sharing of facts, the reporting of ideas and sometimes a well-crafted editorial, the newspaper draws the residents into the need to make a unified decision regarding a tax issue, the repair of streets or other important question.

Newspapers are social. They

keep the readers in contact with others all through the community. They are the platform for businesses wanting to let others know about a sale, new merchandise and changes in their service or product lines.

Newspapers are where the community turns when they want to know about upcoming church suppers, birthday and wedding card showers, the amazing play by a local high school sports hero, and, when there is no virus, where to go and what's going on that weekend.

These are difficult times for all of us, but we have been through other times just as tough. The farm crisis during the early 1980s, for example. And 9/11.

Those of us that depend on advertising sales for our income — and that includes newspapers, shoppers, broadcasters and independent digital outlets — are going to be hard pressed to stay in business. But our American form of government requires that the pub-

lic be informed and we consider doing so a privilege and duty.

An old friend reminded me of an often-quoted statement sometimes attributed to H.L. Mencken, an American journalist, essayist and satirist: "It is the duty of a newspaper to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

That statement has never been more true.

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 pw@iowainformation.com or CELL 712-348-3550. Or contact Peter direct for proven sales training for your staff.

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ments before releasing them, and that because redaction costs hundreds of dollars in staff time, it could charge Conley for the redaction even if it was for documents Conley wanted only to inspect.

Conley said she stopped asking for large numbers of documents to avoid the redaction fee. The sheriff's office stood alone among local governments in this interpretation of the law.

Gov. Bill Lee signed a new law at the end of March that changed the statute language to clear up confusion about what records were exempt from inspection, and effectively eliminated the unique legal interpretation Knox County was using to make it cost-prohibitive for most people to inspect public records.

Other notes from the ruling

Weaver also shot down the sheriff's office notion that records requests could be denied for being overly broad and also when too specific because of the work required in finding the records.

"I think Weaver recognized how the sheriff's reasoning thwarted any meaningful access to public records and undermined the entire purpose of the public records law," Fisher wrote.

Some of the records requests pertaining to staff emails were denied, the sheriff's office argued, because every employee's email would have to be checked.

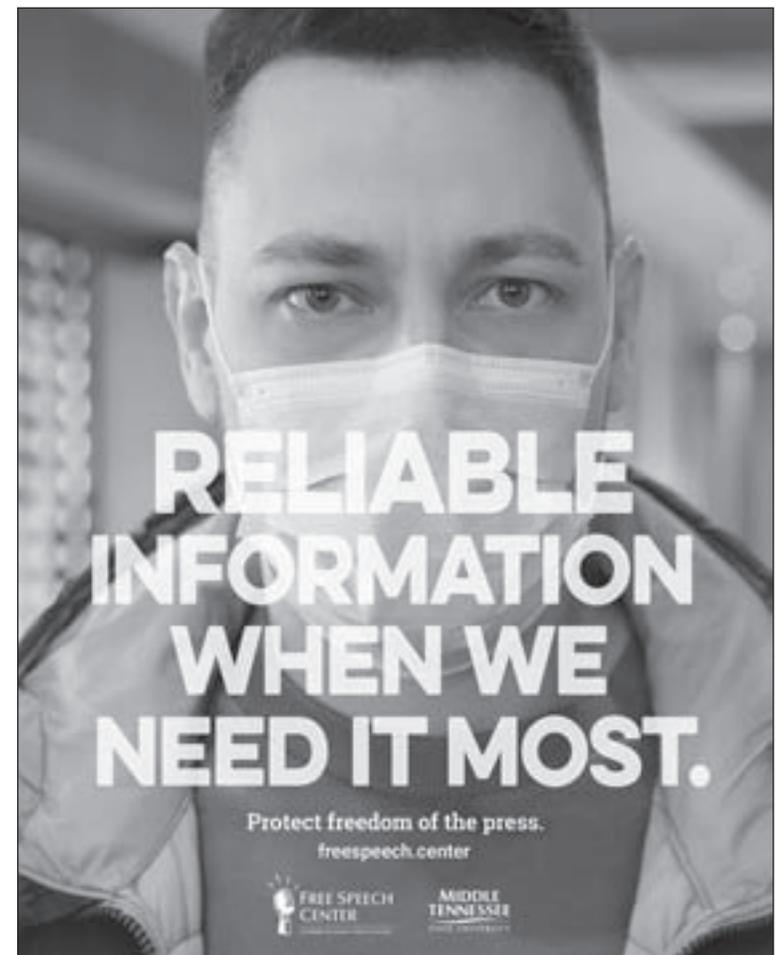
Weaver didn't buy it, writing that KCSO employees are responsible — per the office email policy — to review their own emails and determine whether they are public

records. He said the sheriff's office "can easily inquire" whether its 1,100 employees have particular records by sending out a "blanket email making such an inquiry."

Among the already listed requirements for the sheriff's office, Weaver said Conley should receive:

- Copies of all 48-hour holds issued by ICE to the sheriff's office since the beginning of the 287(g) agreement in 2017;
- Copies of all monthly detention invoices sent to ICE from the sheriff's office since June 2017;
- Copies of any sheriff's office arrest or detention record that Conley deems necessary for her work.

Conley didn't get everything she requested from Weaver, as some of the requests were too stringent or were already covered by the state open records law.



Newspapers may download this series of ads at:
<https://www.mtsu.edu/first-amendment/page/1forall-gallery>



'We Are There With You' Campaign enlisted 64 member newspapers

Inspired by a UK #ThereWithYou campaign in which dozens of newspapers ran the same front page as a means to reassure readers during the pandemic, the Tennessee Press Association in late March launched a similar campaign made available to member newspapers. Conceived by the Chattanooga Times Free Press and using a front page creative designed by Times Free Press Presentation Editor Matt McClane, TPA newspapers were encouraged to create and write their own stories about their own communities and how they were standing with them through these difficult times. More than 60 TPA member newspapers participated in the "Common Page" initiative; some of their front pages using the TPA's "We Are There With You" theme and design are presented below. Participating daily papers ran their Common front pages designed starting March 30 with other papers following that week with their next print editions. Chris Vass, TPA president, offered the initiative to other press associations nationwide, and 11 other state associations participated as a result.



McClane

