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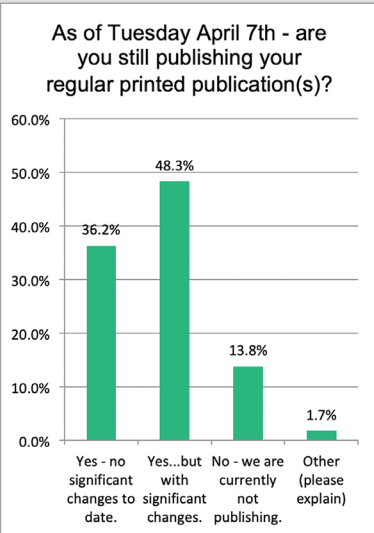
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COMING next month

The June issue of Free Paper INK will focus on what publications can do to stage a strong comeback from this COVID-19 induced business disruption. As always, INK will provide insights and ideas focused on generating an optimistic and successful future for free publications.

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Free Paper INK is dedicated to keeping the industry informed on key issues, topics and industry news. If you have any items of interest that should be shared with people throughout the Free Paper Industry, simply email them to loren@afcp.org. We welcome your input, appreciate your readership and look forward to your contributions to our content.

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# THIS MONTH'S FEATURED

## Association of Free Community Publications

# MEMBER BENEFIT

### INDUSTRY ADVOCACY

The Association of Free Community Publications (AFCP) works hard to monitor events, developments, trends and opportunities that effect members of the community publication industry. Materials costs, USPS changes and discounts, pending legislation that impacts printers and publishers, and so many other important areas of interest all get close attention. Looking back over the last 24 months, here are just a few of the issues we have worked to keep industry members aware of, up to date on and their voices heard:

**USPS Available Discounts** - Coordinating the efforts and materials necessary to take advantage of discounts available with the Emerging and Advanced Technologies Promotion. By developing an augmented reality ad program centered around the "Buy Local" theme, members utilizing Marketing Mail can qualify for a 2% discount on their postage through the 5 month promotion period. A similar program is currently being planned for the Mobil Shopping Promotion later in 2020.

**Newsprint Tariffs** - In response to the proposed tariffs on Canadian newsprint suppliers, AFCP endorsed a coalition of printers and publishers called STOPP to oppose the proposed countervailing duties. Through a series of email blasts, legislative contact initiatives and collective industry support, the efforts eventually resulted in the International Trade Commission terminating the duties being applied to uncoated groundwood.

**USPS Rate Changes** - Our partnership with the Saturation Mailers Coalition helps us monitor changes within the USPS rates, processes and procedures as a critical aspect of many members extensive reliance on USPS delivery for their publications. Keeping members informed as well as coordinating a larger voice for our members is essential to the economic well-being of the industry.

These recent examples are just several of the many ways we represent and connect industry members with the national business world to promote their interests and economic importance within their respective communities.



LOREN COLBURN  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

# We can weather this storm Together

**THIS MORNING MARKS THE FIRST** day of my 11th year as the executive director of the Association of Free Community Publications. The odd thing is I am doing that from the spare bedroom/newly created office in my house as mandated by the State of New York due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. Have to admit, I never saw that one coming!

What it does do is give me the opportunity to reflect on the last 10 years and all the changes and challenges that have come along the way. Those years have not been the kindest to the free community publication industry; but being the resilient, entrepreneurial types that you all are, we found our way through those challenges. This one may be much more difficult than anything we have seen in a long time yet my confidence in all of you to fight your way through this and come out the other side is as strong as ever.

More than any other time in recent history, we as a community of publications must band together for the common good. It is with the support of one another that we will weather this storm and rebuild when the storm has passed. This will not be a simple task and it is sure to change many things along the way that we weren't planning on changing. In the end, if we approach those changes with an open mind and an eye on the horizon, the resulting modifications will make us stronger and more resilient in the future.


I believe AFCP's role in that rebuilding process will be to provide as many communication links and opportunities between all of our members as possible. We will look for additional ways to facilitate the exchange of concepts and success stories in order to promote the implementation of successful procedures,

practices and revenue opportunities for all member publications. The more we can share our success with other people in the industry, the greater the number of publishers that will rebound from this pandemic with a better product.

It won't be easy and some of our associates will probably not be able to survive the storm. But those who are fighters, believers and dreamers will. They are the individuals who founded this industry and they are the individuals who define that intense survival instinct needed to forge ahead even in the most difficult of times. They are also the people who have kept me connected to this industry for the past 43 years and excited about being able to stand shoulder to shoulder with so many individuals I can deeply admire and respect.

We are definitely a community, an interesting and unique community of people and companies. We very much walk to the beat of our own drum. That is what binds us together and that is what will provide us the means of moving past this unforeseen pandemic. As important as it is for each of you to play an active role in your geographic communities, it is equally important for you to actively participate in your trade community. This trade community has the capability to perform as your R&D department, your advisory board and even your psychologist at times!

So take advantage of this resource and all it has to offer. Your survival and success may be directly related to your ability to do that!

In the meantime, stay safe and tell all of those media buyers, "If It's Free, Buy It!" 



# The many sides of Publication Printers

FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED SINCE 1979, Publication Printers Corp. offers a wide variety of competitively priced printing, binding, distribution and digital publication services to meet your publishing needs.

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With a United States Postal Service office onsite, their in-house mailing services can get your publications into the mail quickly at the lowest possible price. In addition to mailing list management, Publication Printers also offers co-mailing services

– combining different magazine titles into a single mailing – to reduce postage costs. A

company-owned fleet of tractor trailers based out of its Denver, Colorado headquarters can get any size shipment of your publication to its Colorado destination. For nationwide shipments, they partner with vendors to assure your publication arrives at its final destination.

Especially important now, in this unprecedented COVID-19 era, is the need for online reader engagement. Publication Printers can help you monetize your product beyond your print sales by either creating a digital presence for you or by enhancing your existing presence with its ePublication, ePublication subscription options and Mobile Apps. Available features include:

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- **Multimedia Platform.** Engage your readers with video (think product demonstrations or property tours), audio, animation and graphics to drive more responses and revenue.
- **Google Analytics.** This free Google tool gives you insight into your readers' activity on your website – where they live, how they linked to your publication, what pages they viewed and more.
- **Reader Tools.** This electronic tool replicates what people tend to do with printed materials: saving and sharing articles, or bookmarking them to come back to again.
- **Custom Mobile Apps.** Create your own mobile application using three pre-existing templates to share with your readers and monetize your digital subscriptions.
- **Additional Content Pages.** More content equals more ads, but printed page counts are limited for many reasons. Online editions

are perfect for expanding your content, allowing for additional ad sales and new revenue opportunities.

- **Custom Hyperlinking.** If people can't find what they're looking for quickly, they will give up and look somewhere else. A custom hyperlink can drive your reader directly to the product or offer in the ad while it is top of mind and they are ready to buy.
- **YouTube Video Advertising.** Premium attention equals premium revenue opportunities. So instead of a static ad in your online edition, give your advertiser better exposure and better responses with an interactive YouTube video ad.
- **Paid Subscriptions.** An advanced subscription system that is compatible with most major payment processors is available.

An assortment of print and digital technologies can be used to expand your reach and reader engagement, and Publication Printers stands ready to use those tools to help you refine your goals. Call them today at 888-824-0303 to set up a personal meeting, or visit [www.publicationprinters.com](http://www.publicationprinters.com) for additional information. 



# Unintended Consequences

**COVID-19** IS AN UNINVITED guest in our lives. Some may think it's all bad, but there are some unintended good consequences of this terrible pandemic.

**TRAFFIC** is gone; **GAS** is affordable.

Cars are moving slower. There are **LESS ACCIDENTS** and consequently **LESS DEATHS**.

Mortgage rates are the **LOWEST** in years.

Due dates on **BILLS** are extended. There's a moratorium on evictions and credit card interest rates.

School loans are **POSTPONED**.

**KIDS** are at home with their **FAMILIES**. **PARENTS** are home taking care of their **CHILDREN**.

**FAST FOOD** has been replaced by **HOME-COOKED MEALS**.

The other day someone told me he washed his hands so vigorously that he saw the answers to a test he took back in the '60s!

Families are enjoying their meals **TOGETHER**.

Hectic **SCHEDULES** have been replaced by **NAPS**.

Parents are taking **TIME** to help their children with homework.

The **AIR** seems **CLEANER**, the **WORLD QUIETER**.

People are going for **WALKS** every day.

Families are bicycling **TOGETHER**.

People are conscious about **HYGIENE** and **HEALTH** again.

Everyone now knows how to **WASH THEIR HANDS** (20 seconds with **SOAP**).

**MONEY** doesn't seem to make the **WORLD GO 'ROUND** anymore.

**HAVES** are helping those who have not. **GIVING** is a new way of life.

**PUZZLES** and **GAMES** have replaced watching television.

**READING** is popular again.

**SIMPLE THINGS** like toilet paper have a new meaning in life.

And we now have **TIME**, finally, to stop and **SMELL THE ROSES**.

And lastly, we can **RELAX** and become closer to our spiritual selves.

Let's turn this negative into a **POSITIVE!** **INK**



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# Getting to know Snyder Communications

AS IT APPROACHES ITS 71ST YEAR, THE Norwich & Sidney Pennysaver is one of the oldest Free Community Publication organizations in the country.

The Chenango Valley Pennysaver was started by Ralph and Darleen St. Denny in 1949 as a booklet size product produced on a mimeograph machine, stapled together, and delivered to 4,500 homes in and around Norwich, New York.

"Ralph told me that after two years he was so tired and broke that he wanted to shut it down. But he owed the bank \$2,000 and had no way to pay it off, so he kept the Chenango Valley Pennysaver alive," said Richard Snyder, current owner of Snyder Communication Corp.

In 1973 Dick Snyder met Ralph and together they put a plan in place where Dick would join as sales manager, progress to general manager, and then purchase the company from Ralph and Darleen in five years. At that time there were only two publications – The Norwich Pennysaver and The Sidney Pennysaver – with a combined circulation of around 23,000 homes.

"Ralph was a terrific mentor to me and to so many others in this industry," said Snyder. Ralph's strength

was on the graphic side producing the ads and the pages. His directions to Snyder and the sales team were simple: "You worry about selling all you can, and I'll worry about getting it out the door."

"We all loved Ralph and he stayed with our company in one capacity or another until 1991," said Snyder. In fact, Ralph was a big factor in the creation of another Snyder Company called Circulars Unlimited, which began in the early '80s.

Circulars Unlimited ("CU") is an advertising circular production company that produces newspaper and direct mail type inserts for companies throughout the USA. This company really took off after

Jeanne Brightman joined CU in 1984; and under her leadership, CU has produced advertising circulars for hundreds of lumber yards, home centers, pet stores, and lawn & garden centers throughout the country.

In 1986, under Snyder's ownership, the company began a significant era of expansion, first acquiring the Turnpike and Pathfinder Pennysavers based in Richfield Spring and Cooperstown, N.Y. Eventually circulation was expanded into Oneonta, N.Y., and the publications then became known as the Richfield Springs Pennysaver and the Oneonta/Cooperstown Pennysaver.

In 1989 Snyder purchased a publication known as My Shopper, covering Schoharie County, and soon added a second My Shopper Edition in the Mohawk Valley region of New York State.

In what is thought of as the first known situation where a free paper bought out a daily newspaper, Snyder purchased the Norwich Evening Sun in 1994. This is a five-day-a-week daily newspaper which began in 1891. Two years later it purchased the New Berlin Gazette, a small paid weekly newspaper which began in 1871. Along with the purchase of the Evening Sun came a small four-unit Goss Community press, which

today has expanded into a 16-unit press operating as Sun Printing Inc.

"One of the major points of pride for us is that all of our papers have been first place General Excellence winners (in multiple categories) in both the New York State and the national Association of Free Community Papers," said Snyder.

Over the years Snyder has seen drastic changes in the communities he serves, and in the paid and free papers he owns. The loss of the small downtown retailer and local business ownership has damaged his main customer base.

*Continued on page 10*



Dick Snyder at work in his Norwich, N.Y., office.





*Continued from page 9*

"In the '70s, '80s, and '90s everything was sales. We were go, go, go, selling hundreds of pages each and every week. Now we focus so much more on the expense side of the financial statement," said Snyder.

With the loss of local retailers, Snyder has tightened up his circulation numbers and abandoned unprofitable circulation areas. He noted that he had actually lost track of how much a single paper cost to print and to deliver in each of his various publication areas. Once realized, he made significant changes in how and where his papers were delivered.

"At one time my ego may have been in how many papers I had and how big my circulation was," he said. "But no more. Just a couple of years ago we had a combined free paper circulation in excess of 77,000. Today our circulation is less than 57,000

and the significant decrease in our expenses has allowed us to remain a profitable company."

At 73, and after 47 years in the industry, Snyder has little interest in slowing down because he sincerely enjoys the business and his employees. "As

much as I love this, I know I can't go on forever. So, we have begun the process of transitioning more of the day-to-day functions to longtime sales manager Russ Foote and his son Nathan.

"In my first interview with Ralph St. Denny way back in 1973, he told me that he had taken his company as far as he could

take it, but not as far as it could go," said Snyder. "Knowing that I'm now at that stage, it's time for me to step back and watch Russ, Nate, and our many talented employees write the next chapter of this great business." **INK**

**"As much as I love this, I know I can't go on forever. So we have begun the process of transitioning more of the day-to-day functions."**

*– Dick Snyder*

# UNPLUGGED

Our daily struggle with digital over-stimulation is continuous and real. With emails, pop-up ads, and notifications, we are often in sensory overload. Printed content has tested better with brand recall than digital, and is often easier on the eyes. Bottom line: printed publications provide readers with a meaningful and memorable experience.

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# Why Community Newspapers Matter..

by Ray Mosby, Rolling Fork, Mississippi

*(Written in October 2017 for National Newspaper Week, but just as relevant today.)*

**THE CHOSEN THEME FOR THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL** Newspaper Week is "Power of the Press," and that power, it seems to me, is a very relative thing.

Everybody understands the power of, say, The New York Times or The Washington Post, but probably less recognized and appreciated is the power of the Deer Creek Pilot and the thousands of other small, community newspapers just like it all across the land.

In survey after survey, it is these little community-minded newspapers that are continuing to thrive. And there are some very tangible, observable reasons for that, not the least of which might be the notion I share that the smaller the community, the more important its newspaper.

For more than 20 years now, I have put out a little country weekly that's been published continuously for 138 years in what most folks might consider Backwater, U.S.A., the two poorest counties in the poorest state in the union with a combined population of less than 6,500 men, women and children.

And it is neither flippant nor hyperbolic when I say that little country weekly newspaper is the only news organization on the planet Earth that gives the first tinker's damn about Sharkey and Issaquena counties, Mississippi. That, folks, is what makes the Deer Creek Pilot mighty, mighty important to those people who call that place home.

While mine might serve as prime example, it is in that respect no different from all those other community newspapers in all those other towns in this country.

Community newspapers have the power to bring about great good and make a profound difference within their locales. And among the good ones, the ones who endure and even prosper, there is always to be found one common denominator – trust.

In a small town the local newspaper is not like the local hardware store. It simply isn't.

In a small town, every newspaper reader thinks he or she is a stockholder, because there exists a real relationship, an implied contract, if you will, between that paper and its readers.

They receive your newspaper, advertise in your newspaper, sometimes even when they don't have to, based

on a simple precept: They trust you to do your very best to find the truth and to tell it to them.

News travels fast in a small town; bad news travels even faster, but all too often that "news" is no such thing. All too often, that "news" is little more than rumor, sometimes made up out of whole cloth and at best some grain of truth exaggerated in its retellings vastly, and often alarmingly out of proportion.

In a small town, readers expect their newspaper to separate the wheat from the chaff and then to "tell it like it is."

And why not?

The community newspaper is not some monolithic entity; its editor is not some ivory towered "big shot." He or she is also a neighbor. He or she is one who goes to

church with you, or stops to chat in the grocery store or is always there to volunteer at community functions or stops to shake hands or just waves in passing.

More importantly, he or she is the one everybody else trusts to promote those things that are beneficial, and to try to stop that which is not. There's a fishbowl effect in small towns, and its newspaper is hence, often its

lightning rod. It may be praised one week and dog-cussed the next, but it is not only impossible, but really not important that it be liked. It's important that it be respected and it is even more important that it be trusted.

I have been in this crazy business for some 38 years now, at both the daily and weekly levels, and been blessed to receive a few accolades along the way, but the greatest single compliment I have ever received came from a salt-of-the-earth little lady who stopped by the office to pick up a hot-off-the-press edition featuring the issue du jour in my little town.

"I've heard all the talk, but I don't believe it until I read it in the paper," she told me.

And that, in a nutshell, is the secret to the continued success of community newspapers.

That, in a nutshell, is the true Power of the Press. **INK**

*Ray Mosby is the editor and publisher of the Deer Creek Pilot in Rolling Fork, Mississippi. He is a two-time winner of the J. Oliver Emmerich Award for Editorial Excellence, the highest honor for commentary writing presented annually by the Mississippi Press Association. This article is reprinted with permission.*

"I've heard all the talk, but I don't believe it until I read it in the paper."

# 7 WAYS Publications Can UP Their Community Involvement...

## Acknowledge the Service of First Responders

There has never been a better time to create a promotion to single out individual first responders in your community for the recognition they most certainly deserve. Putting their own safety aside during this pandemic in favor of the needs and protection of those in their community is worth identifying and promoting within your publications. The community service value is combined with some amazingly strong universal reader appeal to jump start readership after the COVID-19 disruption subsides.

## Challenge Your Community for a Cause

Picking the right cause as a community challenge can create engagement with readers as well as give people a reason to look forward to the next publication. Selecting a cause that has been disrupted by the COVID-19 outbreak can build support and the sense of immediacy for your readers. There are a number of ways to build in community benefit, such as a program of pledging matching funds or even donating a portion or all of the sponsorship revenues to the designated cause.

## Donate What You Don't Need

Donating slightly used equipment or the proceeds from the sale of equipment that is no longer in use can promote many benefits within your community. Consider donating your unused, older computers to the local library, school, or assisted living facility. Another great option is to see if the local school has a list of families in need that might make use of those computers. Create a "reader exchange" within your classifieds to connect under-utilized equipment with families that will benefit from having increased capabilities for their school age children. This shelter-at-home experience will have helped identify many needs within your community and the good will created by helping fill those needs will be greatly appreciated.

## Sponsor a Community-Wide Flea Market for a Cause

Combining the popularity of the right cause and the

universal appeal of a good old fashioned flea market will help recirculate used items that are in need across your community. Utilize a modest table price to fund the event, with proceeds going to a designated local cause. Make sure social distancing rules are incorporated if they are still in place at the time of the event.

## Sponsor an Adoption Fair for Your Local Animal Shelter

Animal shelters sometimes get overcrowded and this pandemic may have created a backlog of adoptions.

If your publication will host an adoption fair, you may be able to get veterinarians and pet supply stores to join you in the promotion and support of the event. Domestic animals pull at the heart strings of all your readers and helping promote local animal welfare encourages very positive community relations.

## Create a Free, Educational Workshop / Special Section

Provide your community with an educational event or promotion that will help them with some of the challenges that have been created with the disruption caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. There are many timely options, such as coordinating a workshop on how best to rebuild your 401K from this setback. Or how about developing a special section on creating a household plan to prepare for future shelter-in-place events before they happen? This event has made everyone critically aware of how unprepared we were to handle this type of event.

## Incentivize Your Employees to Volunteer

Encourage your staff to volunteer. Offer to allow them to leave an hour or two early one day each week or each month to volunteer with a local non-profit group, and pay them to their normal completion time. This program will help foster community spirit with your staff, team spirit within your business, and tons of good will between the volunteer groups and your publication. Allowing your employees to choose which non-political group they volunteer with is critically important to the full benefits of this program. **INK**

### SUPPORT YOUR NEIGHBORS

As spread of COVID-19 forces restaurants to serve only on a to-go basis, our local businesses need our support now more than ever.

**We're all in this together.**

Now is the time to help your neighbors. Sponsor a local restaurant's menu, and help them tell their customers that they are still open and serving.

Support local restaurants! Order to-go!



**HOW IT WORKS**

1. Choose your commitment size (options below).
2. Choose which business(es) you would like to sponsor.
3. Your business name will appear at the bottom of the business' ad, as thanks for your sponsorship.
4. Ads bill at the end of March.

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<b>FULL PAGE</b> (Supports two businesses)	\$500
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**Your Basic Subscription to The Sun remains Free, but if you value community journalism. please consider Enhanced Support**



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Published by Denton Publications Inc.

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Dear Friends:

We hope you enjoy your weekly edition of The SUN. Each week, we do our best to provide our readers with timely, accurate community news, as well as coverage of education, features on engaging community members, and the best high school sports round up. We see it as our role to highlight the good things that are happening in our rural communities, and to shine a spotlight on the many wonderful volunteers and organizations that might otherwise go unrecognized.

However, as a small, independent newspaper company, we face many challenges. The cost of paper and postage continue to rise as we face ever-increasing competition for local advertising dollars, which make up more than 95 percent of our revenues.

To help us continue to bring the community a compelling community news product, we are asking for your support.

Please consider for a moment the value you receive: from the news, features, sports, commentary, fliers, and marketing materials each week in your SUN community newspaper. Is that worth 50 cents a week to you? Or \$1? Perhaps more? If so, we are asking you to help support our efforts so that we can continue to provide this community service for many years to come.

Your Basic Subscription to The SUN remains free, but if you see the value and have the ability, we are asking you to consider Enhanced Support with a contribution of \$26 (50 cents per week), \$52 (\$1 per week), or any other amount you feel is appropriate.

Regardless, we really need your support to keep publishing and delivering this newspaper!

Even if you can't support our efforts financially, by filling out the form below, you may help us qualify for significant discounts from the U.S Postal Service. All we need is some necessary information and your signature stating that you are requesting a three-year free subscription to The SUN.

In the next few months, we will evaluate the support generated from this request. If sufficient support is raised, we hope to maintain news coverage and distribution at our current level. If not, other remedies to reduce overhead will need to be implemented.

As always, we welcome your feedback. If there's anything we can do to improve your reader experience, please contact me at dan@suncommunitynews.com.

Sincerely,  
Dan Alexander, Publisher



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# MOVING on to 2021

by Greg Bruns, 2020 Conference Committee Chair

## RECEIVING THE NOTIFICATION

of the cancellation of the Orlando conference was yet another instance of unavoidable, impending change brought about by a global pandemic. One could put that news in both columns of a "pros and cons list" in light of the crisis we are facing.

On one side, there's the money and time saved by not going, but the other end of it is the missed opportunity to generate the time and money. I don't know of a better way than a conference to meet with peers, hear new ideas, discover new business practices and learn more about our industry and ourselves.

For the Des Moines conference in 2021, AFCP is partnering with Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP), which is one of the largest and strongest of our regional organizations. Missing out on Orlando hurts, but I feel like it just makes attending next year's conference even more important.



Greg Bruns

There were a lot of great events, sessions, roundtables and moments to be had in Orlando, but we'll kick it out a year and take all the good stuff to Des Moines. The 2021 planning committee is ready to get to work, after the dust settles. It turns out that I will be the Conference Chair

this year, too. When I asked how it works with Orlando cancelled, I was told that it's essentially the same as flunking third grade... you're taking third grade over again.

There are going to be a lot of papers who will figure out how to pivot, or simply endure this crisis and find a way to survive. We've seen it before. We saw it in the early 2000s when online advertising had its first round of siphoning business from print. We saw it in 2001 with 9/11. We saw it in the Great Recession around 2008, and in many of the years since, with digital advertising competing with print advertising.

There are so many smart and enterprising people in the free paper industry. We are at our best when we bring our members together. The power of community is the lifeblood of our business. It's what we cater to, and I think it's what we need to give us the best chance for success. **INK**



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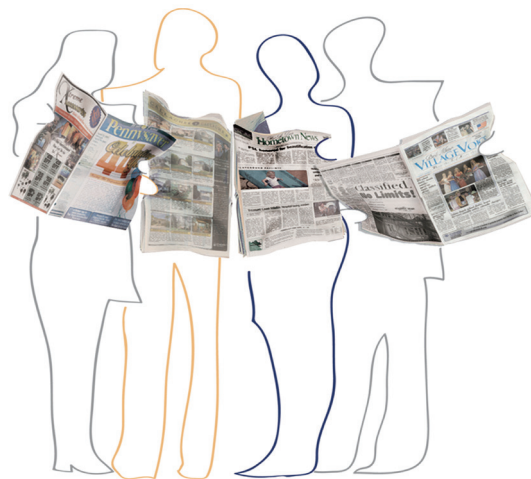
Association of Free Community Papers  
7445 Morgan Road - Suite 203, Liverpool, NY 13090  
Call (877) 203-2327 or visit afcp.org



# The **Headline** should be **Here**

by Charlie Delatorre

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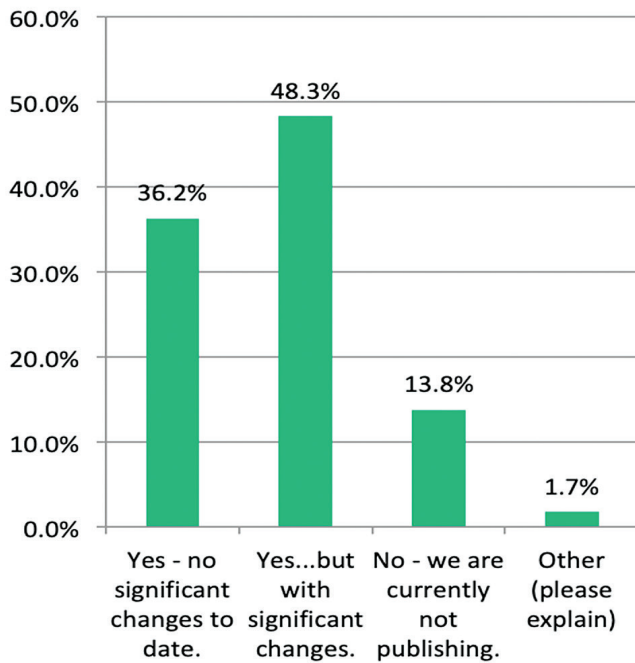


A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CD'.

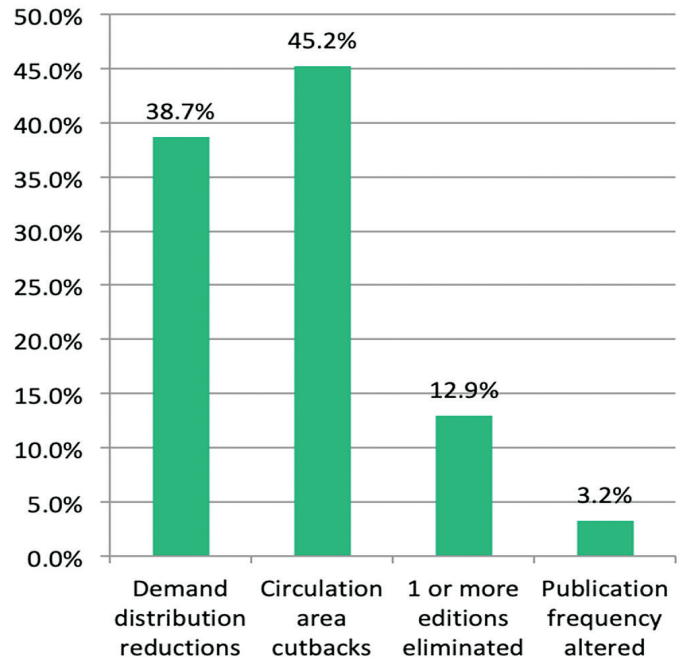
CHARLIE DELATORRE  
**AFCP PRESIDENT**  
TOWER PUBLICATIONS

# The Survey Says...

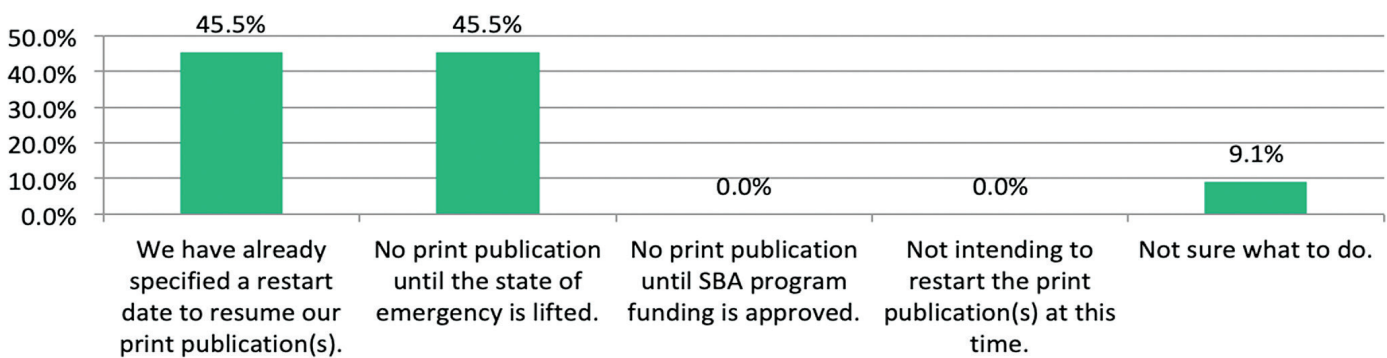
As of Tuesday April 7th - are you still publishing your regular printed publication(s)?



If you answered "yes...but" to the previous question, what changes have you made?



If you answered "no" to question #1 - What is your current plan of action?

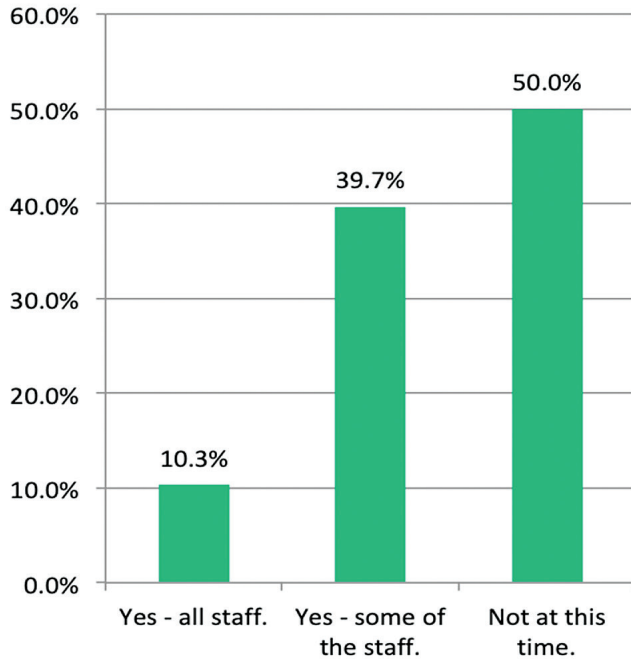


## ~ Other Related Industry News ~

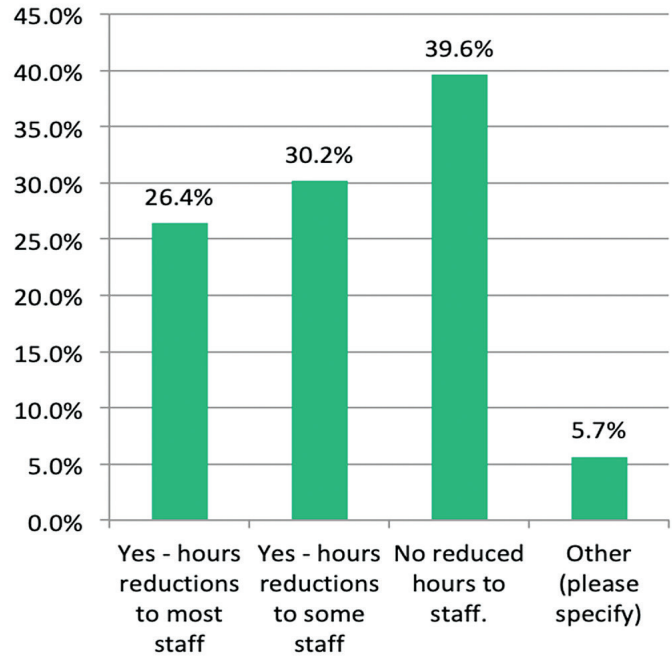
- According to a recent Cribb, Green & Cope Special Report survey, 46% of respondents indicated they are cutting at least one day, or going to a digital-only strategy.
- According to the same survey, 58% of papers responding indicated they believe the publication frequency reductions will be permanent.
- This survey also found that 62% of respondents have seen an increase in unpaid receivables.



### Have you furloughed any of your employees as of April 7th?

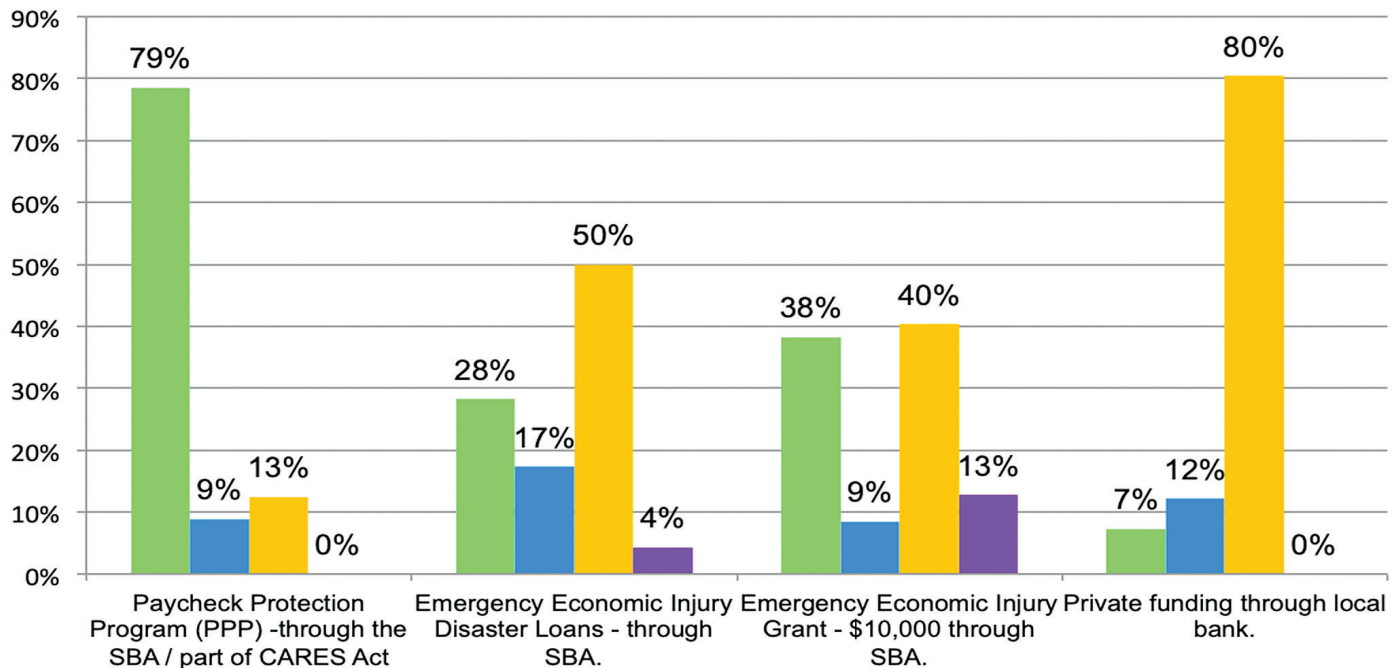


### Have you reduced hours for staff rather than furlough workers?



### At this time, do you plan on applying for any of the following?

■ Yes   
 ■ Maybe   
 ■ No   
 ■ Not even sure what that is.

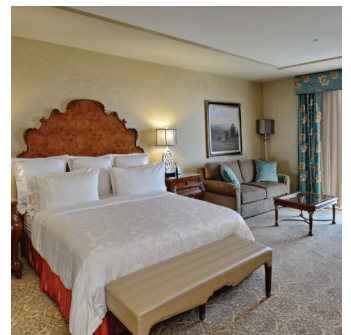
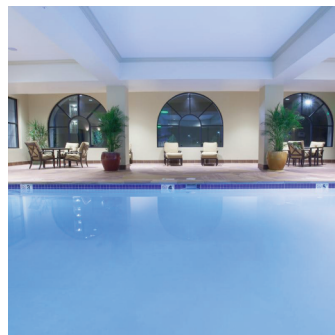




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# The Rising Stars



Shelby Bobbett

**SHELBY BOBBETT**  
*Advertising and Events Manager*  
**Rising Star Since 2018**

Age: 27

Publication: Big Green Umbrella Media

Job Responsibilities: I lead and manage the advertising sales efforts for our CITYVIEW division.

How long have you worked in this industry? I've worked in this industry for four years. After moving to Des Moines, I started with Big Green Umbrella Media as an advertising account executive for our Iowa Living magazines. About a year in, I took an opportunity to manage our CITYVIEW team.

What is your favorite memory from the Vegas Conference? Obviously the impromptu (and epic!) Four Square game.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? As a book lover and a Francophile, I would hang out with Belle from "Beauty and the Beast."

What breed of dog would you be? I recently read a very important piece of journalism on what dog breed you would be according to your astrological sign. As a Gemini, it appears I would be a Weimaraner. Coincidentally enough, Weimaraners are my favorite dogs – so maybe horoscopes are real?

What is the best advice you've ever been given? Fake it till you make it.



Kelsey Graefen

**KELSEY GRAEFEN**  
*Benefits Specialist*  
**Rising Star Since 2018**

Age: 26

Publication: Woodward Communications, Inc.

Job Responsibilities: I currently serve as the primary Human Resources professional in regards to benefits for Woodward Communications, Inc.

I also serve as the HR Manager for three of WCI's divisions in the areas of recruitment and retention, onboarding, benefits administration, internal communications, safety, and performance management.

How long have you worked in this industry? I am

going on five years with Woodward Communications, Inc. I was originally hired as an HR Coordinator then was promoted to an HR Generalist then most recently promoted to Benefits Specialist.

What is your favorite memory from the Vegas Conference? Four Square games!

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? Merida from "Brave." She is my red-headed queen.

Have you ever completed anything on your bucket list? I had on my bucket list to get to a White Sox vs. Cubs game and I have actually been able to get to three now. GO SOX!

If you had to delete all but three apps from your smartphone, which ones would you keep? If you don't count the messaging or phone apps, I would keep YouTube, Twitter and Instagram.



Ericka Winterrowd

**ERICKA WINTERROWD**  
*Editor-in-Chief*  
**Rising Star Since 2018**

Age: 33

Publication: Tower Publications

Job Responsibilities: They include running the editorial department, creating issue themes, story ideas and cover inspiration, assigning stories

and photo shoots for multiple magazines, taking photos, writing articles, fostering young talent within our editorial internship program and running social media platforms.

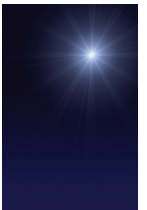
How long have you worked in this industry? Six years.

What is one significant take-away you've gained from being a part of the Rising Stars program? I've learned how sharing new ideas within a group of your peers can foster the growth of leadership within yourself.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? Ariel from "The Little Mermaid." I've always wanted to be one!

You have to sing karaoke. What song do you pick? It's a tie between "Crazy" by Patsy Cline and "These Boots Are Made for Walkin'" by Nancy Sinatra. I usually decide based on what kind of footwear I'm rocking at the time (for obvious reasons)!

*Continued on page 20*





Continued from page 19

If you could rename yourself, what name would you pick? I'd probably go with "Winifred Sanderson" because that's what I named my dog. It's also the name of one of the greatest film characters of all time. #HocusPocus

**TAYLOR CASE**

*Graphic Designer*

**Rising Star Since 2019**

Age: 24

Publication: Fillmore County Journal

Job Responsibilities: Customer service, design and create ads, along with designing brochures, inserts and flyers for our customers.



Taylor Case

How long have you worked in this industry? I started working for the Fillmore County Journal in October of 2016. I was just out of college and looking in the Fillmore County Journal paper for a job in my hometown, and I came across an employment ad for a customer service representative at the Fillmore County Journal. I applied for the job in September 2016 and in October I was hired. I quickly transitioned from being a customer service representative to a graphic designer within the first few months of working here. I have now worked here for two and a half years as a graphic designer and I absolutely love what I do.

What is your favorite Elvis Presley song? "Can't Help Falling in Love"

Have you ever been told you look like someone famous? Yes, many times; Kristen Stewart in the "Twilight" movies.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? I would choose to hang out with Donald Duck because I love his personality and I think we could get along very well!

What's the most embarrassing fashion trend you used to rock? Socks and sandals – and sometimes I still do!

**ASHLEE HERMAN**

*Advertising Account Executive*

**Rising Star Since 2019**

Age: 34

Publication: Big Green Umbrella Media – Iowa Living Magazines

Job Responsibilities: I have three Iowa Living Magazines for which I service current advertisers

and sell to new advertisers. I attend chamber and networking events for each community I am involved in, to prospect and get photos for my magazines. It's important to me that I have a good relationship with my advertisers. Each month I make sure their needs are taken care of. It is also my responsibility to ensure my magazines are meeting monthly revenue goals.



Ashlee Herman

How long have you worked in this industry? Four years.

What is your favorite memory from the Vegas Conference? Making new friends through the Rising Stars program and passing the AAE exam.

What is the best advice you've ever been given? It was very simple advice: Don't Sweat the Small Stuff and Just Be Happy.

Would you rather travel back in time to meet your ancestors or to the future to meet your descendants? Travel back in time.

Have you ever completed anything on your bucket list? Yes, rode in a hot air balloon.

**MANUEL KARAM**

*Director of Advertising Sales*

**Rising Star Since 2019**

Age: 34

Publication: Genesee Valley Publications

Job Responsibilities: Oversee the sales efforts of close to 20 staff members and make the company money!



Manuel Karam

How long have you worked in this industry? I've been in the industry almost three years now. Prior to this I was a corporate attorney, but left it behind to join my wife's family's business. It's been a rich and rewarding experience so far!

What is your favorite memory from the Vegas Conference? Massive game of Four Square!!

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? Magic Carpet. Seems like he would be a cool friend to have.

Favorite Disney movie? The original Jungle Book. Great music!

If you were a wrestler, what would be your entrance theme song? "Can't Nobody Hold Me Down" — Puff Daddy and the Family.

Would you rather travel back in time to meet your

ancestors or to the future to meet your descendants? What an awesome question. I'll say as a history buff I'd go back in time.



Cory Regnier

**CORY REGNIER**

*Graphic Designer*

**Rising Star Since 2019**

Age: 34

Publication: Citizen Publishing Company

Job Responsibilities: Ad Design and Composition

How long have you worked in this industry? I have worked in the industry for over five years

now. Prior to working in publishing I worked for multiple theater companies including the Amery Classic Theatre, Wise Fool Shakespeare and the Duluth Playhouse.

What is your favorite memory from the Vegas Conference? The best memory I have has to be the spontaneous Four Square tournament that happened at the Gold Spike.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? Maxamillion Goof (Goofy's son) from "A Goofy Movie." He seems relatable and we could go to a Powerline concert in L.A.

If you had to eat one meal every day for the rest of your life, what would it be? I think I would choose lasagna.

Would you rather travel back in time to meet your ancestors or to the future to meet your descendants? I would travel to the future to meet my descendants. I can research my past. With the knowledge of the future, I could potentially make a meaningful impact on what's to come.

Have you ever completed anything on your bucket list? I traveled to London and saw the sights. I especially loved seeing five shows in the West End theatre district.



Samantha Anderson

**SAMANTHA ANDERSON**

*Content Editor, Social Media Manager & Sales/Customer Associate*

**Rising Star Since 2019**

Age: 29

Publication: The Exchange (Spokane, WA)

Job Responsibilities: This past year we have been putting a lot

of energy into revamping our social media and really focusing on our branding. That's been one of my bigger projects this year on top of my weekly sales goals and finding relevant content for our publication.

How long have you worked in this industry? I've been with The Exchange since 2017 – so a little over three years now as of January. Prior to working in print, I worked in radio for five years in the promotions department.

What is your favorite memory from the Vegas Conference? First rule of Vegas: What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? Kronk – I need to try those famous spinach puffs. Maybe he would even teach me to speak squirrel.

What would the title of your autobiography be? "This is Why I Can't Have Nice Things. A Memoir" – To put it simply, I'm clumsy and go through life at 100mph when I should be doing 40mph. It's a rarity for me to make it through a day without spilling, snagging or staining my clothes.

If you had to eat one meal every day for the rest of your life, what would it be? Xiao Long Bao (Chinese Soup Dumplings). My husband and I make these at home and they are just little steamed pockets of delicious goodness. Dumplings are great because you can change out the ingredients, play with different flavor combos and there are a number of ways to fold dumplings.

If you were a wrestler, what would be your entrance theme song? "Animal Instincts," The Transcenders, J7 D'Star – I think it would set the tone and would paint a picture in my opponent's mind of what the beatdown coming their way will be like.

**NATHANIEL ABRAHAM III**



Nathaniel Abraham

*Photographer and Website Administrator*

**Rising Star Since 2020**

Age: 26

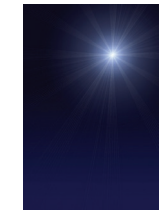
Publication: Carolina Panorama

Job Responsibilities: Website Management, Ad Sales, and Photography

How long have you worked in this industry? I've always

worked in the family business doing photography. This led to an interest in film and drones as well, which I use to aid the business.

*Continued on page 22*



*Continued from page 21*

What does the future look like for the free paper industry? I've heard people speculate that as technology advances, newspapers will become obsolete. I don't agree. Many major news outlets depend on smaller news outlets for stories. Massive news organizations, no matter the size, cover all areas and people will always be dependent on local news for information pertaining to where they live. I believe there will always be a role for local news outlets.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? King T'Challa. Wakanda seems like a cool place to visit.

Have you ever been told you look like someone famous? Some have said I look like Miles Morales (Spiderman).

Would you rather travel back in time to meet your ancestors or to the future to meet your descendants? Backwards, because stories from the past can help teach generations of the future.

**ERIKA (PARSON) ATHERTON**  
*Multimedia Marketing Consultant*  
**Rising Star Since 2020**

Age: 34

Publication: The Franklin Shopper

Job Responsibilities: I promote and sell media products and services offered by the Franklin Shopper, by approaching potential customers to make sales and maintaining excellent relationships with all of my clients. I also work to reach sales goals and deliver sales reports to upper management.

How long have you worked in this industry? Three years. I have worked a variety of jobs – waitressing, bartending and a nurse for 10 years. I was then a stay-at-home mom, but due to things out of my control, I needed to get back in the workflow. I have always had a love of art, people, and persuasion. I began working as an outside advertising sales rep and quickly fell in love with it. I have never once woke up and dreaded going to work.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? Eeyore. One of my favorite things is cheering people up and laughing. Life is too short to not be happy.

What would the title of your autobiography be?  
 "The Girl Who Always Rose Again"

What is the best advice you've ever been given?



Ericka Atherton

My grandparents both passed away recently. A note was found in my Gram's Bible of what to do when she passed. She ended it with, "Be kind to each other." A lot could be solved if we just follow that.

If you had to eat one meal every day for the rest of your life, what would it be? My Mom's lemon chicken with fried potatoes and brussels sprouts with a can of Mountain Dew with a straw.

**CARMEN CAMPBELL**  
*Advertising Sales Consultant*  
**Rising Star Since 2020**

Age: 31

Publication: Genesee Valley Publications

Job Responsibilities: Building customer relations, developing strategic marketing plans and ideas, helping customers reach goals while maintaining my own sales goals, staying organized and meeting deadlines, learning and keeping track of current market trends, communicating with customers via email, phone and in-person meetings, growing community relationships.

How long have you worked in this industry? Eight years. At 16 I started waitressing and was a secretary for a local spa. I did both until college years when I still waitressed and then transitioned into bartending. After graduating from RIT in 2012 with my Marketing degree and two associates in Business, I looked for a new career path. I always loved working with people and getting to know them so choosing a career in sales seemed natural. Once I started at GVP I quickly moved up the ladder and landed an outside sales position.

What does the future look like for the free paper industry? Our company has been in business for over 70 years. The print/paper industry itself is one of the oldest forms of advertising. To me, the key to success is having a good marketing mix. I don't believe print should be the only form of advertising but it should still be in the mix and marketing plans. Print is trusted, print is remembered, and it gives people a chance to unplug and get away from their electronic devices.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? Tinker Bell. Since I was young, I've always enjoyed her sassy personality and I always wanted to fly! My daughters now also enjoy her.

What would the title of your autobiography be?



Carmen Campbell



"Pickett Street Extension" (the road I grew up on)

If you were a wrestler, what would be your entrance theme song? I think I see myself more as a boxer. My song would be "Limitless" by Jennifer Lopez.

What was your favorite game to play as a child? Wolf (hide and go seek, outside in the dark)



Lizzie Gunter

**LIZZIE GUNTER**

*Sales Representative*

**Rising Star Since 2020**

Age: 29

Publication: Boone Newspapers/Mower County Shopper

Job Responsibilities: Making customers happy and helping them grow their business by offering an efficient way of advertising in Southern Minnesota.

How long have you worked in this industry? One year. I graduated from culinary school in 2010, and have worked in the food service industry my whole life. I was a professional Chef in Minneapolis for four years, and then made the transition to a food and beverage director for a hotel for three years. I took a sales representative role on a whim, and haven't looked back since!

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose? Dory from "Finding Nemo." I feel like we get each other. We don't always know where we are going, but by having fun and being positive, we will get there eventually, in our own way!

What is the best advice you've ever been given? You miss 100% of the shots you don't take.

If you had to eat one meal every day for the rest of your life, what would it be? Tacos or Sushi.

Have you ever completed anything on your bucket list? Yes, skydiving!



Carl Appen

**CARL APPEN**

*Account Executive*

**Rising Star Since 2020**

Age: 23

Publication: Appen Media Group

Job Responsibilities: Sign new clients, build relationships with them and advocate on behalf of our shared interests.

How long have you worked in this industry? Tough question. I was tagging along on routes as a toddler! Really began cutting my teeth as a web editor, working remotely while I was in school. Then I graduated, moved back to Georgia and started building a book of business.

If you could hang out with any Disney character, who would you choose and why? Emperor Kuzco if it was only for a day. There's a humor to him that would have me laughing a lot. Any more than eight hours and I'd go Hercules. Enough challenges to keep it interesting, but he's a bit more down to earth.

If you were a wrestler what would be your entrance theme song? "FALLINLOVE2NITE" by Prince

If you had to eat one meal everyday for the rest of your life, what would it be? Microwave nachos.

Would you rather travel back in time to meet your ancestors or to the future to meet your descendants? Ancestors, absolutely. **INK**

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# The Importance of SPACED REPETITION

by Bob Berting



**ALMOST EVERY** day you run into a person who is in management or sales and is a buyer of audio or video tapes to help his or her

career. Once these people are consistent buyers, the distributors bombard them with more offers. Consequently, tapes are accumulated and the information is not absorbed properly.

Sometimes an album of tapes is played and the whirlwind of information swirls around in the mind. Maybe one idea is remembered and hopefully put into action.

Over the years various learning institutions have made statements

about the importance of practice, plus repetition upon repetition. As a matter of fact, the retention of new information many times is described as spaced repetition.

Even in such activities as dance instruction, a student may have to practice a new step or sequence of steps up to 17 times before it becomes a solid movement executed properly. Athletes understand this thinking and may work on a particular movement dozens of times to achieve a flawless performance.

The premise is to focus on one tape program at a time and play each individual tape in the program up to four times on a consecutive, spaced repetition basis. It may well be a week before this tape is played four times. Usually

within a month the entire program could be played at least four times.

Many times, the listener or viewer hears or sees information that was missed or even not heard in earlier sessions. In other words, overlooked thoughts are now back into focus and the full meaning of the audio or video tape program is achieved.

A great lesson is learned by listening to anything over and over again. We learn it whether we want to or not. It is how we learn everything. It just happens. Like magic. **INK**

*Bob Berting is a professional speaker, advertising sales trainer, publisher, marketing consultant and columnist in several national and regional newspaper trade association publications. He can be reached at bob@bobberting.com or 317-849-5408.*

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# The LEADERSHIP Institute

by Jim Busch

The Leadership Institute is a structured sales and sales management training program sponsored by the Association of Free Community Publications.



To date, 2,265 free paper professionals have attended classes at the AFCP, state and regional conferences, earning over 13,841 class credits in 87 different course curriculums. A total of 124 people have completed all the requirements and been certified as Associate Advertising Executives (AAE) by the AFCP Board!

## ***"Improvise, adapt and overcome!"*** – **Unofficial USMC Motto**

**RICH, A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, WAS A U.S. MARINE.** I once made the mistake of saying "former Marine" and he informed me that "Once a Marine, always a Marine!"


His office, which was filled with Marine memorabilia, looked like it was lifted right out of Leatherneck Headquarters. After a Friday sales meeting, several of our coworkers were talking about a golf outing they had planned the next morning. Rich, who loved practical jokes, said he might join them on the course.

The next morning Rich was a no show, so they teed off without him. On the third hole, they parked their golf cart next to a water hazard and were grabbing their clubs when Rich emerged from the water dressed in full camouflage gear, scaring them half to death. A former recon scout sniper, Rich had waited in the pond breathing through a snorkel to "ambush" them. Sadly, I heard this story at Rich's funeral after he lost his last battle against liver cancer.

Rich was an extraordinary sales manager. He refused to offer or to accept excuses. When his team would encounter a setback or resistance, Rich would say, "Challenge noted. Time to improvise, adapt and overcome." He would study the problem and figure out a way around it.

When his team was behind quota on a coupon book project, Rich hit the streets with his salespeople. After calling on several restaurants and hearing, "The owner won't be in until this evening," Rich came up with a plan. He told his team to take the morning off and start their day at 1 p.m.

He took them to dinner at 4 o'clock and assigned them each a list of restaurants to call on that evening. This "night attack" worked. Rich's team reached the decision makers several hours after the rest of the sales force was home watching TV. Rich was the only manager to exceed his goal on the coupon book.

I thought about Rich when I heard that the annual AFCP conference was postponed due to concerns about the Coronavirus. I know this situation is also having a big impact on everyone's sales efforts. There is nothing we can do to make this challenge go away, but we can control our response to it. Like Rich, we can face it head on and "Improvise, adapt and overcome!" 







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## |july

**JULY 7-10, 2020 :**  
**OKOBOJI, IA**

Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP). 65th Anniversary Celebration, Okoboji, Iowa. For information contact Kelly Coy at 507-388-6584 or email: [director@mfcf.org](mailto:director@mfcf.org).

## |sept.

**SEPTEMBER 11-12, 2020 :**  
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Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA). Leadership Summit, Woolley's Suites, Aurora, Colorado. For information contact Douglas Fry at 931-922-4171 or email: [douglas@ifpa.com](mailto:douglas@ifpa.com).

## |2021

**APRIL 22-23, 2021 :**  
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Association of Free Community Publications (AFCP) and Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP). Joint Annual Conference and Trade Show, Des Moines, Iowa. For information contact Loren Colburn at 877-203-2327 or email: [loren@afcp.org](mailto:loren@afcp.org); or Kelly Coy at 507-388-6584 or email: [director@mfcf.org](mailto:director@mfcf.org).

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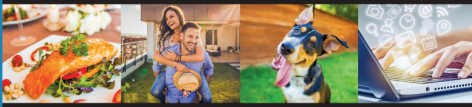
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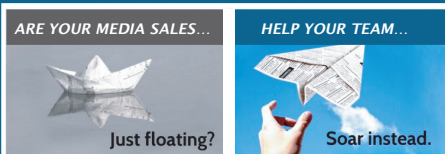
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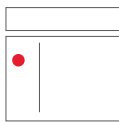
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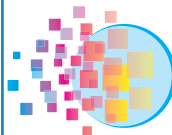


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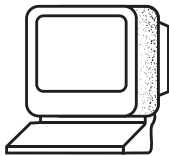
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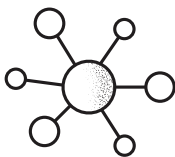
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