

April 2023 INFORMER

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**Community
Papers of
Michigan**

PAWS WITH A CAUSE® - once again our industry's sponsoring partner for the USPS Emerging Technology Promotion

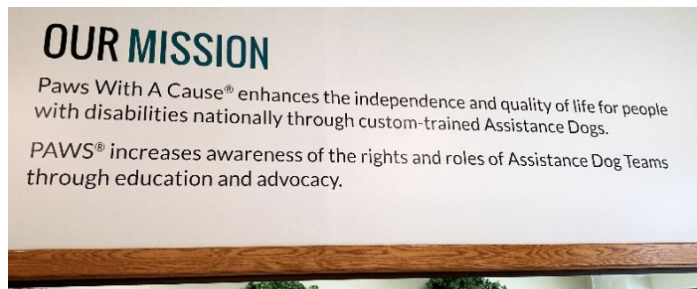
By Jack Guza



Carrie Simmons, Paws With A Cause Director of Advancement and Jack Guza, Executive Director Community Papers of Michigan, Inc.

Photos By: Molly Macleod - J-Ad Graphics News Services

Thanks to Michigan-based Paws With A Cause (PWAC), and the Association of Community Publishers, Inc. (ACP), publishing companies across the country who utilize a USPS delivery, can earn a 3% discount on their postage by taking part in the USPS Emerging Technology Promotion. This year's promotion runs from May 1 through November 30.



PWAC Mission Statement in the front lobby of their National Headquarters located in Wayland, Michigan.

In what has become an annual occurrence over the past several years, on January 31 of this year, I received an email from Loren Colburn, Executive Director Emeritus of ACP, asking if I would contact the fine folks at PWAC, to see if they would again like to be the sponsoring partner in the USPS initiative. 2023 marks the fifth consecutive year PWAC has been the sponsoring partner. Loren has always graciously shared the completed information for this promotion with me for the benefit of our CPM members, and since PWAC is based in Wayland, MI. and just an hour away from my office, it's the least I and CPM could do to assist with this initiative.

On March 1, 2023, Molly Macleod of J-Ad Graphics News Services, met me at the PWAC National Headquarters to learn more about this wonderful organization and pen a feature story to be shared with publishers across the country. Along with other qualifying measures for the USPS discounted promotion, participating publishing companies must run a display ad during the duration of the promotion period featuring the Zappar App



so readers can scan the Zappar logo and view the informative PWAC video. In addition to the 4-C display ad and Zappar video, Loren and I wanted to offer PWAC even more value-added promotion this year by providing a feature story spotlighting the fantastic service PWAC provides.



Molly and I spent several hours with PWAC Director of Advancement Carrie Simmons, who proudly explained the history of PWAC and what it takes to train specialized service dogs for those in need. I have included Molly's story in this INFORMER, so you can read about the wonderful service PWAC provides.

Since PWAC relies almost exclusively on donations to continue providing life-changing service dogs to so many, I am asking all CPM Members to consider featuring Molly's informative feature story to make your readers aware of this wonderful organization and all that they do. As you will read, Paws With A Cause does it all, from breeding the preferred dogs to placement. PWAC is assisting our industry and we should do our part to assist in their mission by sharing their story. Please watch for the text and photo files I will email soon.

**Thank you!
Jack**

PAWS WITH A CAUSE® Assistance Dogs Help Those with Disabilities Regain Independence

By Molly Macleod - J-Ad Graphics News Services



Paws With A Cause, a non-profit organization based in Wayland, Mich., has made a name for itself in the service dog industry.

In 1979, Michael D. Sapp Sr. was delivering commercial paper to loading docks across the Grand Rapids area. He and his wife, Candye, befriended Marty Jansen and his wife, Dianne, through Sapp's delivery route.

Though Sapp's 9-to-5 job was delivering paper, he trained dogs on the side, mostly for his own enjoyment. Jansen caught wind of this fact and approached Sapp on the loading docks one day. Jansen and his wife were both deaf and had just adopted a deaf child. With no other resources to help them at the time, the Jansens were left wondering how they would hear their young child's cries.

Paws With a Cause, a Wayland, Mich. nonprofit, specializes in training four types of assistance dogs for Americans with disabilities. All PAWS dogs are provided to their clients at no cost.

Paws With A Cause (PAWS) Director of Advancement Carrie Simmons recalled the story of her organization's founding, saying Jansen asked Sapp to train a dog to alert him and his wife to their child's cries. Sapp was reluctant at first, but with the help of

his wife, he trained the very first PAWS dog: CRYSTAL, a Cairn Terrier.

Though Sapp expected CRYSTAL's training to be a one-off, the Jansens showed up at the Sapp house one night with a crew of their friends. The Jansens were so impressed with CRYSTAL that many of their deaf and hard-of-hearing friends wanted Sapp to train dogs for them, too.

"Forty-four years later, we've placed over 3,200 assistance dogs," said Simmons. Since its foundation in 1979, PAWS has moved its headquarters from Grand Rapids, Mich. to Wayland. PAWS has also expanded from training only hearing assistance dogs to offering four different types of assistance dogs, along with facility dogs for schools or hospitals.

TYPES OF PAWS DOGS

The four types of assistance dogs PAWS offers today include general service, hearing and seizure response dogs in addition to dogs for children with autism.

Service dogs at PAWS are trained to help those living with physical disabilities of all kinds, offering assistance with day-to-day activities, while hearing dogs alert their owners to important sounds they wouldn't otherwise hear, such as an alarm clock or smoke detector.

"We have a client who was living independently but every time she dropped something, she didn't want to call her mom to come pick it up. So she would just wheel around things for a whole week ... and then her mom would come over on Saturday or Sunday and pick up all of her stuff," said Simmons. "She felt like she didn't want to burden her mom every single day to come over and get these things — so it really impeded her life. But now, she has her assistance dog, and he can pick (items) up for her immediately." "It is pretty impactful," Simmons added. (Continued on page 4.)



Carrie Simmons, director of advancement for Paws With a Cause, said her organization relies on private donations to keep providing its services. One PAWS assistance dog costs \$35,000, on average, to raise and train.

Assistance Dogs *(Continued)*

Seizure response dogs are trained to alert help and offer comfort and assistance during a seizure. While these dogs are not trained to protect from, or alert people to, oncoming seizures, many of the dogs will pick up over time warning signs of an oncoming seizure in their owners.

“The last type of dog that we started training about 12 years ago is service dogs for children with autism. And that is a program that is pretty amazing,” said Simmons. “Obviously, all of our dogs serve our clients with a disability, but these dogs in particular have a huge impact on the entire family.”

PAWS dogs that work with children with autism help the children reduce their anxiety and improve socialization, among other things.

“Just yesterday, we had a mom here and her 10-year-old daughter has autism. It wasn’t until they received their PAWS dog that the mom finally got to sleep through the night after 10 years,” said Simmons.

Though PAWS is known across the country for their top-notch dogs and charitable work, all that success did not come without some growing pains. “Early in the early days, Mike (Sapp) was rescuing

dogs and trying to train them. He was only getting about a 1-in-12 success rate,” said Simmons.

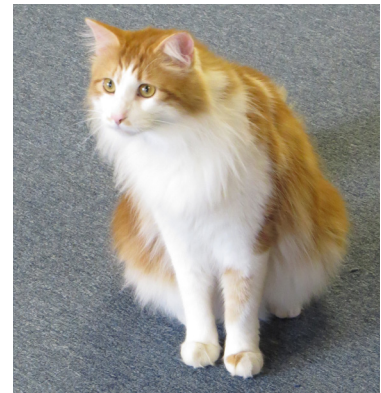
Because PAWS could not always know if a rescue dog had temperament or physical issues before investing in their training, the organization switched to breeding their dogs in-house about 20 years ago.

THE PATH OF A PAWS PUPPY

All Paws With A Cause dogs are bred in-house at the Wayland headquarters, with “mama” and “papa” dogs fostered by families within a 45-minute drive of the organization’s home. PAWS uses four different breeds of dogs: Labrador retrievers, golden retrievers, poodles and papillons.

After the puppies are born, they stay with their mother in her foster home until they are eight-weeks-old. After that, the puppies are brought to the PAWS headquarters for about a week to be vetted and checked over.

The next stop for PAWS puppies in training is to another foster home until they are 12- to 18-months-old, where foster owners will teach them basic obedience. Then, it is time for the



Dogs are not the only furry friends frequenting the Paws With a Cause headquarters. Tuesday, a cat, is always curious about what’s going on at the bustling facility. He and his brother roam the PAWS facilities to help service dogs in training get used to cats — and distractions.

adolescent dogs to return to the PAWS headquarters for more vetting and training.

After receiving their first round of formal assistance training, the dogs are then sent to one of five prisons in Michigan to live with, and be trained by, inmates for five months. Simmons describes this program as a “win, win, win” situation, because it benefits the dogs, the inmates and the prisons themselves.



PAWS Director of Advancement Carrie Simmons attempts to keep a wiggly pup in one spot. This puppy is just beginning her journey as a PAWS dog, only eight weeks into her over two years of training ahead.



All assistance dogs at PAWS go through over two years of professional training before being placed with their clients. One of the rooms used for training at the headquarters is shown here.



MADGE, shown here, is Paws With a Cause's official ambassador and demonstration dog. MADGE began her PAWS career as a seizure response dog. After her owner passed away, MADGE returned to PAWS and travels with PAWS representatives for demonstrations.

"(The inmates) love it. They treat our dogs like you wouldn't imagine. They are very well-loved and cared for in prison," said Simmons.

Only non-violent offenders with zero incidents on their records are allowed to interact with the dogs. If an inmate working with the dog has any type of behavioral incident, they will immediately be barred from seeing the dog. This arrangement has resulted in entire wings of prisons with PAWS dogs showing improvements in behavior overall.

After completing their tour of foster homes, the PAWS dogs finally return to the Wayland headquarters one last time for final training. This training usually takes around four months.

"We have master-level trainers that have journeymanships through the U.S. Department of Labor that certifies them as assistance dog trainers," said Simmons. "They're teaching our dogs to open doors, turn on and off lights, push elevator buttons, pull the covers back over a client if the covers fall off the bed at night. You know, those kinds of tasks that are really high-level." From there, the dogs are placed with their clients,

who must live within 90 miles of a trained field representative for PAWS, who will serve as a liaison between the client and Paws With A Cause to ensure a fruitful placement of the dog. PAWS dogs are sent all over the country, but most are placed in the organization's home state of Michigan.

PAYING FOR PAWS

Simmons said raising one PAWS assistance dog costs about \$35,000 on average — and over two years of training. For a facilities dog, like those used in school counseling offices, it costs about \$26,000.

Despite the massive costs incurred for each dog by the organization, all PAWS dogs are provided to their clients at no cost.

Simmons said no medical insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid, cover any of the costs of an assistance dog. As such, donations are crucial to PAWS continuing to provide their services to those in need across the country.

"Ninety-five percent of our budget comes from philanthropy, and that means that it comes from people just like you and me. That is the bulk of where we get our money," said Simmons. She said there are some small family foundations that donate to PAWS and some grants the organization receives, but overall, it is small, individual donations that drive the nonprofit's funding.

"Some organizations charge their clients for the dog, we're still very lucky to be in a position where we can provide our dogs at no cost," said Simmons. "Most people with disabilities are on fixed incomes. They can't afford a \$35,000 dog. So how do you make that happen? Donors and individual contributions make it happen."

Paws With A Cause receives around 400 applications each year from potential clients seeking assistance or facility dogs. Of these, around 50 dogs each year are placed with their new owners.

HOW TO HELP

Simmons said PAWS is always looking for foster homes, both for the puppies and their parent dogs. For many families, fostering a puppy can be a great "project" to undertake, said Simmons.

Additionally, PAWS has an Amazon wish list where anyone can buy needed supplies for the program,

such as Kong toys and peanut butter. The wish list can be found at amzn.to/2vmUXS6.

Paws With a Cause provides several ways for people to contribute money to the organization, with all the options detailed on its website, pawswithacause.org/waystodonate.

For those who don't want to donate online, PAWS allows phone donations by calling 616-877-7297. Checks can be made payable to Paws With A Cause and sent to the Paws With A Cause National Headquarters, 4646 Division, Wayland, MI 49348.

Readers can download Zappar, an app for smartphones that will allow them to scan the Zappar logo on the ad located within this publication. The Zappar app will open a video for readers that describes the impact PAWS has on its clients.



The decorations at Paws With a Cause's National Headquarters in Wayland, Mich. follow a canine theme, fittingly. Shown here, ceiling tiles are decorated with paw prints.



MEMBERS SHARING *Good News*

You all get positive comments from time to time from readers who want to thank you for various reasons, and businesses you have helped to be more successful. Since we can all use some Good News, feel free to share any positive comments that you would like to share. We will feature them in the next available INFORMER e-newsletter.
SUBMIT TO:
jackguza@cpapersmi.com

Don Rush of View Newspapers submitted the following from a hand-written card:

To our friends at the Oxford Leader

A HUGE thank you from St. John's Episcopal Church in Dryden for your support of our Music Concert on March 11 with Matt Watroba. We had hoped our advertising would attract attention, but it was your article that really encouraged people to make that long drive to Dryden. Having a church full of people singing along with Matt and his wife was magical.

Your support of local community events helps bring us together in a world that too often wants to tear us apart. That sounds like God's work to me. Keep it going!

Sincerely,
Becky Foster, Sr. Warden
John's Episcopal Church

Reader letter submitted by John Jacobs of the Lowell Ledger:

March 20, 2023

Editor,

I would like to compliment you on continuing to publish an excellent local weekly paper. I have been reading The Ledger since I was a child, and I am now 75. I was born and raised in Grand Rapids, but often visited my relatives in Lowell. My Uncle, Donald (Mac) MacNaughton ran the Ledger presses for decades and my Aunt Maggie worked in the office. I still have a piece of linotype my uncle gave me from the days when each line was cast in metal before going to the printing bed. Once a month I would visit Lowell to play with my cousins, and each summer I would spend the whole Showboat Week there. My cousin Roger still sends me Ledgers because he knows how I love local papers.

I have worked for eight local papers since high school, doing writing, photography and illustrations. I spent 20 years at the High Springs Herald, here in Florida, before starting the monthly Observer, which folded in 2022 after 19 years in business. It is hard these days for newspapers to survive, one of the reasons The Ledger is so wonderful.

The Ledger is long-lived, but its quality is most amazing. You print a variety of interesting articles, not just coverage of local events like the Chamber dinner and new businesses, but items like book and movie reviews, and Melissa Spino's column, "Live the Life You Want" or Justin Tiemeyer's recent "Funny Book Forum" and "A Visit to the Detroit Zoo."

I also love "Looking Back Through the Ledgers," since life was much different 125, 100 and 75 years ago. I have a file of those saved pieces. The history of Lowell buildings is fun too since I once visited some of those places.

Beyond the content, your layout is clear and easy to read, and even the ads are fun. I want you to know how much many of us still appreciate a newspaper that we can hold in our hands to read, with no batteries required. I thank you for the joy you've brought me over the decades and wish you well in the future.

Sincerely,
Larry Behnke
High Springs, Florida

Thank You!

Questions Posed by NY Publishers

Small changes can make a big difference in how readers see your paper



by Kevin Slimp
kevin@kevinslimp.com

Yesterday, I returned from a trip to New York, where I spoke at the New York Press Association (NYPA) Convention for two days. I was reminded that I spoke at my first NYPA convention 28 years ago. Time flies.

Unlike many conventions where I'm the only speaker – or maybe one of two – NYPA has four to six speakers making presentations during each time slot. That means not everyone makes it to one of my sessions during the convention. As a result, I often found myself involved in conversations with publishers and others who came by my room immediately after a session or approached me during a “meet and greet” to ask for my advice.

The conversations generally begin with something like, “I wasn't able to attend any of your sessions,” as if the questioner felt the need to apologize. I tried to assure them that was fine. After all, you can't be everywhere at once. I met with one publisher who runs a one-person shop. He writes the stories, sells the ads, designs the paper, and pays the bills. I met others who owned several large dailies and weeklies in the state.

Here are some of the things we discussed:

- The publisher running a newspaper alone brought his paper and asked me to look it over, hoping I could offer a little advice. I

suggested he use a different body font (I believe he was using Minion) and a larger text size. I recommended he use a 10-point Nimrod. I assured him if that was the only change he made, readers would be writing to praise him after the first issue. I also suggested he use smaller borders around photos. Probably a .3 or .4 frame rather than a 1-point border. I knew he had his hands full getting a paper out by himself. I figured that was enough advice for one day.

- I met with another publisher – who attended my classes with her page designer – for about 30 minutes, and we looked over her newspaper. We discussed several potential improvements. The most important, in my opinion, was to put the flag on top of the front page to rest and create a new flag for her newspaper. Redesigning as many newspapers as I do, I've learned people can be protective of their flags, and rightly so. While newspapers should undergo a redesign every 5-7 years, the flag identifies the newspaper and shouldn't be discarded at a whim. However, as was the case with this paper, sometimes a flag looks too outdated and can be a distraction – or even turn off – a reader. We also discussed the importance of creating a consistent look on each newspaper page. When our conversation ended, I felt confident they would go home after the conference to begin working on these changes.

- Two owners of larger groups approached me separately. One asked about training for their papers. Where can they find



NY publisher Brett Freeman and his daughter compete with friends around the table in a game of “Pass the dice” at the 2023 NYPA convention.

training directed toward newspaper staff, and what training would be most helpful? Both asked about redesigns. One mentioned it had been a long time since her papers had gone through a redesign process. I suggested there's never a wrong time to begin redesigning a newspaper. You don't have to wait for an expert to guide the process, although that's always helpful when possible. Any newspaper can gather the staff together and begin discussing the most urgent redesign issues and develop ways to start upgrading a publication.

- Perhaps my favorite conversation while in New York was with Chip Rowe, editor of *The Highlands Current* (HC), which was named co-winner of the 2023 “Best Newspaper Award.” HC tied with *The Times Union of Albany*, winning 24 awards at the convention. I spent three days with Chip two years ago, holding focus groups and meeting with staff members of HC. Chip

reminded me of the work we did while I was in his community, meeting with multiple focus groups and offering advice to his staff. He shared that he felt like those focus groups and minutes spent together contributed to the success HC is experiencing. I write a lot about focus groups in my columns and advise most clients to hold focus groups annually. It's always nice to hear that the information garnered from such gatherings leads to improvements at newspapers.

After leading seven sessions over two days, my body reminded me I'm not as young as I was before COVID, or maybe I'm just out of practice standing all day. I returned home, however, as I always seem to from newspaper conferences, refreshed and inspired by the work being done by newspapers of all sizes. Today's free press is just as important, if not more, than ever.



By
Mark W.
Rummel
Fenton, MI

YOU'D BETTER SHOP AROUND:
Artificial Intelligence or A.I.
does your writing with
limited instructions

Maybe it was bound to happen. It appears computers are actually getting smarter than people — or at least computers can write all types of stories as easily as a human can.

I don't claim to know a great deal about A.I., but I have been closely watching the many news reports about this emerging technology. Since A.I. programs have scanned literally billions of human-written stories and photos from all over the world, they merge that massive amount of data into human-sounding words... written by a computer.

This might be incredible technology which can produce stories for people entering just a few key words into an A.I. program, or it might be the first step in the dumbing-down of our whole world. And we won't even consider that school students can tell their computer to write that historical essay about Christopher Columbus or whatever.

TO GIVE YOU several examples of how this can apply to publications, I used a basic A.I. program with the four sentences shown in red below. The A.I. program wrote these similar — but still different — 100-word stories based on those few words. None of the computer-generated stories are worthy of Pulitzer Prizes, but they would certainly save the time (and expense) of relying on human writers to produce basic copy. A.I. probably can't be stopped.

However, will A.I. produced stories lead to a general decline in our basic level of communication, since they seek and produce average or simple middle-ground language? Will our standard of all forms of writing decline?

Michigan's community newspapers have an interesting history.

Michigan's community newspapers have a long and rich history. They began in the 1800s when settlers established the first papers and continued to grow throughout the mid and late 1900s. They cover a range of topics, with some focusing on local news and current events, others on entertainment and sports, and some on opinion columns and editorials. These publications form an integral part of the fabric of life in Michigan and are vital sources of information for citizens across the state.

Michigan's free community papers have an interesting history.

Michigan's free community papers have a long and colorful history. The first of these papers, The Michigan Messenger, was established in Detroit in 1835. Since then, many papers have followed, becoming a vital source of news and information for local communities throughout Michigan. Over the years, community newspapers have also become an important part of Michigan's cultural identity, providing a powerful platform for local voices and stories.

Michigan's free shopping guide papers have an interesting history.

Michigan's free shopping guide papers have a unique history dating back to the 1950s. In the mid-50s, a few independent publishers took the lead in developing a resourceful guide for budget-minded consumers. The papers, which became known as Michigan Free Shopping Papers, featured coupons, offers, and shopping tips that could be used to save money. It eventually became a statewide phenomenon, providing value for budget shoppers for decades. Over the years, the papers have gone through various iterations, from print to digital, allowing Michigan shoppers to stay ahead of the trends and enjoy savings.

Michigan's community shopping guides have an interesting history.

Michigan's community shopping guides originated from the early days of thrifty pioneers looking for the best deal and a way to promote small businesses. In the 1920s and 1930s, entrepreneurs would hand-paint signs and produce flyers featuring stores in their area. By the 1940s and 1950s, large directories had been created and distributed to feature a comprehensive list of businesses for customers to explore. Today, many of these guides can still be found in physical and digital formats. They provide a snapshot of the past, promoting local businesses and enabling customers to shop smarter.

Mark worked at papers in Saginaw, Port Huron and the Thumb Area, plus served on the CPM Board. He and wife Sally even worked for The Walt Disney Company. He also opened and ran a successful restaurant for 17 years. He's mostly retired but still does some social media work from Fenton, Mich. MarkWRummel@gmail.com



BY JOHN FOUST

Ad - Libs

We've Got Some Explaining To Do.



- People usually say “no” to things they don’t understand. It’s a salesperson’s job to help
- prospects understand what he or she is selling. What makes media choice A better than choice
- B? What’s all this talk about target audiences being better than general audiences? Doesn’t
- that mean fewer buyers? If a business has been successful for a long time, why spend money
- on advertising?

You’re probably not worried about these things, but more than a few of your prospects are. There’s a natural tendency to think our prospects are keeping up with what we’re saying, when in reality, that may not be the case. We have to get in step with them before we can expect them to get in step with us.”

Christopher, a veteran ad salesperson, told me about an unusual misunderstanding with a prospect. “When he called to say he wanted to discuss his advertising outlays,” Christopher said, “I immediately thought about the budgeting process. As the conversation progressed, I realized that we were on two completely different wavelengths. He was referring to ad layouts, not ad outlays. We can laugh about it now, but at the time, it took a few minutes before I was able to adjust to the situation.”

Think of a camera. When you use the setting to focus tightly on a photo subject, the background is blurred. Sometimes, we concentrate so much on the center of attention – the person on the other side of the desk – that we lose sight of the things that might be blurred to them.

Here are a few ideas which may help:

1 Think of different ways to explain things. Have plenty of examples in your toolbox. In one case, an analogy might be your best choice and in another, a demonstration may be most appropriate. “Even when I use a map or a chart, I explain the information as simply as possible,” Christopher said. “A picture may be worth a thousand words, but a picture with no explanation is not worth much in a sales presentation.”

2 Break it down into small pieces. Don’t bombard the other person with everything at once. Build your case one point at a time. What good is point number three, if they don’t understand points one and two?

3 Check for clarity. Sure, your sales explanations are crystal clear to you, but how does the other person see them? Unlike a camera, there is no viewfinder in a sales meeting. So, we use other techniques to see if anything is blurry to them.

The most reliable way is to watch for body language and ask questions: “How does this look so far?” “When others see this chart, they often have questions. Does anything come to mind?” “Before we go any further, let me ask if this kind of information is what you need at this point?”

Good selling is a matter of becoming a professional explainer. By eliminating the blurred edges, you can help your prospects and clients see a much clearer picture.

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





BUILDING MAIN STREET NOT WALL STREET



Building Synergies Key to Success

by John Newby

The positive synergies between a vibrant chamber, a transformative city, and the local media company can result in a transformative impact on the community they serve. Each of these entities has its unique strengths and capabilities, and when combined, they can leverage each other's expertise to promote economic development, enhance civic engagement, and foster a strong sense of community.

The chamber of commerce is a business-oriented organization that promotes the interests of local businesses and provides support for their growth and development. It offers various services to its members, such as networking opportunities, business training, marketing assistance, and advocacy on their behalf. By collaborating with the city and local media company, the chamber can extend its reach and impact on the business community and the wider population.

The city government, on the other hand, is responsible for providing essential public services such as utilities, transportation, and public safety. It also sets policies and regulations that affect the local economy and community life. By partnering with the chamber and local media company, the city can gain valuable insights into the needs and aspirations of its residents and businesses. It can also leverage the media's reach and influence to communicate its vision, programs, and initiatives to a broader audience.

The local media company serves as the eyes and ears of the community, providing news, information, and entertainment to its readers, viewers, and listeners. It has the power to shape public opinion, influence

consumer behavior, and inspire civic action. By collaborating with the chamber and city, the media company can enhance its role as a community watchdog and advocate, highlighting local issues, events, and opportunities. It can also provide valuable promotional and advertising support to local businesses, boosting their visibility and sales.

One of the most significant benefits of this synergy is the promotion of economic development. By working together, they can create a positive business environment that attracts new investments, entrepreneurs, and talent to the community. The chamber can provide business training and mentoring to new and existing businesses, while the city can offer tax incentives, infrastructure improvements, and streamlined regulatory processes. The media company can promote the community's strengths, such as its natural beauty, cultural attractions, and quality of life, to a broader audience, creating a buzz that attracts visitors and investors alike.

Another crucial benefit of this synergy is the enhancement of civic engagement. By collaborating, the chamber, city, and media company can create opportunities for residents to get involved in community affairs, express their opinions, and participate in decision-making. The chamber can organize public forums, focus groups, and surveys to gather feedback from the business community and share it with the city. The city can use this input to develop policies and programs that reflect the community's needs and aspirations. The media company can provide comprehensive coverage of local issues and events, encouraging residents to become informed and active citizens.

Finally, this synergy can foster a strong sense of community. By working together, the chamber, city, and media company can create a shared vision for the future, based on common values and goals. They can celebrate the community's diversity and cultural heritage and promote its strengths and achievements. The chamber can organize events that bring together businesses and residents, such as business fairs, job fairs, and festivals. The city can support community-based initiatives, such as neighborhood cleanups, youth programs, and cultural events. The media company can showcase the community's stories, achievements, and challenges, building a sense of pride and belonging among residents.

To sum it up, the synergy between a chamber, city, and local media company can truly transform a community in so many ways. By promoting economic development, enhancing civic engagement, and fostering a strong sense of community, these entities can create a virtuous cycle of growth and prosperity that benefits everyone. They can leverage their unique strengths and capabilities to address the community's challenges and seize its opportunities, creating a brighter future for all.

John Newby is a nationally recognized Columnist, Speaker, & Publisher. He consults with Chambers, Communities, Business & Media. His "Building Main Street, not Wall Street," column appears in 60+ newspapers and media outlets. As founder of Truly-Local, he assists chambers, communities, media, and businesses in creating synergies that build vibrant communities. He can be reached at: John@Truly-Local.org.





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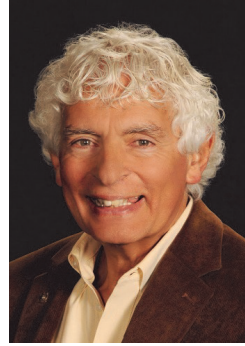
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