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Plan Now to Attend the CPF / SAPA / IFPA Joint Conference

The Community Papers of Florida (CPF) will return to the Caribe Royale Resort in Orlando for its 2016 conference scheduled September 29 through October 1.

This year CPF will join the Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA) and the Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association (SAPA) for a huge conference. By joining together the associations can split the bill for speakers and the other popular events at the conference, thereby being able to offer a more robust conference agenda to our members.

CPF will have its usual "Awards for Excellence" awards program to honor editorial and graphic personnel. You'll want to take a look at the awards information included in this newsletter as there has been a significant revamp of the categories and rules of entry.

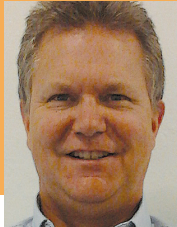
For a peek at the conference agenda, take a look at CPF President Wendy Murray's column on page 3. 



CPF's Board of Directors & Staff



President
Wendy Murray
Senior Life Magazine
North Ft. Myers
239-707-6722
seniorlifeofflee@aol.com



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Breeze Newspapers
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Secretary & E.D.
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susan@opcfla.com



Director
Farris Robinson
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South Daytona
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frobinson@hometownnewsol.com



Admin. Asst.
Barbara Holmes
Community Papers of Florida
Bellevue
352-347-4470
CPFDisplayAds@aol.com



Mission Statement: To support the success and growth of our members and the community paper industry.



Member Benefits

Your CPF membership provides a multitude of benefits and services that are paid for by the CPF classified network. If you haven't already, you'll want to take advantage of some of the following benefits:

- Audits provided by Circulation Verification Council (CVC).
- Annual Convention.
- A flat fee of \$59.50 per room per night (which includes the hotel room, lunch, dinner, training sessions by top industry speakers, and outstanding entertainment) for classified network members, according to the 2016 Board of Directors' established attendance guidelines. Current guidelines are: For publications that **SELL** network classified ads: Up to 100K circulation, 2 rooms (with 2 persons per room, for a total of 4 attendees); 101-300K, 3 rooms (with a total of 6 attendees); 301-500K, 5 rooms (with a total of 10 attendees); 501-750K, 6 rooms (with a total of 12 attendees); 751K-1 million, 7 rooms (with a total of 14 attendees); and over 1 million circulation, 9 rooms (with a total of 18 attendees). For publications that only **PLACE** (but do not **SELL**) network classified ads: Up to 100K circulation, 1 room (with 2 persons, for a total of 2 attendees); 101-300K, 2 rooms (with 2 persons per room, for a total of 4 attendees); 301-500K, 4 rooms (with a total of 8 attendees); 501-750K, 5 rooms (with a total of 10 attendees); 751K-1 million, 6 rooms (with a total of 12 attendees); and over 1 million circulation, 8 rooms (with a total of 16 attendees).
- Convention Idea Fairs. Earn cash awards. Share ideas. Fantastic opportunities to take home revenue-generating ideas.
- Annual CPF "Awards for Excellence" contest to honor our editorial and graphic service personnel.
- Nationally-recognized convention speakers.

- An opportunity to earn money through CPF's classified network.
- Quarterly CPF newsletters.
- AFCP's Free Paper INK. No cost to members.
- Training seminars provided. No cost.
- Disaster Fund. Aid in the event of a hurricane, tornado, or other catastrophic event.
- A successful tax lobby effort, still working for you.
- The Saturation Mailers Coalition, fighting for a positive postal rate, pricing, operation and service environment that benefits free paper publishers that mail.
- Defending our industry against the assaults of government and others that may choose to consider us as second-class citizens.
- Helping publishers in CPF gain their market share of revenue and protecting their interests.
- Promoting the free paper industry. CPF has budgeted funds to promote our industry to our readers and our outstanding value to both advertisers and consumers.
- A great opportunity to work together as a team to make Florida a better place to live!
- The CPF Website with CPF news, including classifieds for the following week; advertising information; links to Member publications and state, regional and national free paper organizations; photos from past conferences; and a list of Member Publications (with audited circulation figures). Visit: www.communitypapersofflora.com



The President's Message

Discover the Treasures of More Sales and New Friends!

– Wendy Murray

Discover the Treasures of More Sales and New Friends by attending the joint CPF, SAPA and IFPA annual conference scheduled for September 28-October 1 at the Caribe Royale Resort in Orlando.

If you attend you will improve your leadership skills, get ideas on social media marketing, and have the opportunity to be part of a publishers mini summit. You can attend a session on how to print money, learn from an “everything digital” panel, attend a media buyers panel discussion, win some money at the three-minute idea exchange and have tons of fun.

The conference will kick off with “Dare To Lead” sponsored by The Citadel College in Charleston, S.C. The theme of the college’s mission is “to educate and develop principled leaders” in all walks of life.

The Citadel has built a reputation around the world for its academic distinction and the quality of leadership it helps develop. You can find out more about this by going to their website, www.daretolead.com.

“How to Print Money” is the topic being presented by Ed Henninger who will provide 10 no-cost, time-saving, revenue-generating design strategies you can immediately put to use at your publications.

Each of the three associations have conference chairs who are working to make this conference worth the investment to attend. The theory they used is to have an understanding of the ever-changing challenges publishers face today, such as the need to develop leaders, improve time management, increase sales, address personnel changes, build teams and enhance performance. The goal is to have it all at this conference.

The fun will include a Thursday night reception with DJ Denny Rogers and a Friday night reception with entertainment by the Trop Rock Junkies.

The band was started by Steve Tolliver, a former CPF and SAPA vendor, who now performs around Florida and other places.

See further details about the conference in this newsletter.

The good news is that despite declining classified revenue, the CPF board of directors has approved a charge of only \$59.50 per night for up to two nights (either Thursday / Friday or Friday / Saturday) for members that publish the network classified ads to attend. The remaining costs for food, entertainment and the training sessions will all be paid by the association.

This is a three-day conference that ends on Saturday afternoon. Those who want to take advantage of the nearby tourist attractions can stay an extra night at the group rate, but must pay for their own room.

One of the highlights for CPF members will be the annual “Awards for Excellence” awards ceremony. Once again, this is our opportunity to honor the talent of the graphic and editorial personnel of this association.

Despite this being a joint conference, CPF will have its own session for the “Awards for Excellence” using the format we used last year. The forms to enter the competition are included in this newsletter.

On a personal note, this will be my last conference as president of CPF. During the general membership business meeting at the conference, the recommendations of the nominating committee for officers and directors will be voted on.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your president. A special thanks goes out to the board of directors for their help during these past few years when the loss of revenue has been a factor. We have dug into the reserves to continue to provide the financial assistance for members to attend the annual conferences.

We hope to see you in Orlando! 🎯

Announcements

Nominating Committee Recommendations

The CPF general membership must approve the recommendations at the conference.



The Community Papers of Florida (CPF) Nominating Committee has recommended that Farris Robinson serve as president during the next two-year term.

The CPF general membership must approve the recommendations at the General Business Meeting that will be held at the conference.

Farris is the president of Hometown News, which publishes 15 publications on the East Coast of Florida from Daytona Beach to the Treasure Coast. The company distributes its 15 community newspapers to 200,000 homes weekly.

Farris moved to Florida in 1987 and worked for Ryder Distribution Resources assembling and delivering Xerox copiers. From there he went to work in the warehouse of the paper supplier Mac Papers and quickly became the warehouse manager. Farris said, "I decided that it was too hot to work in the warehouse and convinced the GM to give me a shot at inside sales. I quickly became the #1 inside sales rep and wanted a new challenge in outside sales."



Farris Robinson

At that time the general manager refused to put him in an outside territory so he went to work for the competition, Dillard Paper Company, now known as Xpedx. After a year he transferred to the Orlando office and was given the Volusia/Lake County areas.

One of his accounts was the Daytona Beach News Journal, and he was eventually offered a position with the News Journal as a retail/classified advertising account executive.

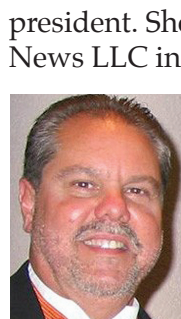
After the company went through a buyout, he decided to move on and accepted a position with Hometown News as a new business development rep in April of 2010. He then took over a territory. Later he was promoted to sales manager of the Volusia office and then to regional sales manager handling Volusia and North Brevard counties.



Susan Griffin

From there he was given the opportunity to be the senior vice president of sales and was later promoted to president.

Susan Griffin was nominated to serve as vice



Justo Rey

president. She is the publisher of OPC News LLC in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Justo Rey was nominated to serve another term as treasurer. Rey is the president of The Flyer.

Nominated to continue their service on the board were Tom Adams, publisher of the Forum Publishing Group in Deerfield Beach; Dan Autrey, publisher of Tampa Bay Newspapers; Scott Blonde, vice president of the Breeze Newspapers in Southwest Florida; and Charlie Delatorre, CEO of Tower Publications in Gainesville.



Dave Neuharth

CPF Executive Director Dave Neuharth was nominated to continue serving as secretary as a non-voting board member.



Wendy Murray

Wendy Murray will serve a two-year term as past president.

Be sure to attend the Business Meeting Saturday at noon. 🕒



Tom Adams



Dan Autrey



Scott Blonde



Charlie Delatorre



Awards for Excellence

Contest Rules & Categories

Entries are due by Wednesday, August 3, 2016!

Contest Rules

ELIGIBILITY: All entries must have been conceived, written and designed by staff members. Entries must be produced solely by bona fide employees of a CPF member publication, and all entries are subject to verification.

READY-MADE ADS: The Awards for Excellence is a contest to recognize the creativity of employees of CPF member publications. The creative element should be stressed, and any art service illustrations may ONLY be used to supplement original design ideas. Advertising agency ads and ready-made ads from the services should not be entered into the competition (except for category 8b) and will be automatically disqualified if they are.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING: Judging will be based on originality, layout and design, headline, copy, use of artwork/photography and color, when applicable.

AWARDS: Judges will select First, Second, and Third Place winners. They have complete discretion in making awards and their decisions are final. Plaques will be presented to all winning newspapers. 🎯

2015 Contest Categories

1. EDITORIAL

- 1a. **PERSONAL COLUMN** – A column, written by the publisher or a member of his/her staff, covering any topic.
- 1b. **BEST EDITORIAL** on a subject of local community interest which best expresses a hometown allegiance.
- 1c. **NEWS STORY** – A written rendering of a newsworthy event. Include byline.
- 1d. **BEST ORIGINAL WRITING** for a human interest or feature article.
- 1e. **BEST ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH** used for a feature or general interest story, a community news event or a sports event.
- 1f. **BEST ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SPREAD** for a feature or general interest story, community news event or sports event.
- 1g. **BEST INDEPENDENT PHOTO FEATURE** – Photo with a tag line but no story.

2. SALES PROMOTION

- 2a. **SELF PROMOTION IN PAPER** – Advertising in your paper that promotes the use of your paper by advertisers or acceptance by readers. Includes testimonials.

- 2b. **OTHER SELF PROMOTION** – Includes flyers, mailers, media kits, electronic media, etc.

3. RETAIL ADVERTISING

(All Retail Advertising [products and/or services] other than Automotive, Real Estate, Dining & Entertainment, or Professional Services.)

- 3a. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (MORE THAN 1/2 PAGE)**
- 3b. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (LESS THAN 1/2 PAGE)**

4. AUTOMOTIVE ADVERTISING

- 4a. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (MORE THAN 1/2 PAGE)**
- 4b. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (LESS THAN 1/2 PAGE)**

5. REAL ESTATE ADVERTISING

- 5a. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (MORE THAN 1/2 PAGE)**
- 5b. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (LESS THAN 1/2 PAGE)**

6. DINING & ENTERTAINMENT ADVERTISING

- 6a. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (MORE THAN 1/2 PAGE)**
- 6b. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (LESS THAN 1/2 PAGE)**

7. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ADVERTISING

(Limited to Lawyers, Medical Professionals, Financial, Insurance and Political Ads)

- 7a. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (MORE THAN 1/2 PAGE)**
- 7b. **FULL COLOR/PROCESS (LESS THAN 1/2 PAGE)**



8. B&W AND/OR SPOT COLOR ADS

(Any ad from categories 3 through 7 that is done in either black & white or with spot color, in any size.)

8a. **BLACK & WHITE**

8b. **SPOT COLOR**

9. MULTIPLE CATEGORIES

8a. **THEME PROMOTION** – A common theme for a group of businesses such as car care, home improvement, holiday themes, strip malls, etc.

8b. **ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN** – Multiple ads for a single client using continuity of theme and artwork.

8c. **IN-HOUSE PRODUCED ADVERTISING INSERT**
(Either single sheet or more than single sheet.)

10. SPECIAL SECTIONS

9a. **BEST COVER DESIGN – NEWSPRINT**

9b. **BEST COVER DESIGN – GLOSS**

9c. **BEST CREATIVE CONCEPT**

9d. **BEST CREATIVE CONTENT**

11. INTERNET/ WEB PAGE

11a. **BEST INTERNET HOME SITE** design & presentation. (Submit a printed copy of your home page, not just the Website address.)

12. JUDGE'S CHOICE AND BEST OF SHOW

12a. **JUDGE'S CHOICE** – This award will be presented by each judge for his/her favorite entry. Separate entries in this category are not accepted.

12b. **BEST OF SHOW** – The judges will choose the winner of this category from all entries received. Separate entries in this category are not accepted. 📌

Entry Specifications

1. Only items published between August 1, 2015, and July 31, 2016, are eligible for entry.

2. ENTRIES should be securely mounted on half-sized sheets of poster board (approximately 14" x 22").

- The publication date should be clearly visible on the tearsheet. An electronic tearsheet mounted on poster board is acceptable.

- Be sure that any permanent markings drawing attention to the entry do not run into or cover it. Exception: Stick-on arrows or Post-its.

- For editorial categories, be sure to include the entire article/story. If a jump is omitted, the story will be disqualified.

- When a full copy of a magazine or brochure is being submitted, please insert it into a clear pocket securely mounted on the poster board.

- No more than one entry per poster board.

3. ENTRY TAGS must be completely filled out and attached to the **BACK** of the poster board.

- Please attach the tag in the **UPPER RIGHT-HAND CORNER** of the vertical board, NOT in the center of the board or the left corner.

- Be sure to credit the author(s), artist(s) or department that created the entry.

- No more than one category per poster board. (If you are entering the same ad in more than one category, each entry must be on its own poster board.)

- Each entry must have a category written on the entry tag. If an entry is not marked, it will be removed from the competition.

4. There is a limit of two (2) entries per category, per publication.

5. **Entry Fees**: Each company will pay an entry fee of \$2.50 per entry. *Fees are due with the contest entries. Entries received without payment of proper fees will be removed from the competition.*

6. Entries should be shipped to: Community Papers of Florida, 13405 SE Hwy. 484, Belleview, FL 34420.

7. All entries must be received by the CPF office no later than Wednesday, August 3, 2016. Judging will take place August 5, 2016. 📌

Mail or Overnight Your Entries to

Community Papers of Florida

13405 SE Hwy. 484

Belleview, FL 34420

for delivery by

August 3, 2016!

Awards for Excellence *Entry Tags (Photocopy as Needed)*



Publication _____
Contact Person _____
Phone _____
Advertiser _____

(For editorial entries, put name of article here)

Credits _____

(Name of the author(s) or artist(s) who created the entry.
If none, put "none" and the publication will be credited.)

**PRINT
CATEGORY
NUMBER
HERE** →

**Limit of
2 entries
per category
per publication**

Publication _____
Contact Person _____
Phone _____
Advertiser _____

(For editorial entries, put name of article here)

Credits _____

(Name of the author(s) or artist(s) who created the entry.
If none, put "none" and the publication will be credited.)

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HERE** →

**Limit of
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per category
per publication**

Publication _____
Contact Person _____
Phone _____
Advertiser _____

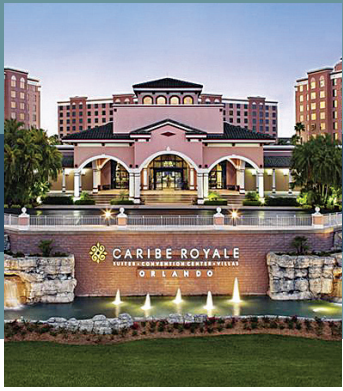
(For editorial entries, put name of article here)

Credits _____

(Name of the author(s) or artist(s) who created the entry.
If none, put "none" and the publication will be credited.)

**PRINT
CATEGORY
NUMBER
HERE** →

**Limit of
2 entries
per category
per publication**



Conference Update

Welcome Back, Trop Rock Junkies!

Look for a rockin' good time at Friday's reception in Orlando!



The Trop Rock Junkies will again entertain conference attendees in Orlando. In 2014, when CPF, SAPA & IFPA last met for a joint conference, this band was an overwhelming hit.

The band was formed several years ago by a former vendor of the associations, Steve Tolliver. He left his position with Newspaper Printing Company to follow his lifelong dream.

He created Trop Rock Junkies and writes all the songs the group performs. The Florida Keys and paradise are instrumental in his writings. The group has won numerous awards including writer of the year, song of the year and musician of the year in Florida. To listen to his songs, go to www.stevetolliver.com. 🎧

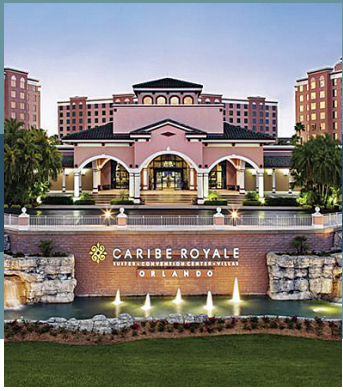


						
David York Guitar/Vocals	Doug Wilcox Keyboards	Mark Sweat Drums	Lightning Jack Steel Pans	Greg Sabol Bass/Vocals	Steve Tolliver Guitar/Vocals	Colin Ward Ld. Guitar/Vocals



Take one part country, two parts rock n roll
mix it all up with some Caribbean soul
www.troprockjunkies.com





Conference Update

Seeking Nominations for the Beckerman Award!

Nominate your publication, your employees or yourself!

Milton and Bernice Beckerman, CPF associate members for more than 25 years, were newspaper brokers with big hearts.

In 1993 they placed \$15,000 in a fund with the intent that a CPF publisher (or a member of his or her staff) be recognized annually for outstanding community service. The CPF Board of Directors is delighted to bring back this prestigious award.

If you have been involved in sponsoring a community event or charity, or if an individual on your staff (or you personally) have worked to improve the quality of life in the communities you represent, please use the entry blank on this page to enter.

We thank you for your service to your community. 📌

The Milton & Bernice Beckerman Award Entry Form

This award honors a CPF member publication, or an employee of a member publication, for outstanding community service from September 1, 2015 through August 30, 2016. This service can be in the form of a special edition that benefitted a community or charity, a fund-raising event for a charity, an employee who performed service for his community, etc. Please complete the entry form, attach any pertinent backup (i.e. pictures, tearsheets, etc.), and return it to the CPF office so that it is received no later than September 1, 2016. Mail to CPF, P.O. Box 1149, Summerfield, FL 34492; fax to 352-347-3384; or email to CPFDisplayAds@aol.com.

Name of Publication: _____

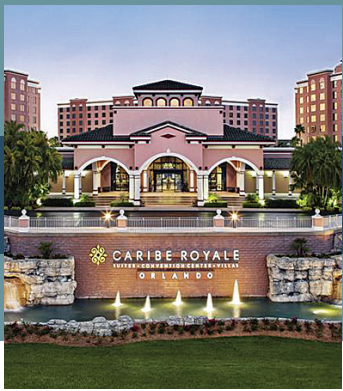
Publisher: _____

Service Performed: _____

Date Service Performed: _____

Effects of the Service: _____

Name of Employee (if employee related): _____



Conference Update

Discover Treasures at the IFPA, SAPA & CPF Conference

Sponsorship Packages are available for the Joint Conference in Orlando 9/29-10/1.

	Event Sponsorship	5 minute presentation to attendees	exhibit space	internet @ booth	electric @ booth	your material in conference packets	vendor welcome reception	full color ad in TIP + an ad in SAPA & CPF newsletters	meals are on us	registration	VALUE	Early Bird Special Pricing	After July 15th 2016
Platinum	. welcome reception . publishers rd.table . saturday lunch . friday lunch	at your sponsored event	pick your location	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2 meal plans	2 people	\$2266	\$1395	\$1595
Gold		ONLY 5 premium slots	pick your location	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2 meal plans	2 people	\$1771	\$975	\$1195
Silver			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1 meal plan	1 person	\$1088	\$625	\$775
VALUE	\$495	\$225	\$295	\$50	\$50	\$95		\$190-\$290	\$159	\$249 each			

Only 30 Booths Available. Reserve Your Space Today at freepaperconference.com

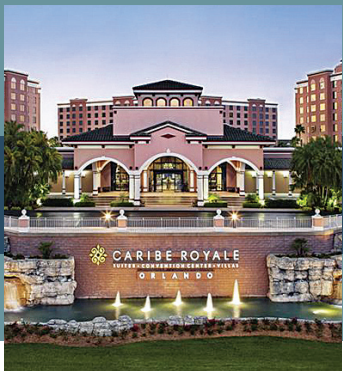
Additional Registration: \$99 per attendee, Additional Meal Package: \$159 per attendee

You must be an IFPA, SAPA or CPF member to sponsor the conference.



FreePaperConference.com

danielle burnett | danielleburnett-ifpa@live.com | (866) 224-8151
katie mcNabb | katie@exchange-inc.com | (931) 619-8107



Conference & Hotel Registration Form

September 29 – October 1, 2016, Caribe Royale, Orlando

Complete & fax to 352-347-3384 or register online at www.communitypapersofflorida.com

Conference Registration

Company: _____
 Contact Person: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Is your company a new member of CPF? Yes _____ No _____

Please print the following information as you'd like it to appear on your name badge.

NAME: _____
 Title: _____
 Email: _____

Is this your first CPF Conference? Yes _____ No _____

Number of guests you will be bringing: _____

Management _____ Sales _____ Graphics _____

NAME: _____
 Title: _____
 Email: _____

Is this your first CPF Conference? Yes _____ No _____

Number of guests you will be bringing: _____

Management _____ Sales _____ Graphics _____

NAME: _____
 Title: _____
 Email: _____

Is this your first CPF Conference? Yes _____ No _____

Number of guests you will be bringing: _____

Management _____ Sales _____ Graphics _____

The Investment Level Required to Attend

Members Participating in the CPF Classified Network:

- All but \$59.50 of the room cost per night will be deducted from your bill in accordance with the following guidelines:

~ For member publications that SELL network classified ads: Up to 100K circulation (that publishes the network classified ads), 2 rooms (with two persons per room, for a total of 4 attendees); 101–300K, 3 rooms (6 attendees); 301–500K, 5 rooms (10 attendees); 501–750K, 6 rooms (12 attendees); 751K–1 million, 7 rooms (14 attendees); and over 1 million circulation, 9 rooms (18 attendees). **Note:** Publications that sell classified ads will have first choice in booking rooms through July 25, 2016. There is a fee of \$59.50 per room per night for up to two nights to cover the room, food, receptions, training and entertainment.

~ For member publications that DO NOT SELL network classified ads BUT ONLY PLACE the ads: Up to 100K circulation (that publishes the network classified ads), 1 room (with two persons, for a total of 2 attendees); 101–300K, 2 rooms (4 attendees); 301–500K, 4 rooms (8 attendees); 501–750K, 5 rooms (10 attendees); 751K–1 million, 6 rooms (12 attendees); and over 1 million circulation, 8 rooms (16 attendees). **Note:** Publications that only PLACE classified ads are encouraged to register early, but will be placed on a first-come, first-serve waiting list until August 1, 2015. There is a fee of \$59.50 per room per night for up to two nights to cover the room, food, receptions, training and entertainment.

- CPF will pay for your rooms in accordance with the established 2016 guidelines (above) for TWO NIGHTS ONLY (either Thursday & Friday OR Friday & Saturday). If you wish to stay an additional night, you may do so at your own expense.

- A credit card is required to make your reservation. It will be charged the \$59.50 per room per night fee on or after July 25, 2016 (for publications that SELL the network ads) or on or after August 1, 2016 (for publications that only PLACE but do not sell the network ads).

- Member publications may continue to send as many members as they wish to the conference, but they will be charged the FULL COST of attendance for each member that exceeds the guidelines. **Note:** Guests (including children) attending with a member are counted in the above totals.

- Publications may make credit-card-secured reservations through August 15, 2016. After that, room reservations will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis until the allocated rooms are filled. Once the room block is full, all late registrations must pay for their own hotel rooms.

- The absolute cutoff date for hotel registrations is August 25, 2016.

Associate Members & Members Not Running the CPF Network Ads:

- All costs associated with attending the conference, including a \$60 registration fee, all hotel room charges and meals, are your responsibility.

Hotel Registration ~ Payment Section

Credit Card # _____
 Expiration Date: _____ Code: _____
 Type: MasterCard _____ VISA _____
 Name on Card: _____
 Billing Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____

I understand that I am responsible for \$59.50 per room per night plus all charges made to my room. I also understand that in the event I do not show up at conference or cancel my room reservation by calling CPF at 352-347-4470 no later than September 26, my signature below authorizes CPF and/or the Caribe Royale All-Suite Resort & Convention Center to charge the full cost of my room to my credit card.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Hotel Registration ~ Please complete one per room:

ROOM IN NAME OF: _____

Check in Date: _____ Check Out Date: _____

Special dietary or access needs: _____

If two or more conference attendees are rooming together, list roommate(s) here: _____

ROOM IN NAME OF: _____

Check in Date: _____ Check Out Date: _____

Special dietary or access needs: _____

If two or more conference attendees are rooming together, list roommate(s) here: _____

ROOM IN NAME OF: _____

Check in Date: _____ Check Out Date: _____

Special dietary or access needs: _____

If two or more conference attendees are rooming together, list roommate(s) here: _____



PaperChain Update

Confronting Challenges When Reducing Circulation

— Jim Busch

While researching a subject for this month's Link and Learn, I received an e-mail from my good friend and Leadership Institute colleague, Tom Cuskey.

Tom, who works for the Free Community Papers of New York, passed along the following question from a sales manager at one of the FCPNY member's papers: "To cut costs, our publisher has been forced to reduce our circulation in areas where we have few advertisers. While I understand why we need to do this, the smaller circulation, and readership, has impacted our efforts to retain our current customers and attract new ones. What can our sales people do to stop the bleeding?" Tom felt that this was a good Link and Learn subject and I agree.

Papers all over the country have been forced to reduce their footprints in the last few years. While no publisher wants to cut their circulation, many have been forced to do so in response to economic and competitive pressures. While reducing circulation in underperforming areas can put a paper on a better financial footing, doing so creates new challenges for its advertising sales people.

In our industry, the value of a publication is directly related to the number of consumers

who read it. It is an undeniable fact that when we reduce the coverage of a publication we also reduce the value it provides to its advertisers.

Unfortunately, a reduction in coverage is often accompanied with a loss in sales revenue. Some advertisers see a paper's shrinking footprint as "proof" that "print is dead," and move their dollars to other media. Our competitors from other media see a paper's reduction in coverage as a golden opportunity to lure our advertisers away. Like us, many of our advertisers are looking to reduce their costs. They seize upon the issue of a paper's reduced circulation to negotiate better rates for themselves. Cutting back on coverage can also impact a paper's ability to attract new business. Most business owners want to "go with a winner," and may see the change as evidence, often irked on by the competition, that your paper is failing, making them reluctant to commit to advertising with it.

The economic and competitive environment we face today is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, so we must learn to adapt and cope with it.

While some loss of revenue is inevitable when a paper is forced to reduce its coverage, there are some steps publishers and sales people can take to mitigate the damage done to their bottom line. The two keys to weathering the downsizing of your publication are:

- Communication (Controlling the optics);
- Focus on current value.

Like any of life's many problems, the best way to meet the challenges created by a circulation cut is head on.

GETTING THE STORY RIGHT

It is human nature to want to know what is going on. This is the impulse that led the Egyptians to decide that the sun moving across the sky was Ra's golden chariot and why people are interested in what's trending on Facebook.

This innate need to know what's going on means that, in the absence of facts, people will "fill in the blanks" with whatever seems plausible. Usually the fabricated version of events paints a much darker picture than the reality of the situation would dictate. There is a great educational film on this subject you may want to watch, "Ferris Bueller's Day Off." In this film, Matthew Broderick's character calls in sick to get a day off from high school. Since they really don't know what is wrong with Ferris, his fellow students decide that Ferris is dying.

When I was a sales manager, I found the best way to counter a rumor was to call my reps together and give them the plain, unadulterated facts about the matter in question. It is very

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tempting to “maintain radio silence” about a decrease in circulation, no one likes to give bad news or, even worse, admit failure.

The problem is that in a business where your product is distributed to a large number of people on a regular basis, people are going to notice that suddenly your paper is no longer showing up on their porch on Wednesdays. As business people, we are ethically bound to tell our advertisers about all but the most minor changes in our coverage. We should not only offer the when and where the changes will be made but also the why.

When people hear that you are cutting coverage, the first thought is that this is “the beginning of the end,” and that your business is failing. Though the most successful businesses are always changing their business model to adapt to changes in the business environment, this is not how most changes are perceived.

How you position the changes in your coverage will have a big impact on how people see your paper. Publishers should craft a clear explanatory statement of the changes they will be making and a strategy for disseminating the information.

The statement should be short, simple and direct. Avoid any “weasel wording” in your message. People become very suspicious when they read that a change is being made to “serve them better.” We live in a capitalist society; people will accept that you have to make decisions to ensure the profitability of your enterprise. It is also important to reassure them that you are committed to serving them in the future. Here is an example of this type of statement:

The Your Town Shopper will no longer be delivered to homes in the XYZ area. This was a difficult decision but it reflects our desire to focus on our core areas and to maintain our profitability so that we can serve our readers and advertisers far into the future. The management team of the Your Town Shopper regrets any inconvenience this decision will create for our readers and advertisers.

“How you position the changes in your coverage will have a big impact on how people see your paper.”

SPREADING THE NEWS

Obviously, the first people that need to know about the circulation cuts are the paper’s employees. It is important to make sure everyone is on board with what is happening and why. Employees’ futures are tied to the success or failure of the paper and any doubts will negatively affect their performance. Also, the paper’s employees are part of the community. Their friends and neighbors are sure to ask them, “What’s going on at the Shopper? Are you guys going out of business?” You want every employee to have a positive answer for this question.

Since the salespeople are on the “front lines,” they need to be trained to discuss the changes.

It is important to discuss the changes in detail, and address all questions that the sales people may have about them. Roleplay how to inform advertisers about the changes until the reps are comfortable presenting them.

The more confident the reps are presenting the changes, the more confident customers will be about continuing to advertise. Sales managers should sit down with their reps individually to review their accounts and discuss the best strategy for maintaining their revenue base. The manager should work with any reps who are likely to be disproportionately impacted by the changes to work out a plan to maintain their income.

Once the reps are prepared to present the changes, a launch date should be set to roll out the changes. If possible, the reps should visit all advertisers within a day or two of the announcement. This should be done before an announcement is published in the company’s publications. They should both deliver a letter from management explaining the changes and answer their customers’ questions.

They can offer their regrets about the changes, but should not disparage the company’s motives. Reps should reinforce the idea that these changes will make the company stronger. Be careful not to blow the situation out of proportion. Some accounts may not be overly concerned about the areas eliminated from your circulation. Reps should position the changes as what they are, a business decision intended to make the paper stronger. (A good example to use is Wal-Mart’s recent decision to close stores. Does the advertiser believe that this means that the mega-retailer is going out of business?)

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GOING FORWARD

Reducing a paper's circulation presents a challenge to the sales people. Like all sales challenges, it requires going back to the basics of sales.

It is important for reps to focus on the value offered by their paper's current coverage. They should be armed with circulation numbers, market research and audit info for the new footprint. They need to talk about what advertisers are getting and not what has been lost. Approaching the customer with new ideas and ad layouts will set a positive tone and tell the advertiser that the rep is still there to help them grow their business.

There are several things that publishers can do to soften the blow to their bottom line when they have to cut circulation. If revenues no longer justify the expense of delivering or mailing papers in outlying areas, they may want to consider going to a racked delivery in those zones. This would reduce costs while still offering the paper and advertisers a presence in the market.

This strategy provides a vehicle for up-selling advertisers in the core area and allows the paper to maintain a relationship in the areas dropped from delivery.

This leaves the door open to go back into these areas if the situation changes. You can change the frequency of the paper by making it monthly rather than weekly and eliminating or reducing editorial content to cut costs as necessary to make the product profitable.

Another option is to offer a digital edition in the dropped areas.

It is wise to couple circulation changes with other changes in your publications.

By making a change in the design of the paper or adding new features or promotions to your product mix, the circulation change is more likely to be perceived as part of a general program of improvement. This also gives the sales people something positive to present to their advertisers and prospects.

Coupling cuts with product improvements sends a clear message that the company is strong and intends to persevere in the market.

IT'S A TOUGH JOB, BUT SOMEBODY HAS TO DO IT

No publisher ever wants to cut their circulation and no sales rep wants to tell their customers they're reducing their coverage, but sometimes this is what we need to do to keep our companies financially viable. The keys to minimizing the loss of revenue in tough economic times are clear communication and value focused selling. It is vital that you control the message about what your paper is doing and position it in the best possible light. Keeping focused on the value your paper still offers and presenting that value to advertisers and prospects will keep your current publications profitable and set the stage for future growth when things improve.

When dealing with this problem, as with most challenges in life, it is how we handle the situation that separates the winners from the losers. 🎯



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Postal Pieces

Rates to Rollback on April 10, 2016

– Donna Hanbery

The USPS has filed the notice it is required to file by the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) decision in the exigency case to announce that postal rates will “rollback” on April 10, 2016.

Previous to this official filing, the USPS had released detailed rate information to all mailers about the “rollback rates” that will go into effect when the USPS has recovered all of the revenue the PRC found it was entitled to recoup “due to” the Great Recession and to collect with the 4.3% exigency increase that has been added to all Market Dominant postal rates.

The Postal Service announced, absent Congressional or Court Action to make the existing exigent surcharge for Market Dominant Products and Services part of the rate base or to otherwise extend it, that the Postal Service would provide notice of the rollback date to the PRC at least 45 days before the exigent surcharge revenue target is reached. The USPS posted on its RIBBS website charts that show all of the rollback rates.

The Postal Service PRC filing, announcement, and posting of the rollback rates, is all required by existing order of the PRC. The Postal Service

would still like to see some legislation passed before the “rollback” date to permit it to keep the exigency surcharge in place. In a USPS Release accompanying the announcement, Postmaster General Megan Brennan said, “Removing the surcharge and reducing our prices is an irrational outcome considering the Postal Service’s precarious financial condition.”

The USPS, the President’s budget, and some mailers and associations have supported a continuation of the exigent surcharge as part of a potential postal reform package that would help stabilize Postal Service finances. Such a proposal was in the President’s budget and is in the Ipost bill introduced by Senator Carper. The USPS has also continued its exigency appeal challenging the last round of proceedings before the PRC. But in this contentious Congressional environment and election year, and in light of the extensive court proceedings and rulings that have already taken place, the likelihood of Congressional or court action to continue the exigent surcharge seems remote.

A chart of the rates for Enhanced Carrier Route Flats sent as High Density (TMC) Mail or Saturation Mail Flats, reprinted with permission of PostCom, the Association of Postal Commerce, accompanies this article. These are the rate categories used most frequently by free paper publishers that use the mail for all or part of their circulation.

The rate category referred to as EDDM ECR Flats - Saturation refers to Saturation Mail pieces sent with the simplified address format, and as commercial mail where the mailer has a mailing permit. (These are not the rates for EDDM Retail where a business owner can enter smaller quantities of unaddressed saturation mail at a local postal office without a permit). SMC is a member of PostCom and thanks that organization for the permission to share this information and this helpful chart with our members.

So what is ahead for postal rates? With CPI continuing to be exceptionally low, it is not anticipated that there will be a rate change until January 2017. Under the current law governing the USPS, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, postal rate increases have been limited to adjustments within the CPI rate cap, except for extraordinary or exigent circumstances. In 2017, after the exigent 10 year anniversary of the law, the PRC is charged with conducting a “Rate Review” to determine how the rate setting process has worked.

Although most mailers applaud the Rate Cap as a PAEA protection that has stabilized postal prices for monopoly products and encouraged the USPS to cut costs and right size its network, the USPS and postal labor have made it clear that they want to bust the cap. Brennan said, “Our

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current pricing regime is unworkable and should be replaced with a system that provides greater pricing flexibility and better reflects the economic challenges facing the Postal Service.”

Mailers and other USPS stakeholders believe the problems the USPS faces are not due to the rate cap but unworkable and unfair government imposed mandates relating to health care costs and prefunding, overpayment of retirement costs, and other burdens that could be fixed with postal reforms that do not unfairly and unreasonably burden mailers, and put the USPS and the federal government at risk of losing more of the postal rate paying customers that fund the USPS.

Some mailers and associations, including SMC, have advanced an idea to be included as part of an overall postal reform package of a rate proposal that would give the Postal Service some additional revenue (beyond what is permitted by CPI) to help the USPS with its financial challenges. The willingness of mailers and industry to accept a higher than CPI rate is conditioned, however, on other Congressional action that would postpone the 10 year rate review one year to 2018, and would give mailers the certainty of two years of rate stability.

This rate proposal would be part of a comprehensive postal reform package that would give the USPS the restructuring changes it needs to amortize health care obligations over a longer period of time, would allow the USPS and its employees to take advantage of Medicare participation (currently USPS employees pay for Medicare but do not participate in the plan), would give the Postal Service a right to refunds for overpayments to its retirement plans, and

would make other changes that would improve the long-term health and stability of the USPS.

As of the writing of this column, this proposal is still in the discussion stage. But it is an effort by mailers that opposed exigency, to try and meet the Postal Service part way on its financial challenges, but to also give the industry and the Postal

Service some breathing room to adjust to changes that might be in an overall reform law, and to complete studies that would be required by the law, before the PRC begins its rate review process. But as of this writing, the prospects of comprehensive postal reform in the short-term, or long-term, during an election year remain uncertain. 🌀

Regular Standard Mail Flats Postage Rates-Enhanced Carrier Route Exigency Surcharge Rollback (Potential Implementation April 2016)

(All Rates Shown In Cents)

SUBCLASS/ Rate Category	For Pieces Weighing 3.3 Ounces or Less				Current Rates		New Rates	
	Current Rate	New Rate	% Difference	Amount Difference	Per Piece	PLUS Per Pound	Per Piece	PLUS Per Pound
ECR FLATS High Density/1	24.5	23.5	(4.1)%	(1.0)	11.3	64.1	10.8	61.5
NDC Entry	21.1	20.2	(4.3)%	(0.9)	11.3	47.3	10.8	45.4
SCF Entry	20.1	19.2	(4.5)%	(0.9)	11.3	42.3	10.8	40.6
Delivery Unit Entry	19.1	18.3	(4.2)%	(0.8)	11.3	37.8	10.8	36.3
ECR FLATS-High Density Plus	24.0	23.0	(4.2)%	(1.0)	8.8	64.1	8.4	61.5
NDC Entry	20.6	19.7	(4.4)%	(0.9)	8.8	47.3	8.4	45.4
SCF Entry	19.6	18.7	(4.6)%	(0.9)	8.8	42.3	8.4	40.6
Delivery Unit Entry	18.6	17.8	(4.3)%	(0.8)	8.8	37.8	8.4	36.3
ECR FLATS-Saturation	21.4	20.5	(4.2)%	(0.9)	8.1	64.1	7.8	61.5
NDC Entry	17.9	17.2	(3.9)%	(0.7)	8.1	47.3	7.8	45.4
SCF Entry	16.9	16.2	(4.1)%	(0.7)	8.1	42.3	7.8	40.6
Delivery Unit Entry	15.9	15.3	(3.8)%	(0.6)	8.1	37.8	7.8	36.3
EDDM ECR FLATS-Saturation	21.5	20.6	(4.2)%	(0.9)	8.2	64.1	7.9	61.5
NDC Entry	18.0	17.3	(3.9)%	(0.7)	8.2	47.3	7.9	45.4
SCF Entry	17.0	16.3	(4.1)%	(0.7)	8.2	42.3	7.9	40.6
Delivery Unit Entry	16.0	15.4	(3.8)%	(0.6)	8.2	37.8	7.9	36.3

* Add \$0.035 (currently \$0.036) for each piece addressed using a Detached Address Label with no advertising or a Detached Address Label containing advertising (Detached Marketing Label).



Sales Training

Strange Things I've Heard Around Ad Departments

— John Foust

In my years around newspapers, here are a few statements that made me say, “Huh?”

1. “Let’s run the ad one time to see what happens.” People who run an ad one time would get just as much for their investment by throwing it down a storm drain. This advertiser didn’t realize – perhaps because no one had told her – the power of reach and frequency. How many people do you reach? And how often do you reach them?

2. “It’s recyclable.” A sales person said this in response to the question, “What is the number one reason to advertise in your paper?” It didn’t occur to him to talk about how advertising is good for business.

3. “You should support your local paper.” The same sales person offered this as the second reason to advertise. He didn’t realize that most businesses are looking for ways to sell product, not support the local media.

4. “The only reason to cultivate relationships with people is to get money out of them.” This was said by a sales manager in a staff meeting. While it revealed a shallow and manipulative approach to customer relations, it was worsened by the fact that several people on his staff were in their first job. What a lousy introduction to the sales profession.

5. “White space is a waste of money.” An advertiser said this, while reviewing the proof of an ad which featured some white space between illustrations. She insisted on adding more pictures, which resulted in an uninviting glob of clutter on the page.

“When an advertiser has the freedom to pick any color, it’s best to base the decision on what will look good on the page.”

6. “My office building is brown. So print my logo in brown ink.” This advertiser was hung up on color, even though he had not built his brand on color (like Coca-Cola’s red or McDonald’s golden arches). When an advertiser has the freedom to pick any color, it’s best to base the decision on what will look good on the page.

7. “They just don’t get it.” This is the way one

publisher described his advertising staff. What he didn’t realize is that, when everybody doesn’t get it, something is wrong with the communicator – namely him.

8. “I don’t believe in having friends at work.” An owner made this absurd statement at an all-staff meeting. Thank goodness, my boss didn’t discourage friendship in my first job after college. My former co-workers are still some of my closest friends.

9. “If your account rep doesn’t do a good job, let me know.” An ad manager said this to a client, in the presence of the account rep. In an effort to impress, he put the sales person in an awkward position. Not exactly a confidence builder.

10. “An ad doesn’t need a headline.” This was mentioned by a recent graduate who was showing his portfolio to ad agencies. Commenting on an ad with all copy and no headline, he said his professor had called it a creative approach. In reality, numerous studies have shown that the headline is the most important part of an ad. No headline? No way. 🎯

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