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 Bring news and resources to the attention of the free paper industry by publishing a responsible quality magazine.

In next month's issue of Free Paper INK, we are "**Going Pink**" and featuring papers that support the fight against breast cancer. If you are involved in a similar community event, please share your story with INK's readers by emailing DJNeuharth@aol.com. We would also appreciate receiving any other items of interest to the free paper industry, such as promotions or participation in community events.

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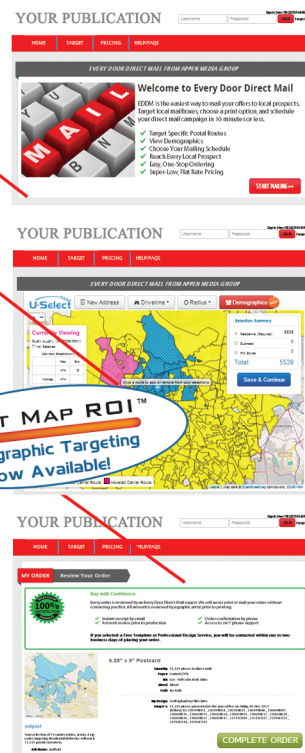
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"The mission of AFCP is to help its members enhance their profitability and lead in strengthening the free publication industry."



Dave Neuharth

DAVE NEUHARTH
EDITOR

This 'n That

ACCORDING TO A RECENT SURVEY BY 20/20, over 50% of digital revenue will be going to eBooks. The good news for us in the print industry is that magazine and newspaper readers still prefer print.

The survey notes that print revenue will continue to decline but the printing presses won't be closing down soon. Print will continue to dominate.

In recent times around the print industry, "Print is Not Dead" has been a popular topic at conferences and various meetings.

It might be worth the investment to travel to Iowa in October for the Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP) conference in West Des Moines. On the agenda from the United States Postal Service (USPS) is Vickie Stephen. She is employed with the USPS as a headquarters manager. Her presentation, "Print is not Dead – Neither is Your Post Office" should be an interesting session!



Kudos to Carol Toomey and the employees at Action Unlimited in Massachusetts. This issue of INK contains an article on how the Action Unlimited employees stepped up to the plate to support Fisher House.

PaperChain has asked free paper publishers to support this worthwhile project, and the work of Action Unlimited is a great example of how a free paper can get involved in a community project. See the article and examples of house ads on page 11.



Free Paper INK targets certain categories for its monthly publications. In this issue we are featuring digital businesses, including some INK advertisers and AFCP conference vendors.

In next month's issue we going pink and featuring some papers that support the fight against breast cancer. If you are involved in one of these community events, please email the information to INK.

In future issues we will include short articles of upcoming INK themes for which we would appreciate your input. **INK**

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Bill Welsh Memorial Golf Tournament

THE 2015 BILL WELSH Memorial Golf Tournament was held recently at the Table Creek Golf Course in Nebraska City, Neb.

The event was well attended and the Welsh family was on hand to take part in the tournament.

A bench was donated by AFCP and the Sunland Village, Ariz., (Bill's winter home) and placed at the 11th green where Bill made a hole-in-one on his birthday, June 12, 2013.

AFCP also sponsored one of the holes in the tournament.

The wording on the bench reads:

*W.R. 'Bill' Welsh III
June 19, 1946 –
November 2, 2014*

Site of his birthday hole-in-one June 19, 2013

*Donated by Bill Welsh
Memorial Fund, Sunland
Village AZ. Golf LTD
& AFCP.*



From left to right in the above photo are Bill's son, Skip Welsh, wife Ruby Welsh, and daughter Stephanie Fritz. Bill's grandchildren are in the photo below left.





PRC Rules on Exigency Remand

USPS Entitled to an Additional \$1.191 Billion

by Donna Hanbery, Executive Director, Saturation Mailers Coalition

ON JULY 29, 2015 THE POSTAL REGULATORY Commission (PRC) issued its order in the remand case. The PRC's order authorizes the USPS to collect an additional \$1.191 billion in contributions as an exigent rate adjustment. This additional sum, when added to the original \$2.766 billion the PRC approved, will permit the USPS to collect, through the 4.3% exigent rate surcharge, a total of \$3.957 billion in postal rates that the PRC found was lost "due to" the great recession. Looking at past performance, this is likely to extend the period of time when the exigency surcharge is in place to the spring of 2016.

The PRC continued the requirement that the USPS file a quarterly report to show how much it has collected from the exigent surcharge. In the quarter when it is anticipated that the USPS will need to roll back the exigency, the service must file monthly reports. The USPS must give a 45-day notice of when the exigent surcharge will be rolled back.

The impact of the decision on rate payers is to give the USPS an additional eight months longer to collect the exigent surcharge. It is likely that the new total limit will be reached by March/April 2016.

The Service did achieve a partial victory in its appeal and remand requests, in the form of an additional \$1.191 billion it can collect in contribution with higher rates. But it was not successful in many of the arguments it made to the PRC.

As discussed in my last INK column, the USPS had made several arguments to the PRC that would have expanded the amount it could collect from a low of \$1.191 billion to an additional \$10 billion or a potential "forever" exigency surcharge. None of these arguments were upheld or approved by the PRC.

A review of the PRC decision, a 70-page order considering the arguments made by each party and the Commission's analysis of each position, shows that the PRC was strictly focused on the one issue where the Court of Appeals found the original PRC order to be in error.

The postal service had urged the PRC to revisit its interpretation of the "new normal" rule, finding

that the exigent surcharge could only stay in place until the postal service had an opportunity to adjust to the "new normal" in the economy. The PRC noted that the Court of Appeals found its "new normal" rule to be well-reasoned and grounded on the evidence before the Commission in the previous proceedings. The Court explicitly endorsed the Commission's discretion and analysis of the new normal test.

The Commission was clearly ready to be done with the protracted exigency proceedings. It was not accepting any invitation or opportunity to reopen issues that had already been litigated by parties. The Commission states we "decline to revisit the 'new

normal' analysis that was affirmed by the [Court of Appeals]. The Postal Service has not identified any newly available evidence or other basis for reopening the issue at this late stage in the proceeding."

The PRC also rejected the Postal Service's arguments to change the individual year dates that the PRC had found were different for each class of mail for the beginning of the "new normal." The Postal Service had urged the PRC to adopt the latest, same-date, for all classes of mail. Alternatively, the USPS had argued for an even later date for when the "new normal" began. The PRC rejected all of these arguments and USPS requests.

The Commission was not looking to reopen any arguments or to consider new theories or methodologies at this late stage in the proceedings.

The Commission was not looking to reopen any arguments or to consider new theories or methodologies at this late stage in the proceedings.

The Court of Appeals sent back one issue to the PRC to consider, the "count one" rule. The Court of Appeals vacated the portion of the original PRC decision that found that mail volume lost due to exigent circumstances should be counted only once in calculating the contribution loss that the Service was entitled to recover through exigent rate, for one twelve-month period.

SMC, along with other mailers, had urged the PRC to calculate the additional revenues that the Service was entitled to receive by looking back to the actual lost per piece contribution calculations for the years that the losses occurred. The amount of contribution

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in these prior years was less than the contribution figures the PRC had used. The PRC used fiscal year 2014 contribution numbers to calculate the Postal Service's losses. This issue was not litigated or subject to the Court of Appeals order. Pointing out that the Court of Appeals had only vacated one part of the order – the count one rule, and that the PRC had not been critiqued for the calculations, or the year of contributions used in the original order, the PRC stuck with its original methodology.

The PRC writes, "The Commission considers the unit contribution issue to be settled and declines to reopen the issue because no commenter identifies any newly available evidence or other basis for reopening the issue at this late stage in the proceedings... The Commission declines to revisit an issue that has already been resolved."

Given the conservative approach taken by the Commission, it does not seem likely that any party will seek to pursue any further proceedings. Questions that still remain are whether or not the USPS will seek to combine a CPI rate adjustment with the next change in rates that will be required with a March/April rollback. If the USPS does decide to combine the rollback price adjustment with a CPI price adjustment, it would have approximately one year of CPI rate authority (from November 2014 until November 2015) to include in a future price adjustment. If the USPS decides to combine a CPI price increase with next year's rollback, it would need to do its rate filing in the late December 2015 / early January 2016 time frame.

For now, it appears that mailers were successful in avoiding arguments to keep the exigency surcharge in place "forever" or for a period of several more years.

Given the postal service's persistence, however, in seeking to keep the exigency rate increase as long as possible, we will monitor and be mindful of efforts that might be made to "bake in" the exigency increase as part of my postal reform legislation. Although it appears unlikely that postal reform legislation will move forward this year, or in 2016 – an election year – there continue to be proposals and rumors that legislation is being considered that would prolong the payment of postal rates that are above CPI.

For now, mailers can breathe a sigh of relief that this proceeding seems to be over and that the exigency increase is on target to expire in spring 2016. 

For further information on the Saturation Mailers Coalition, contact SMC Executive Director Donna Hanbery at 612-340-9350 (voice), 612-340-9446 (fax) or e-mail: Hanbery@hnclaw.com.

Getting to Know Dick Snyder



ARMED WITH A MARKETING

degree from Siena College near Albany, N.Y., Dick Snyder began working for a national oil company in the early 70's. While working for that firm he met free paper pioneer Ralph St. Denny in 1973 and a discussion led to Dick joining The Chenango Valley Pennysaver and moving his family to Norwich, N.Y.

Starting as Sales Manager, Dick moved on to General Manager and in 1978 he arranged to purchase the Chenango Valley Pennysaver from Ralph and its two publications, the Norwich Pennysaver and the Sidney Pennysaver.

Snyder considers St. Denny his mentor. He said, "We were fortunate that he stayed involved with us until 1991. He was very generous with his time and knowledge."

Under his leadership the company continued to expand. In 1984 it purchased the Richfield Springs Pennysaver from Charlie Abrams and eventually added a second edition covering the Oneonta and Cooper-

stown market areas.

In 1987 his company purchased what is now called My Shopper covering Schoharie County, and then added a second paper covering portions of the Mohawk Valley in New York State.

In 1994 the expansion continued with the purchase of the Evening Sun, which is a five-day-a-week daily newspaper covering Norwich and Chenango County. Along with that purchase came a four-unit press, which has now grown to a 16-unit operation known as

Sun Printing Inc. Their final acquisition was the purchase of the Wharton Valley Pennysaver in 2001.

Another business Snyder was involved in started in the early 1980s. Called Circulars Unlimited, it produces advertising circulars for lumber yards, pet stores, lawn & garden locations, hardware stores, rental centers and many more retailers around the country. Originally St. Denny got the ball rolling; but when Jeanne Brightman joined the company in 1984, the company grew into a well-regarded national company.

Brightman started a company known as New Media Retailer (NMR), to which Snyder's companies play a support role in providing various services. NMR has offices in Norwich and in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., and provides web and social media services to a host of national companies. Many of these are also customers of Circulars Unlimited.

When asked about the changes over the years in the Free Paper

Industry, Snyder said, "Perhaps the most obvious change is the loss of downtowns and small businesses. This includes the loss of many auto dealerships in everyone's market. Fortunately for us we always had a very strong distribution system so when all of the grocery stores and drug stores moved from ROP to inserts, we were able to meet those needs which helped to keep our revenue side healthy.

"Another big difference is in how we managed and that may have been a result of most of us coming into this business from sales. We loved to sell and increase revenue and that is the fun part of this business. What many didn't do as well at was managing the expense side of the business, as that does not give us the same high as selling a full page ad. Ralph St. Denny was always a great mentor to me and one of his lessons was this: If we have a 20% profit margin and we increase sales one dollar, we increased our profits by 20 cents. But, if we reduced our expenses by one dollar, we increased our profits by one dollar. It took me many years for that lesson to sink in."

Snyder remains active today running seven free community publications, a paid daily, a paid weekly, a printing plant, and the Circular division that has customers throughout the United States. As noted, Snyder's current involvement also includes web and digital products but he still loves print.

Snyder said, "For me, we are still in the impulse business where people see something and decide they want it. As I have for four decades, I still see print as the very best way to drive store sales and to increase traffic." **INK**

Helping Fisher House Help Vets

by Carol Toomey

ONE THING FREE PUBLISHERS can be proud of is our readers. Most publishers have had occasion to ask readers to participate in contests or to help a charity. It has been our experience that every time we ask, our readers come through.

One soft spot we all have is for our veterans. PaperChain has chosen the Fisher House as its charity of choice. Fisher House is a chain of 65 different houses in the U.S. ready to house families near the hospital of their loved ones, much like the Ronald McDonald House does for sick children.

Action Unlimited employees wanted to help veterans and we knew our readers would want to as well. Memorial Day and Veterans Day are two

days people think about our Veterans more than any other time. Before the Memorial Day holiday, Action Unlimited employees contacted the Fisher House in our area. We asked them what items they needed most. They told us that the biggest need was to help veterans' families when they are staying at the house. Gift cards are the most practical answer. Most families don't have cash to go to Dunkin Donuts or other places for food and drink. The solution? Gift cards are given to family members for coffee, snacks, etc.

We listed in the paper where our readers could purchase gift cards to help the veterans' families. And our readers came through.


After the ad ran in our papers,

readers were calling with questions and arriving at the Action's front desk with gift cards. We ran the ads requesting help for the Fisher House for two weeks and many people participated. The gift cards were collected and delivered by one of our sales people to the Fisher House office. The Fisher house office was surprised and thrilled with all the gift cards as we had collected over \$900 in gift cards.

As the publisher of Action Unlimited, I was not surprised that our readers had come through once again. We ran a thank you ad in our paper expressing our deep appreciation for our readers.

This is just one more way free papers help the community. **INK**

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their website at
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Thank you



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"VA Boston Health Care Center"

Innovative **Mobile Apps** Can Help You Earn **RECORD REVENUE**

by William Lee Little, CEO, Bar-Z



William Lee Little

ADDING A MOBILE APP to your product offering is an effective way to earn additional revenue and extend your reach to new audiences.

This is what Ken Esten Cooke, editor and publisher of the Fredericksburg Standard and the free GoFredericksburg printed guide, has learned through the success of his GoFred mobile app.

Cooke is working with Bar-Z, a mobile software

development firm in Austin, Texas, to develop his apps and it has paid off. The apps have opened new doors with both advertisers and audiences. The company has earned record revenue for its 2015 spring edition by adding the iPhone and Android apps to the mix.

Bar-Z's platform enables a variety of advertising and sponsorship options ranging from banner and interstitial ads to sponsorships, digital coupons and native advertising. The GoFred app includes a title sponsorship from a local hospital. Enhanced business listings have been sold to advertisers which feature photos, video, hours of operation, text descriptions, contact information, social media integration, and turn-by-turn directions. The system also supports event and deal listings.

Mobile apps are a great way for publishers to attract new advertisers and build relationships.

"It shows that we are keeping up to date with trends and digital products. Clients who may not be interested in weekly newspaper advertising might talk to us about our app and learn about some other products, such as our web ads, our daily email newsletter or our niche publications," said Cooke.

Adding companion digital products also helps to fit the needs of your advertisers by reaching a broader audience and gaining exposure across the mediums. Bundling print and digital offerings for a complete advertiser solution is a popular approach.

Cooke noted, "Instead of approaching our existing customers with another product, we thought it would be best to pair the GoFred app advertisement with our free print visitors guide, GoFredericksburg. That encouraged more print advertising, which is still our bread and butter, and advertisers are rewarded with a presence on this new app."

Bar-Z has been offering innovative digital solutions since 2005 and has designed a variety of revenue-generating products including visitor guides, digital marketplaces, coupon and deal apps, high school sports apps, readers' choice contests, loyalty programs and more. The Bar-Z Full Digital Platform delivers content to audiences on any device with mobile responsive design websites and native apps for iPhones, iPads and Android devices, all powered by a central CMS.

Bar-Z handles all of the technological aspects allowing publishers to concentrate on producing content and selling new digital advertising.

"I think it's a cool app. We came up with a snappy logo and we're promoting it with our brand. Bar-Z's service is great and I or my team can call anytime and get questions answered quickly. Mostly, for customers, it's user-friendly," Cooke said. "We love it, and we're looking forward to making it even better as time goes on and this market continues to grow."

For additional information, contact CEO William Lee Little at 512-732-0135 or by email to lee.little@bar-z.com. **INK**



MaxPro Brings Departments Together

by Chris Sedlak, MaxPro Publishing



Chris Sedlak

IT'S 8:00 A.M. MONDAY morning. You walk in the door, coffee in hand, ready to start your day. Your sales manager is sick today. There's a note on your desk from your production manager. A full-page ad never made it in the issue and a 1/2 page pick-up never got updated. And to top off your morning, the lady who does your billing emailed you that \$3,000 was never invoiced last issue because she didn't get

the information from sales.

While you're probably cringing right now and vowing that it will never happen to you, it can and unfortunately does. The good news is that it can be prevented with a good organizational system in place. This is where MaxPro comes in.

MaxPro Publishing is a solution developed by Little Fish Big Ocean Inc. of Orlando, Florida. Developed specifically for the independent publishing industry, MaxPro is perfect for bringing departments together. As soon as a company grows and departments are created, the lack of communication grows and begins to hinder smooth operations. From ad placement to billing and everything in between, MaxPro allows each department to enter its information on a single, shared platform. With this "enter it once" philosophy, double-entry is a thing of the past. Errors from lost paperwork or miscommunication are virtually gone, including lost revenue for neglecting to place or invoice an ad.

So you're probably thinking to yourself, "Well, we've been using Excel all these years and we're doing just fine." Yes, that may be true, but have you ever wondered if you may be missing out on more business? Do you have access to all of your clients' information or do your sales people have the information in their computers or phones? What if something happens to your sales people? There are so many potential problems that can come your way. Do you really own your data or can it walk out the door at any moment? Oh wait, employees always look after your best interests.

When business owners look at MaxPro or similar solutions, they compare it by face value.

Off-the-shelf products or basic online business solutions that are not geared towards publishers may cost less and seem like a viable solution. True, it costs less money; but there's a reason for that. How much time are you going to spend trying to create work-arounds for all of its shortcomings? If you want to compare the real value, let's look at your return on investment after a one- or two-year period. Did your sales team have more time to go get new sales? Were there fewer errors in placement? Did an advertiser that was about to drop out renew his contract?

Unfortunately, most people are looking for immediate results. "I spent \$300, I expect my sales to increase by \$500 in a few months." This thinking is short-sighted.

So often we hear, "Well, I'll just hire an office assistant." If you hired an assistant for one person for, let's say \$10 an hour, it would run you roughly \$20k plus taxes, benefits, etc. So for one assistant you're looking


at about \$25k per year. WHAT IF you could hire an assistant that worked 24/7, was available anywhere the Internet is available, helped every person in your office and made filling in for someone easy? And what if this assistant would cost you LESS THAN 1/4 of a regular employee?

MaxPro Publishing was designed for those reasons.

Installation and implementation is quick and painless. Support is free and quick.

MaxPro's interface is designed to be friendly, not gray and drab. Users will find it easy to navigate and virtually plug-and-play for new users. But most importantly, your data is safe and backed-up, and all at your fingertips with support you can always count on.

If you ever thought about expanding your company by creating a new publication or beefing up your sales staff, then we need to talk. Call us today at 407-656-2777.

Since 2008, Little Fish Big Ocean Inc. has been helping small businesses grow. We are honored to be working with so many businesses around the U.S. and look forward to helping you. 



Growing Up With the Publishing Industry

by Tom Vachon, Founder & President, Merrimac Publishing



Tom Vachon

IT'S SUNDAY EVENING AND I JUST got off the phone with one of our clients. (It's my turn to field the after-hours support calls this week.) She didn't really have a problem – the program was working correctly – but one of her key staff people had just resigned. She was getting the run sheet ready for production day on Monday, and she needed reassurance that she was doing it right.

That's a lot of what we do here – help our clients make the most effective use of our Merrimac Publishing Manager – that and make the program grow and adapt to the changing needs of our publishers and our industry.

I call it “our” industry because serving publishers of small and medium-sized community papers is the only thing we do. It's been that way since we started back in 1987, helping the publisher of our local neighborhood weekly in Brooklyn, N.Y., get her paper organized.

Back then, the idea of an integrated software system, one that served all the paper's information needs, was relatively new. It had been around for a while in much larger mainframe and mini computers, but software for personal computers was still based on the activities that the new little computers were replacing – one program to replace the ledger book, one to replace the typewriter, etc.

The idea that you could enter an ad order once when it first came in and have the information go to production to build the paper, to the sales manager to monitor the progress of the issue, to the sales rep to keep track of what she'd sold, to the accounting department to generate a bill, and eventually flow all the way through to the monthly P&L report – that was pretty revolutionary at the time.


I wrote the original program in collaboration with that first publisher and

her staff. Since then, several hundred program users have joined the development team, coming up with requests for additional functions and reporting capabilities. We've shared every one of those improvements with all our clients in the belief that what's useful for one publisher is probably going to be useful for others.

Changes in technology have helped too. The advent of Quark XPress in the early 1990s made it possible for us to flow formatted classified ads directly into the paper. PDFs made it possible to place and retrieve ads with unprecedented accuracy and speed, with or without the help of automated pagination systems, which we also support.

And of course the advent of the web has both opened up a whole new universe of opportunities for publishers and created a whole new set of demands for the software that supports them. If anybody had told me in 1987 that we'd be selling classified ads online and downloading them directly into the paper... But of course, nobody would have. We didn't even have the vocabulary for it back then, never mind the technology.

We're still growing with our clients. About twenty of them have become shareholders over the years to help ensure the program's continuity. And they're still coming up with good ideas. Just the other day, I got another call from a publisher that started with, “Would it be possible to...” It probably would. We're looking into it right now.

Oh, and that first paper that we started with back in 1987? It's still around, and it's still on our client list. We're proud of that. 



Hello All!

by Greg Birkett

I HOPE YOU ARE HAVING a great start to your fall season and your publications are filled with advertisers. Through all

the struggles we have, it is great to see our advertisers reaping the benefits of the work we put into our publications. As I have mentioned in the past it is always rewarding to hear success stories from our advertisers. It helps me get out of bed each day knowing we do make a difference.

By now you have been seeing some advertising for the April conference in San Diego. We just locked up the keynote speaker and workshop presenter - Sam Richter. You will see more information about Sam elsewhere in this issue. The thing you need to do now is to mark your calendars for April 27-30, 2016 so you can keep those dates open. Then watch for registration information to come later this year. I have been fortunate to be able to stay at the San Diego Sheraton Marina hotel a couple of times and know you won't be disappointed.

The membership committee has been busy inaugurating AFCP Peer Groups. We have at least two groups activated now and they are having short monthly conference calls to discuss business conditions, promotions, and general sharing of information and ideas. If you are not part of an AFCP Peer Group and would like to be in one, let the AFCP office know and they will fit you in with a group of publishers that have similar publications/operations. The membership committee is also looking for free papers around the country that are not members of AFCP. Please help by sharing AFCP's contact information with publications you know could be helped by joining the association.

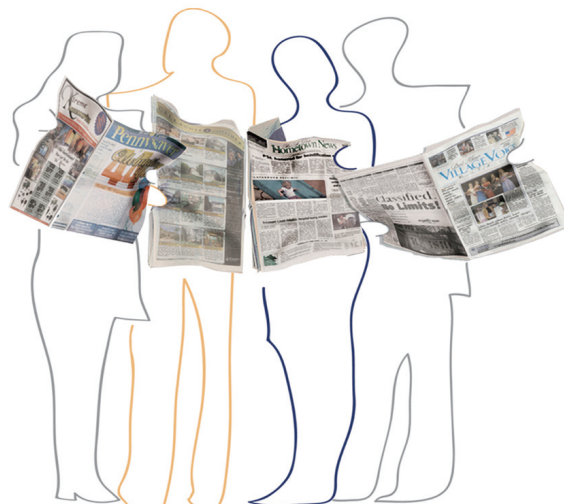
As I write this, our county fair just concluded and I must share a lesson I learned from it. The entertainment committee decided to try some new main stage entertainment this year and hired superstar Jason Derulo to perform. When the marketing committee was informed of this, my first reaction was "Jason who?" Upon googling him it became evident that he was the real deal - a big up-and-comer who is also a judge on "So You Think You Can Dance."

I was still not sure the entertainment committee had made a good choice. It was not until tickets went on sale for the concert that I realized they had hit a home run. Although it's not my kind of music he has some really catchy songs and his concert was a sell-out.

During the concert I was given an all-access pass so I was able to go down front and see part of the show from the stage front. It was very entertaining and what I really liked was looking out into the huge crowd and seeing so many people singing, dancing and having a great time. A bonus was that the concert drew a different crowd than what would normally have gone to the fair. Hopefully they had a great time, got to enjoy many of the other fair amenities, and will come back to the fair in future years.

The lesson I learned is not to judge others' ideas on your own likes and dislikes. Expand your knowledge, do your homework and make informed decisions.

Here's hoping we all are open to new ideas! **INK**



GREG BIRKETT
AFCP PRESIDENT
DUBUQUE ADVERTISER

SET SAIL for Success:

Our itinerary is starting to take shape.

by John Draper, 2016 Conference Committee Chair



John Draper

I'M NOT A SAILOR BY ANY traditional definition of the word. I've never captained a sailing vessel or hoisted a sail and couldn't explain what a jibbing or tacking maneuver is. The closest I've come might be a sunset cruise or two with Jimmy Buffet playing and rum drinks blending. These, of course, were leisurely "sit back and let others do the work" excursions.

I do however, like you, captain a wonderful team of employees and set daily courses of action (sometimes adventure) for the crew. This is by far nothing of the leisurely sunset cruise variety. As publishers in the Free Paper Industry, we are captains required to navigate the hard waters and find motivation when the winds die and empty our sails.

AFCP has long provided resources for navigation and motivation. (And from time-to-time they have made available some much-appreciated rum drinks as well.) Another full round of captain's tools are currently being constructed and will be available for all at the 2016 AFCP Conference and Trade Show.

The first new resource is already in place. The planning team will be bringing in Sam Richter as our keynote opening day speaker. Sam's presentation themes, "Know More," are a great fit for our industry. Through his keynote and follow-up work sessions we will better understand the power of knowledge and more importantly how to put that to work to make our businesses sail towards success.

In addition to Sam, AFCP has been working on honing other captain's

tools. The Leadership Institute (TLI) is working on a new set of curriculum to broaden its traditionally strong programming. In addition, they will revisit core classes for updates and freshness. TLI has proven to be one of AFCP's finest tools for publishers, and it isn't limited to just AFCP conferences. Check out the online offerings at www.afcp.org and the podcasts found on YouTube. These tools are available every day of the week for you and the crew.

Every business knows to look for resources from all around. AFCP has begun to fill up the industry's largest trade show, a resource unlike any other. They have booked many vendors and continue to identify more. If you have a vendor you feel would be a good resource for our publishing brethren, please introduce them to AFCP. If you have contact information you would like to pass along, we encourage you to send that to Loren at the AFCP office.

Our 2016 excursion to success is just getting underway. The planning team has many new and newly sharpened tools in development that will be introduced in the months to come. These tools are yours for the taking in sunny San Diego on April 28-30, 2016. Please hop aboard and build your resources as you navigate and motivate your own crew to success. **INK**



A couple takes a romantic sunset walk on Coronado Island with the San Diego skyline in the background.
Photo by Chris Johnson, Dreamstime.com

Sam Richter Named Keynote Speaker

THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR THE ANNUAL

Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP) conference April 26-29, 2016 in San Diego, Calif., has been named on the world's Top 25 Most Influential Sales Leaders for the past five years.

Sam Richter is an internationally recognized expert on sales intelligence and online reputation management.

His award-winning experience includes building innovative programs for startup companies and some of the world's most famous brands.

Richter is founder and CEO of SBR Worldwide/Know More! and the Social Selling Institute. Through his Know More! business improvement program, he has trained leading organizations and entertained tens of thousands of persons around the world to rave reviews. Richter's programs promise to be the highest-content, most take-home-value program attendees have ever experienced.

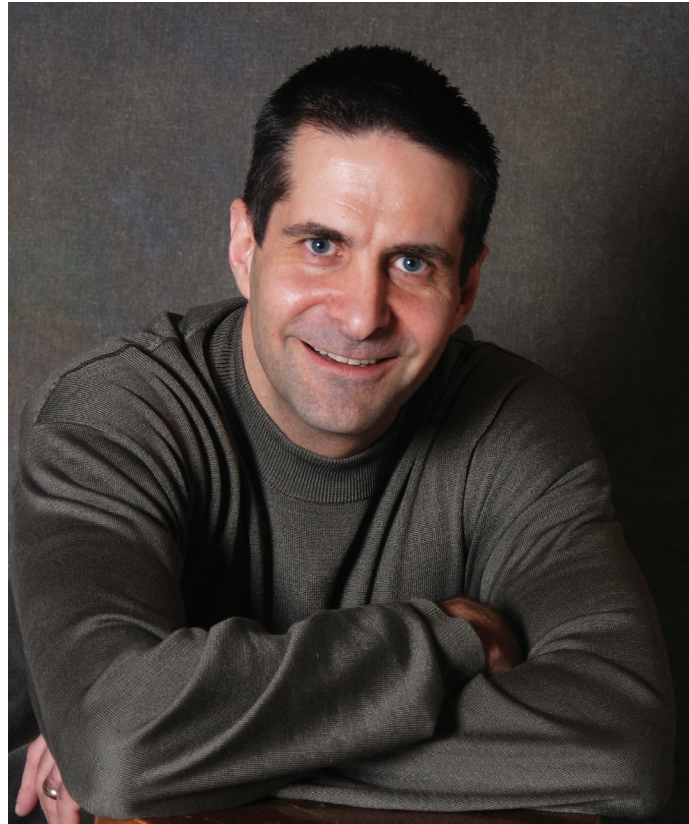
Since 2010, Richter has annually been named by InsideView as one of the Top 25 Most Influential People in Sales, and he was also named as one of the Top Chief Marketing Officers on Twitter. He has been featured in thousands of television and radio programs and national and online publications.

He is the author of the best-selling book, "Take the Cold Out of Cold Calling," considered the preeminent publication on finding information online and using it for sales success. "Take the Cold" was named "Sales Book of the Year" by the American Association of Inside Sales Professionals, and it was also named a "USA Book News Winner" and a "Sales Book Awards Silver Medalist."

For more than six years Richter was president of a not-for-profit business library, where he led the transformation of an 85-year-old private, non-profit business research organization into a nationally renowned institution serving entrepreneurs and small businesses via cutting edge online resources.


Richter also spent more than 18 years in the advertising, public relations, and e-commerce/e-marketing industry, owning his own firm and working for internationally recognized organizations as a creative director, group director, and marketing director. He has created programs for companies including Microsoft, Coca-Cola, Major League Baseball, Northwest Airlines (Delta), Kraft/Nabisco, Polaris Industries, National Geographic, 3M, Brunswick, and other large and small firms.

Richter has won regional, national and international awards including Best of Show and Gold Awards at numerous sales and marketing competitions, Webby



Awards, and a Gold Award at the International Film Festival. He's also won a Retail Vision Award as well as a Codie Award, the "Oscars" of the software industry, for Best E-commerce Software. He is a member of the Business Journal's "Forty Under 40" list honoring the top Minnesota business leaders under the age of forty. He was also a finalist for Inc. Magazine's Entrepreneur of the Year and he's one of the more highly recommended persons on LinkedIn.

Richter received his B.A. from the University of Minnesota School of Journalism and Mass Communication and was twice named Scholastic All-American while also a four-year player and a letter winner on the University of Minnesota varsity football team. He has a graduate certificate in Executive Leadership and another in Corporate Boards of Director ethical leadership.

Besides his speaking work, Richter is SVP/Chief Marketing Officer at ActiFi, a software and solutions firm serving the financial services industry. He lives in Minnetonka, Minnesota with his wife and two children, serves on the board of a number of for-profit companies, and volunteers his time to numerous non-profit organizations. 

MFCP's Publishers Summit

CONFERENCE NOTES



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 Papers.



To date, 1,814 free paper professionals have attended classes at the AFCP, state and regional conferences, earning over 10,935 class credits in 66 different course curriculums. A total of 81 people have completed all the requirements and been certified as Associate Advertising Executives (AAE) by the AFCP Board!

"Better keep yourself clean and bright, you are the window through which you must see the world."

– George Bernard Shaw

IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT GEORGE BERNARD SHAW EVER spoke or even heard the word "metacognition," but this is what he was talking about in the quote listed above.

Metacognition is defined as "an awareness and understanding of one's own thought process." In short, metacognition refers to "thinking about thinking."

Our minds are working twenty-four hours a day. During our waking hours, a steady stream of thoughts parade across our conscious mind while our subconscious is working behind the scenes. When we go to sleep, the subconscious seizes the controls and takes us to dreamland.

Ancient philosophers compared our thoughts to riding a horse. If we let the horse run wild, the ride will be rough and we have no control over where our mount will take us. If we take the reins and control the horse, we will steadily move toward our intended destination.

This is not as easy as it sounds. We are constantly distracted from within and without. Our environment is constantly bombarding us with new sensations. A thousand and one things vie for our attention and attempt to break our train of thought. Sometimes we are our own worst enemy; our emotions get in the way of our thought process.

Fear of failure, or sometimes of success, tells us that we are unlikely to succeed so "why waste our time trying." When rejected, our injured feelings label the prospect a "stupid jerk," which may be emotionally satisfying but gets in the way of logically analyzing the call to determine how we can improve our presentations.

As stated above the key to clear thinking is "awareness and understanding." This requires constant self-examination. We must stop every now and then and listen to our own thought process. We must hold thoughtful conversations with ourselves. "Is this prospect really stupid or a jerk? Am I putting that label on him or her because I failed to make the sale? What could I have done differently? How can I improve my next presentation?"

It is natural to be hurt by rejection and to react emotionally. This is letting the horse run wild. It is far harder to grab the reins and say, "Whoa," but this is the only way to achieve our goals. By paying attention to our inner dialogue and keeping our thoughts "clean and bright" we will not only be much more effective people, but happier people as well. **INK**



Changes are taking place All Over

LONGTIME ASSOCIATION OF Free Community Papers (AFCP) member Boyd Petersen, the publisher of Boyd Media located in the Salt Lake City, Utah, area, has initiated a newsletter as a Certified Marketing Coach.

Some of the subjects included in his newsletter include:

- * Write your own book? Business, fiction, biographies and more.
- * To blog or not to blog? How and why you should be blogging.
- * The importance of being

listed on Internet business listing sites.

- * Digital marketing and how it will build your business.
- * Social Media – The big eight and how your business can use them. There are four parts to this instruction, using two each.
- * There are 34 types of marketing and many of them are free. What you should be using.
- * Want more business? Invite your customers back again.

For information contact Boyd@BPMedia.com. **INK**



Boyd Petersen

A Member Benefit of the Association of Free Community Papers



The Leadership Institute

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Complete 15 Class Credits

Pass Comprehensive Exam at Conference

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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 mission of AFCP is to help its members enhance their profitability and lead in strengthening the free publication industry."

Interested?

by Jesse Walma, 2015 Rising Star, Graphic / Web Designer, The Shopper, South Holland, Illinois



Jesse Walma

IT WAS NEARLY a year ago when I heard of online groups for garage sales called "For Sale" groups. My in-laws were boasting about a buy-sell-trade Facebook group they had joined in a single stoplight town called "100 Mile House" in British Columbia. They described deals that were

offered at garage sale prices and explained all that was needed was an "Interested" comment on a Facebook post to reserve buyer priority.

When I found a neighboring city of mine in Indiana that had 32,261 residents and a "For Sale" group of 20,542 members, I was astonished. I had to join. Although it took me two weeks and multiple requests to get into the closed group, it was well worth the persistence.

Once I had gained access to this elite group, I was able to watch the negotiating process that engaged buyers and sellers to be competitive. Most of the buyers were prompt with responses. Some respond nearly instantly through "PM's" or Private Messages. Gone were those unengaged Craigslist sellers who may respond within two or three days. If one wasn't the first to comment

"Interested" on a post, they would have to wait until the potential buyer passed or waited too long to pick up the offered item.

If one doesn't have time to scroll through multiple posts of Beanie Babies, there is a search bar on the page. Craigslist has this feature as well, but searching can be much more efficient through Facebook where nearly every post includes an image. Some advanced groups have categories. Members are only allowed to post in the appropriate gallery. Most of these posts are individual items, but there is a section for "Events" where garage sale locations are listed. Some groups also allow services and "ISO" (In Search Of) items or services. This could also be fertile ground for leads. If a paper dedicates just a few minutes each week, they could solicit these lists for potential ads.

As the Millennial Generation has recently overtaken the living Baby Boom Generation, Facebook is nearly necessary as a supplement to communicate with audiences. The average American checks their newsfeed 14 times and spends over 40 minutes daily on Facebook (according to a 2014 International Data Corporation study). A prime consideration of implementation would be to those who do not have any of these groups started in their region. It would require managing, but would build value to the surrounding community.

Managing a group on Facebook can create an added value to those who submit garage sale entries. A great way to start is

by going to Facebook and creating a profile. Once a profile has been created, a group can be created

Continued on page 22



Interested?

Continued from page 21

simply through an option in the top menu. Once created, the settings can be modified to fit the company brand. If a company is concerned with what is being posted, there are settings to have the posts approved by the administrator of the group.

To gain the full potential of a Facebook group, it would be advantageous to apply for a "For Sale" group by submitting a request to Facebook. Once the "For Sale" group has been approved, the features of the group will be customized for selling. The sellers have forms to fill out regarding items, price and pickup locations. This creates orderly and consistent listings within your Facebook group.

Creating a "For Sale" group provides exposure and interaction with the community. If a strategic banner image is used, it could also provide opportunities for the group members to win free listings in the newspaper. Providing offer codes or phrases through Facebook to your members may also prompt them to call and submit their events.

This can be an added value to those "offline" customers who currently submit garage sales to the newspaper as well. Offering to announce their garage sale in a garage sale community group could bring them coming back the next year when they have accumulated more mass than available space. Being a group administrator of a town's "For Sale" group would provide listings for the paper, garage sale listings and the opportunity to up-sell photos to supplement the listing.

The modern opportunities for not only increasing garage sale entries but also value to the community is ripe for the plucking.

Interested? 

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Tired of high credit card processing fees cutting into your profits?

AFCP members have the option of enlisting the services of MSG Payment Systems to provide competitive, member-only rates for your credit card processing.

To learn more about this member benefit, contact the AFCP office or look for MSG Payment Systems in the AFCP Digital Toolbox at afcp.org

Co-op = Math + CREATIVE

by TIM BRENNAN, MultiAd

HOW MUCH CO-OP MONEY IS AVAILABLE IN MY market? What level of opportunity do I have with my local dealer of Brand X? What kind of revenue could I generate by focusing on Category Y? I get asked these questions fairly often and most can be answered pretty easily with basic math.

Unfortunately most Americans are pretty bad at math, which is part of the problem with co-op advertising – it's all math-based. Generally these programs all provide a small percentage of purchases as the base funding mechanism for the dealer brand promotion budget. This percentage can vary from less than 1% to over 10% of the wholesale purchases dealers make for the brand inventory involved. And each manufacturer's percentage will be a little different, which can become vexing for the local dealer trying to keep track of the monies involved.

Some manufacturers will take the entirety of the previous year's business and apply the co-op accrual percentage to give the dealer a full budget for the plan's performance period. These generally make it a bit easier for the players involved. This allocation can be planned for and included in a dealer's advertising budget cycle as they work out their plan for the year.

Many other manufacturers, however, will base their co-op allotment on current year's business, which adds to the co-op pool with every product order. These plans create a moving target for the dealer to try to keep up with and often lead to underutilized co-op budgets or completely untapped resources.

This is where the math comes in.

With any approach to a local brand dealer, you should bring whatever details are available for their brand's co-op offering. When the plan lists that the co-op accrual varies or the plan is specially arranged through the manufacturer rep (more on that next

time), simply work from a base average of 2-3% of wholesale volume. If the dealer is unaware of how much co-op money might be available, just ask the very simple question, "About how much business have you done in Brand X this year?" With whatever ballpark number they give you, use the calculator on your phone and multiply it by the accrual percentage to get your answer. This will give you an idea of whether this is something to pursue; and if it is, connect with the manufacturer directly or their sales rep to nail down the exact figure.


Once you've used left-brained analytics to sketch out the possible budget, add in your right-brained creativity to apply whatever ad materials you have for the brand to show the dealer how they could apply that to their advertising schedule.

Doing this you'll soon figure out that your dealer needs to be moving more than \$10,000 in product volume to make a dent in any decent advertising (i.e., \$10,000 x 2% = \$200 co-op). With some stores, you'll find that \$200 in a lot of different pockets, which can definitely transform what they might be able to do with you.

Once you've used the left-brained analytics to sketch out the possible budget, add in your right-brained creativity to apply whatever ad materials you have for the brand to show the dealer how they could apply that to their advertising schedule. Co-op should rarely be the entirety of the advertiser's spend with you; but with the right dealer and brands, this should really increase the exposure you can provide.

Use both sides of your brain to give your accounts the right solutions.

Use both sides of your brain to give your accounts the right solutions.

This information is provided by agreement with AFCP and MultiAd Recas to help take the mystery out of co-op advertising. For more information or your Recas.com Co-op username and password (a benefit of AFCP membership) along with the AFCP Co-op Lead email, contact the AFCP office at 877-203-2327. 



Dead at DEADLINE!

Emergencies are just part of the game in our business.

by Kevin Slimp

IN RETROSPECT, I LOVE THE EMAIL SUBJECT line: "Dead at deadline."

The email came to me at 6:15 last night, just as I was getting ready to take my two teenagers out for dinner. It was from Joe, a publisher at a small weekly who, like many newspaper publishers, has become my good friend over the past 20 years.

Before I tell you more about the email, let's step back in time to yesterday afternoon when I mentioned to some folks in my office that I needed to come up with a topic for today's column. A couple of ideas were tossed around when, finally, I said, "Don't worry. Something will come up. It always does."

I just didn't know that "something" would be my friend, Joe. I threw the Xbox remote to my daughter and said, "Take Zach on in a game of Tetris while I make a phone call."

After a few rings, Joe was on the other end of the line. It's funny how, after being in this business for so long, things like this don't seem nearly as frantic as they once did. We've all faced crises at deadlines, and we've all lived to tell the tale. But this was a tough one.

Seems there was a big storm yesterday that knocked out the power at Joe's paper for a while. When the lights came back on, Joe and his staff opened InDesign to finish laying out the pages. That's when the problem arose.

As Joe went to open the InDesign file he had been working on before the storm, the words "Cannot place this file. No filter found for requested operation" popped up on the screen. It might as well have said, "Danger, Will Robinson," because, just as in the old TV series "Lost in Space," Joe had a major problem on his hands.

He was, as he so eloquently penned, "Dead at deadline."

After a couple of decades as a consultant, I've learned a few important skills that help at times like these. The most important task at deadline is to get the paper out. Figuring out the exact cause of the problem can come later.

Once, while training the staff at The Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch, a pressman ran into the room shouting, "We need you now!"

It seems the plates were on the press, it was a few minutes past deadline, and there was one page that wouldn't go through the RIP (the processor that sends the files to the plate-maker). We could have spent precious time trying to determine the cause of the problem. But no one was very interested in the cause. They just needed a plate. I made some adjustments to the PDF, sent it to the RIP, and we figured out the cause of the problem later.

Back to Joe's problem. We could figure out the cause of the issue later. Right now, we just needed to get those ads on his pages so the PDFs could go to the printer.

The first course of action is to get the easy stuff out of the way. After learning he had already tried restarting the computer, I suggested he go ahead and try creating PDFs from the pages, even though it was doubtful they could be used.

He did. And they couldn't be used. All of the ads were pixilated throughout the pages.

Next, since it seemed like an InDesign filter problem, I walked Joe through creating a "package" of the InDesign file, which he then sent to another computer. It was doubtful that two computers would have the same filter missing in InDesign.

You guessed it. When he opened the InDesign file on the other computer, Joe saw the same dire warning on the screen, "Cannot place this file. No filter found for requested operation."

What were the chances that two different computers would lose the same filter during a thunderstorm?



INCREASE REVENUE with afcp

This had all taken place within about 15 minutes. My next idea was to walk Joe through the art of creating a Photoshop "action" that would take each of his ads and convert them to another format, perhaps TIFF or JPG.

That's when things got really interesting. Photoshop could not open the files. You guessed it. A different warning appeared, letting Joe know that the files were corrupt.

I know what you're thinking. What about the backup files? None. What about Time Machine (a built-in function on all Macs since 2008 that periodically "remembers" everything done on a computer and saves it for future use)? Joe's staff was working on Windows-based computers, so there was no Time Machine.


It wasn't the time for a lecture on backing up. It was deadline. And by now, 30 minutes had passed.

I asked Joe if he had the original InDesign files in which the ads were created. He did. I thought for a moment about replacing the original links with the InDesign files (you can place an InDesign file on another InDesign document), but there was too great a risk of font and link issues within those files.

Finally, I told Joe he had two choices. The first was to go with the pixelated PDF he was able to create. The second option, I explained, was to open each InDesign ad file, export them as PDF files, then hope for the best. Joe decided on the second option.

At 9:29, I received this message from Joe: "It will truly be a good night, thanks to you. Paper transferred to printer with no errors. Thank You. Thank You. Thank You. Sorry I interrupted your dinner with the kids. Will look forward to winter convention and dinner."

Yes, the kids and I did have dinner. I did most of my work with Joe while we drove to and from Abuelo's Mexican Restaurant. On the way to the restaurant, I apologized to my kids for being on the phone during the drive.

My daughter, who doesn't miss much, remarked, "I noticed you were taking the long way to Abuelo's." 

Kevin Slimp is director of the Institute of Newspaper Technology, a training program for newspaper designers, publishers and technical staff. For more information concerning the Institute, please visit www.newspaperinstitute.com. To read past columns, visit www.kevinslimp.com.

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"DENIM AND DIAMONDS" IS THE THEME OF the Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP) conference scheduled October 15-16, 2015 in West Des Moines, Iowa.

Keynote speaker Dennis Wade will provide training sessions, and moderate a publishers and a managers roundtable. Vickie Stephen, a USPS headquarters manager, will address the members on, "Print is not Dead ... Neither is Your Post Office."

The conference will include an innovative idea award competition. The Thursday social hour is a Blue Moon dueling piano session which includes dinner, drinks and fun.

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST Association of Want Ad Newspapers (PNAWAN) has established a new website: www.RegionalAds.org.

The site is designed to submit network regional ads online and to see the ad price calculation, for useful sales tools, downloadable order forms, member lists and association brochures plus other information.

For information contact executive director Kyla Strohte at ads@pnawan.org.



PACIFIC NORTHWEST Association of Want Ad Newspapers (PNAWAN) President Barbara Powers has named the association's key committee members.

Terri Drake, the association's vice president, will serve as the AFCP and IFPA representative; Andy McNab and Deb Jones will chair the membership committee; Jay Lenkerdorfer will chair the By-laws committee; and Kristen Bryant, Doug Bourkland and Tim Rostkowski will chair the digital and website committee.

ELAINE BUCKLEY IS ON THE AGENDA for the International Classified Media Association (ICMA) Fall Conference scheduled October 21-23, 2015 in Madrid, Spain.

Buckley will be moderating a Sales Manager Workshop. As a former veteran of the PennySaver in California, Buckley recently established a new company as a sales trainer.

To submit your "associations in the news" story, please contact Dave Neuharth at: DJNeuharth@aol.com.

"BACK TO BASICS" IS THE THEME OF THE Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA) and the Texas Community Newspaper Association (TCNA) joint conference September 24-26, 2015 in San Antonio, Texas.

Included on the agenda is Tim Bingaman, who will speak on the state of the industry. Essential sales training programs will be conducted by Bob Mcinnis, Dennis Wade and Ron Pilger; a Fast Pitch Workshop will be moderated by Bob Munn; graphic sessions are by Jeremy Pafford and Douglas Fry; and a Great Apps session will be moderated by Will Thomas.



| sept.

ORLANDO, FL :
SEPTEMBER 18-19, 2015
 Community Papers of Florida (CPF). Annual Conference, Caribe Royale Resort, Orlando, Fla. For additional information contact Dave Neuharth at 352-347-4470 or email DJNeuharth@aol.com.

SAN ANTONIO, TX :
SEPTEMBER 24-26, 2015
 Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA) and Texas Community Newspaper Association (TCNA). Joint Conference, Riverwalk Hyatt, San Antonio, Texas. For additional information contact Danielle Burnett at 866-224-8151. Email: danielleburnett-ifpa@live.com, or Douglas Fry, Email: Douglas@tcnatoday.com.

MELBOURNE, FL :
SEPT. 27-OCT. 1, 2015
 North American Mature Publishers Association, Inc. (NAMPA). National Convention, Holiday Inn and Conference Center, Melbourne, Fla. For information contact Gary L. Calligas, executive director of NAMPA, at (877) 466-2672 or at gary@maturepublishers.com.

| oct.

SYRACUSE, NY :
OCTOBER 5-6, 2015
 Free Community Papers of New York (FCPNY). Conference & Leadership Summit, Genesee Grande Hotel, downtown Syracuse, N.Y. For information contact Dan Holmes: dholmes@fcpny.com.

TBA, WI :
OCTOBER 7, 2015
 Wisconsin Community Papers (WCP). Publisher's Summit, October 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., location to be announced. For information contact Janelle Anderson, janderson@wisad.com.

WEST DES MOINES, IA :
OCTOBER 16, 2015
 Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP). Fall Conference, the Sheraton Hotel, West Des Moines, Iowa. For information contact Dick Colvin: dick@mfc.org.

| 2016

SAN DIEGO, CA
APRIL 28-30, 2016
 Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP). Annual Conference & Trade Show, Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina on the shoreline of San Diego Bay, San Diego, Calif. For information contact Loren Colburn, loren@afcp.org.

| 2017

LOUISVILLE, KY
APRIL 20-22, 2017
 Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP). Annual Conference & Trade Show, Gait House, downtown Louisville, Ky. For information contact Loren Colburn, loren@afcp.org.

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Email: info@macnetonline.com
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Alyse Mitten

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Fax: 319-341-4358
Email: dick@mfcf.org
Web: www.mfcf.org
Dick Colvin

PNAWAN

Pacific Northwest Association of Want Ad Newspapers
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Fax: 509-455-7940
Email: ads@pnawan.org
Web: www.RegionalAds.org
Web: www.PNAWAN.org
Kylah Strohte

SACP

Southwestern Association of Community Publications
c/o Valley Publications
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Darrin Watson

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Web: www.communitypapersof-florida.com
David Neuharth

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WCP

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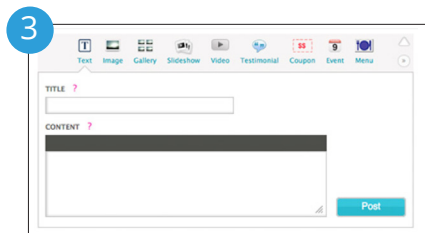
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