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**INK** features:



**6** DREAMING OF THE NEW YEAR



**11** AFCP'S BILL WELSH FOUNDATION



**17** KINNEY IS SAN DIEGO KEYNOTE

**INK** departments:

- 4 | AFCP DIRECTORS
- 8 | POSTAL UPDATE: PARTNERS
- 10 | POSTAL UPDATE: FISHER HOUSE
- 12 | ASSOCIATION CONTACT INFORMATION
- 13 | FEATURE STORY: MEET DAVID GRAYSON
- 15 | FROM THE TOP
- 16 | CONFERENCE COMMITTEE UPDATE
- 18 | SPOTLIGHT ON PERSONNEL
- 19 | THE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
- 20 | ADVERTISING ADVICE
- 21 | RISING STARS: T-SHIRT CONTEST
- 23 | RISING STARS: ARE YOU GOOD WITH DESIGN?
- 24 | GRAPHICALLY SPEAKING
- 26 | ASSOCIATION UPDATES
- 27 | ON THE HORIZON
- 28 | GRAPEVINE
- 29 | CLASSIFIEDS

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Neuharth".

DAVE NEUHARTH  
EDITOR

# Dreaming of the New Year

## I HAD A DREAM.

In the New Year, the Internet disappeared.

The print media did away with all their web activities. Classified revenue in print media soared to new heights.

The circulation of the daily newspapers started to grow, but it was too late. Free papers took over the advertising in their communities and free paper publishers made so much money they didn't know what to do with it.

Gone are the days when newspapers had to go through consolidations in local and regional markets in order to survive, laying off thousands of employees.

Gone are the investments required to compete for digital advertising, which in most cases was not successful. Competition in the digital world was a tough ball game with the likes of Facebook and Google.

The problem is that the dream came to end when I read some of the following:

- "Based on my research in this space, I've been pushing themes and #Hashtags in PaperChain Social Messaging that attempt to illuminate the #Safety and #Power of #Print – favorably contrasting with #AdTech that is still truly #WildWest in terms of #Privacy, #Metrics, #Malware, #AdFraud – concluding with the Obvious: #Bots-DontShopLocal and #PrintCantStalk You."

- "And a final caution to Publishers: Get a handle on what code is on your websites now. I am willing to bet that most Ad Opps & Techies at most papers have no clue why half the scripts are running – and how much 'data leakage' is going on – where some 3rd-party firm they don't know is grabbing 'audience

insights' far superior to their own, to target and sell on a competitor's site."

No doubt about it, some of us have no clue.

Recently I read that less than 50% of papers have a website, but the ads we read state that publishers can increase profits by offering mobile solutions to their advertisers. That includes text ads, mobile app development, mobile website development for your customers, mobile text coupons, promotional blasts, mobile apps, niche smartphone apps and the list goes on and on. The publishing print media is leveraging technology and audience data more than ever.

Forget the digital. There is some good news for the print industry in the New Year.

For those who use direct mail for delivery, there is no price increase scheduled in 2016 – that is, if the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) approves it as expected at their scheduled meeting on January 17.

The North Dakota Newspaper Association (NDNA) recently took a readership survey in the state and the results for the print media were great. The survey reveal that 83.4 percent of adults read newspapers and 73.3 percent of those between the ages of 18 to 34 were print readers.

With the readership of the young people, we can say that "Print is Alive."



## WHAT IS IN STORE FOR THE FREE paper industry in the New Year?

You can bet the executive directors of the free paper associations will be working on new revenue opportunities as their long-time source of revenue,

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classified ads, continues to decline.

Greg Birkett, publisher of the Dubuque Advertiser in Iowa, thinks the economy is going to pick up a bit, although in the Midwest the agriculture market is suffering due to low commodity pricing. "The implementation of more and better quality special sections and digital advertising will help drive results for our advertisers. It will be a great year for thinking outside the box," he said.

First, I wrote a long version of what we expect and our plans, then I wrote a very short one – so here's a middle version. Edit as you see fit.

Overall, we are doing surprisingly well and if we can keep it together, next year should be good too.

Barbara Powers, publisher of The Exchange, a shopper in Spokane, Washington, said, "Our economy here is stable and shows growth in many areas including real estate and the building industry. Continued growth opportunities look good for us as we offer our readers goods and services mainly revolving around the home and real estate.

"I expect our print circulation to increase with the addition of more rack locations and also [due to] a weakening of other print publications in our area. It is our ongoing intention to improve our print format and content to provide our readers what they want and need.

"Digital is, and will continue to be, a constant struggle to keep up with the latest and the greatest. It will be more expensive to maintain all the platforms (mostly due to staffing). I don't see our banner ads making any big revenue increases but we are finding other ways to bring in revenue, such as charging for videos and featured placements on our website. I believe there is money to be made by helping our current advertisers increase their digital presence to target their customers and audience. Recently, we increased our presence on social media as a marketing tool, and it's starting to pay off.

"2016 should be another good year if we stay focused on who we are and cater to our readers both online and in print."

Good advice!

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# Papers Partner With USPS & Mail Mobile Promo Helps Heroes

by Donna Hanbery, Executive Director, Saturation Mailers Coalition

POSTALupdate



When Dan Alexander, publisher and owner of Denton Publications, Inc., and the publisher of Sun Community News and Printing, got up early to attend a postal roundtable at the AFCP annual conference in 2015, he was looking for the latest information on postal service rates, service changes, and promotions. He is always on the lookout for ideas that can help his paper, his customers, and significantly, other papers in the industry.

As the publisher of a community newspaper with distribution through much of the Northeastern portion of New York, Alexander values the Postal Service and his relationship with the USPS. He describes the Postal Service as a "vital partner" and "the best distribution system in the world." He is also a passionate spokesperson for the free paper industry and the ability of community newspapers to provide advertisers with the relevant, locally delivered, print advertising messages they need.

When Alexander heard about the Postal Service's 2015 Mail Drives Mobile Engagement six-month, two-percent discount incentive program, he recognized an opportunity to do more than just earn a discount for his own paper. Donna Hanbery, executive director of the Saturation Mailers Coalition, explained how the incentive program was designed to connect consumers to the Internet to trigger an online purchase, with a product or a mailed confirmation and receipt delivered by the USPS.

Alexander saw an opportunity to use the USPS promotion, combined with a donated ad from his publication and that of other papers, to help support Fisher House Foundation, an A+ rated charity that relies on the generosity of the American public to fund its homes and programs. AFCP and other state, regional, and national free paper associations, acting individually and through PaperChain, have supported the work of Fisher House Foundation for the past two years. Fisher House is best known for its network of comfort homes where military veteran families can stay at no cost while a loved one is receiving treatment.

Alexander did the leg work to look into the Postal

promotion and to determine the steps that would need to be followed for a publisher, and the Fisher House promotional ads, to qualify for the two percent Postal discount.

So what is Fisher House and how did it come to be the sponsored cause for the free paper industry? The story begins with AFCP Executive Director Loren Colburn. When the Government shutdown occurred a few years ago, Colburn heard that Fisher House was stepping up to help ensure that military families would continue to receive death benefits for those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Colburn, like many Americans, was moved by Fisher House offering to do what the Federal Government would not. He also saw the opportunities for home town America to contribute to Fisher House in meaningful ways. Fisher House accepts donations, large and small, in the form of cash but can also use donations of airline and hotel points or miles to help military families travel to be with a loved one and find lodging in areas where Fisher House does not have one of its "home away from homes" to house military families. He describes Fisher House Foundation as "the perfect opportunity for hometown America to move the needle to help a good cause in a meaningful way."

Alexander saw an opportunity to use the USPS promotion, combined with a donated ad from his publication and that of other papers, to help support Fisher House Foundation.

Colburn reached out to the Foundation for information and sample ads that free papers could include as part of their community service commitment to help Fisher Houses nationwide and in the communities where papers are published and read.

So let me return to the diligent efforts of Dan Alexander. He is involved with PaperChain, a combined effort of all free papers to help build the brand of free community papers. PaperChain strives to present the free paper industry as the most persuasive and locally relevant print product that advertisers and media buyers can choose to help advertisers connect with customers.

For papers with either editorial or 100% advertising content, free papers receive excellent audited scores for readership and response. In communities where free papers are distributed by mail, papers work





closely with the Postal Service to provide advertisers and readers with a weekly source for shopping values. Most free papers devote a significant amount of unpaid space within each publication to community news, announcements, and other non-profit or charitable efforts. For PaperChain President John Draper, the opportunity to support Fisher House while partnering with the Postal Service's promotion was a win-win-win.

Draper liked the Fisher House opportunity, as it was a cause with connections throughout the country. The free paper industry works to push results in local community markets. As one of its brand-building outreach efforts, PaperChain values the opportunity to partner with charitable programs and to educate free paper publishers on opportunities, like the Postal promotion, to strengthen the free paper industry.

Draper credits Dan Alexander for doing the leg work to get a template ad and bar code for the promotion, and for making sure that publishers understood and could fulfill all USPS promotion program requirements.

The program rules for the Mail Drives Mobile Engagement incentive were designed to encourage mailers to drive consumers to complete an online transaction. Alexander made the inquiry about designing an ad and program that could help readers make a contribution to Fisher House. He describes the Postal Service promotion office as being very helpful in answering his inquiries and working to design a program where a true exchange of funds for a contribution was achieved. "They took the time to understand the promotion, and to help us explain to participants that wanted to register in advance how to meet program requirements," said Alexander.

PaperChain communicated with its members to promote and describe the Postal Service promotion and the opportunity for publishers who mail to participate in communications to members. PaperChain pointed out that donations of miles or hotel points would not qualify for the promotion at this time. A donation of money or another financial contribution that could be confirmed by a receipt that the Fisher House Foundation would send by mail was required.

PaperChain got to work in sharing information about the Mail Drives Mobile Engagement promotion with all publishers.

After describing the steps to participate in the Mail Drive Mobile Engagement promotion, PaperChain provided some information about Fisher House and the Postal Service.


"Fisher House has been serving our military families for 25 years with 66 facilities around the country and in Europe, providing housing close to a loved one during hospitalization for an illness, disease, or injury. This USPS promotion provides PaperChain publishers with an incentive to run the Fisher House ads and assist them in this very important mission.

"Our delivery partner, the United States Postal Service, sees this mobile engagement promotion as an ideal way to further strengthen their market position in this ever challenging economy. Keeping our delivery partner well positioned to meet the technology changes, maintains our publications delivery method through this valuable vendor."

Alexander has been running the Fisher House ads in every edition of his paper since the promotion period began. He pointed out some other win-win benefits of the promotion. He states, "Our readers have seen the ads each week and

have learned about Fisher House and the valuable work it is doing. The savings the paper has received in postage has helped the paper invest in inserting equipment to help expand its distribution business and strengthen its mailed community products."

Alexander is bullish on print and the free paper industry. "As the dailies are pulling back and doing less in full saturation coverage, insert and flyer customers are moving towards the free paper industry and the mail," he said.

Alexander also believes in the Postal Service. "In our rural market, it surely is our partner," he said. "The Postal Service has been interested in our well being and has worked with us. We hope this promotion is offered again in a way that we can help and support the Fisher House next year." 

**"The Postal Service has been interested in our well being and has worked with us. We hope this promotion is offered again in a way that we can help and support the Fisher House next year."**



# Fisher House Facts

by Donna Hanbery, Executive Director, Saturation Mailers Coalition

**AS THE AUTHOR OF THIS** column, I must confess that I did not know about the Fisher House until Dan Alexander talked to me about ways to help the organization and free papers to qualify for the USPS Mail Drives Mobile Engagement promotion. Until Dan helped me “get smart,” I thought Fisher House had something to do with nuts.

Well nuts on me. I talked to Ashley Estill, communications and public relations coordinator for Fisher House Foundation, and learned about Fisher House and its mission.

Estill is the one who told me about AFCP Executive Director Loren Colburn reaching out to help Fisher House Foundation when the Foundation stepped up to do the right thing during the Government shutdown, providing military families the death benefits from their loved ones who made the ultimate sacrifice. Ashley welcomed the opportunity to have more media attention and support from community newspapers and shoppers, as most of Fisher House’s support comes from the generosity of the American public.

“We don’t pay for advertising, so we keep administrative costs low,” said Estill. “It was great to have Loren volunteer with another way to help our mission.”

Estill started the partnership with AFCP and the free paper industry in late 2013. Fisher House provided free papers with ads and a good story to tell about how individual contributions can go a long way. For contributions that come in through use of QR

codes, Fisher House generates a receipt for each donation. Fisher House is also a big user of the Postal Service with its magazine, *The Patriot*, mailed tax receipts to acknowledge contributions, and a large reliance on volunteer efforts that frequently include Postal workers.

Estill stated that the need for help for our Veterans was growing. At the end of each year, Fisher House gets involved with the combined federal campaign, where federal employees have an opportunity to help and promote philanthropic causes. “We frequently get requests to speak at Post Offices and to talk to Postal employees. At these talks, a lot of hands are raised. We are always encouraged by the questions and volunteers that respond to our requests.”

Here’s a little Fisher House history. Since 1990, over 250,000 families have been served. As of the present time, Fisher House has 66 facilities located near major military and VA medical centers. Fisher House homes can accommodate 16 to 42 family members in a homey and comfortable environment. Typical houses are 5,000 to 16,800 square feet, with a common kitchen, laundry facilities, spacious dining room, and living room with a library and toys for children. **INK**

*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.*

## Fisher House 2014 Highlights

Families Served: Over 25,000.

Average Length of Stay: Ten (10) days.

Average cost to provide a night of lodging for a military family: \$10.00

In 2014, Fisher House saved families more than \$47 million in lodging, food and transportation costs. Fisher House is a not-for-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Eligibility for Fisher House housing is established by criteria set by the hospital or installation commanders. Fisher Houses are given to the U.S. Government as gifts. Military service secretaries and the Secretary of Veteran Affairs are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the homes.

# AFCP Board Establishes Bill Welsh Foundation



**THE ASSOCIATION OF FREE** Community Papers (AFCP) board of directors approved the following resolution supporting the formation of the Bill Welsh Foundation. The action was taken at their October board meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada.

WHEREAS, Bill Welsh played a critical role in the development of the Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP) and was an honored friend and colleague of everyone associated with AFCP.

WHEREAS, Bill Welsh was specially endowed with energy, fun and leadership skills and harbored a special love for AFCP.

WHEREAS, it is therefore most ap-

propriate that a charitable foundation be organized to prominently carry the name of Bill Welsh and that the Foundation operate to promote the education and professional development of outstanding young professionals working in the community newspaper industry whose character reflects Bill Welsh's natural enthusiasm for the industry, love of people, problem-solving skills and leadership abilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

RESOLVED, that the AFCP Board of Directors of the Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP) supports the formation of the Bill Welsh Foundation.

*Continued on page 26*

## CREATE THE BACK OF THIS YEARS CONFERENCE SHIRT

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*Must reference the AFCP 2016 Annual Conference and Trade Show in San Diego, the conference logo does not have to be used in the design.*



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Please send questions or design entries to [alix@afcp.org](mailto:alix@afcp.org) by March 1st.



## national

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104 Westland Drive  
Columbia, TN 38401  
Phone: 866-224-8151  
Phone: 931-922-4171  
Email: douglas@ifpa.com  
Web: www.ifpa.com  
Douglas Fry

### CANADA

Blain Fowler  
c/o the Camrose Booster  
4925 48th Street  
Camrose, AB, Canada T4V1L7  
Phone: 780-672-3142  
Fax: 780-672-2518  
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### NAMPA

North American Mature Publishers Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 19510  
Shreveport, LA 71149-0510  
Toll Free: 877-466-2672  
Phone: 318-636-5510  
Fax: 318-525-0655  
Email: nampa.gary@gmail.com  
Web: www.maturepublishers.com  
Gary Calligas

## regional

### CPNE

Community Papers of New England  
403 U.S. Rte. 302 - Berlin  
Barre, VT 05641  
Phone: 802-479-2582  
Email: dphillips@vt-world.com  
Web: www.cpne.biz  
Deborah Phillips

### MACPA

Mid-Atlantic Community Papers Association  
P.O. Box 408  
Hamburg, PA 19526  
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Fax: 610-743-8500  
Email: info@macpa.net  
Web: www.macpa.net  
MACnet (Advertising Networks)  
Email: info@macnetonline.com  
Web: www.macnetonline.com  
Alyse Mitten

### MFCP

Midwest Free Community Papers  
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400 First Avenue #2  
Coralville, IA 52241  
Toll Free: 800-248-4061  
Phone: 319-341-4352  
Fax: 319-341-4358  
Email: dick@mfcf.org  
Web: www.mfcf.org  
Dick Colvin

### PNAWAN

Pacific Northwest Association of Want Ad Newspapers  
c/o Exchange Publishing  
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Spokane, WA 99210  
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Phone: 509-922-3456  
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  
27259 1/2 Camp Plenty Road  
Santa Clarita, CA 91351  
Phone: 661-510-7520  
Fax: 661-298-5338  
Email: scdarrin@pacbell.net  
Darrin Watson

### SAPA

Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association  
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Email: info@sapatoday.com  
Web: www.sapatoday.com  
Douglas Fry

## state

### CPF

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Summerfield, FL 34492-1149  
13405 SE Highway 484  
Bellevue, FL 34420  
Phone: 352-347-4470  
Fax: 352-347-3384  
Phone/Fax: 850-762-4086 (Classifieds & billing inquiries only)  
Email: DJNeuharth@aol.com  
Web: www.communitypapersof-florida.com  
David Neuharth

### CPI&I

Community Papers of Indiana and Illinois  
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Phone: 219-689-6262  
Fax: 219-374-7558  
Email: Tina@FamilyFlyer.com  
Tina Jackson

### CPM

Community Papers of Michigan  
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East Lansing, MI 48823  
Toll Free: 800-783-0267  
Phone: 517-333-3355  
Cell Phone: 517-242-0203  
Fax: 517-333-3322  
Email: jackguza@cpapersmi.com  
Jack Guza

### CPOWV

Community Papers of Ohio & West Virginia  
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Columbus, OH 43204  
Phone: 614-272-5422  
Fax: 614-272-0684  
Email: phildaubel@columbusmessenger.com

### FCPNY

Free Community Papers of New York  
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Syracuse, NY 13206  
Toll Free: 877-275-2726  
Phone: 315-472-6007  
Fax: 877-790-1976  
Email: dholmes@fcpny.com  
Web: www.fcpny.org  
Web: www.adnetworkny.com  
Dan Holmes

### TCNA

Texas Community Newspaper Association  
104 Westland Drive  
Columbia, TN 38401  
Phone: 931-223-5708  
Fax: 888-450-8329  
Email: douglas@tcnatoday.com  
Web: http://tcnatoday.com  
Douglas Fry

### WCP

Wisconsin Community Papers  
P.O. Box 1256  
Fond du Lac, WI 54936-1256  
101 S. Main Street  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935  
Toll Free: 800-727-8745  
Phone: 920-924-2651  
Fax: 920-922-0861  
Email: janderson@wisad.com  
Web: www.wisad.com  
Janelle Anderson (ext. 108)

# Meet FCPNY's David Grayson



**THE PRESIDENT OF THE FREE** Community Papers of New York (FCPNY) is a longtime member of the association, having joined in 1990 and served on the board of directors since 1995.

David Grayson is the president and owner of Dray Enterprises, Inc. the parent corporation, as well as the publisher of LeRoy Pennysaver & News in New York. The company is also involved in commercial printing, textile printing, embroidery, and promotional product distribution, all under the trade name of LP Graphics.

Grayson started his printing career in 1983. Shortly thereafter he and his father were approached by the owner of the LeRoy Pennysaver who asked if they were interested in purchasing the publication. The LeRoy Pennysaver was well established and publishing since 1933, so they joined together to make the purchase and began publishing in November of 1984.

During his tenure he has served as vice president, transitioning the company to its present form while working for his father. His father's company was original-

ly in the automobile industry, which was declining during the automotive downturn of the early 1980s. Grayson subsequently purchased the corporation from his father.

The publishing company is also a member of the Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP).

Grayson said that FCPNY has been a great advantage during his career. "The knowledge we have gained from conferences, meetings and relations with many freely-sharing publishers from all over New York State has been invaluable to our business," he said.

A native of LeRoy, Grayson has spent most of his life living in his hometown. He stays active in the community serving in the Rotary Club, where he is a past president. He also is past president and a member of the LeRoy Business Council and the Genesee County Chamber of Commerce.

Grayson studied business administration at the Rochester Institute of Technology and worked for an automotive parts manufacturer for eight years prior to entering business with his father.

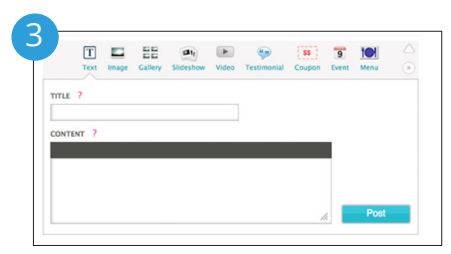
In his spare time he likes to hunt, fish, ride a Harley Davidson motorcycle, and sing in his church choir. He is also involved with nonprofessional theater.

Grayson has been married to Danette for 40 years and the couple have two adult daughters, Jacqueline and Lauren, and three grandsons. **INK**

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100	\$39,900	\$5,000/mo.	\$60,000
200	\$79,800	\$10,000/mo.	\$120,000
400	\$159,600	\$20,000/mo.	\$240,000
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# Happy New Year!

by Greg Birkett

**IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE** 2015 is over – it went way too fast! Now that the Holidays are over, it is time to lean in and put the shoulder to the wheel and make 2016 another great year.

The conference committee has been hard at work planning for another great conference! Top notch presenters like our opening Keynote speaker, Sam Richter, great training sessions, a super trade show, food and fun await all who attend. Not only are we going to learn a lot, we are going to have fun doing it.

The Thursday night dinner is going to be held on the USS Midway, a retired aircraft carrier in San Diego harbor just minutes away from the famous gas lamp district. It will be a spectacular event with amazing views of the bay and city skyline. I would encourage anyone attending to plan to stay a couple of extra days or to come in a bit early – San Diego has a lot to offer. The marketing committee is busy finalizing the conference brochure and if you haven't received it by now, you will be getting it very shortly.

I want to take a moment to shout out to the past Rising Stars and to the incoming Rising Stars. It has been great to see this program continue to get better every year. It has been fun working with them during the convention and on conference calls throughout the year. Also a special thanks to John Draper, chair of the Rising Stars committee, for all of his guidance on this program. I know he has a lot of fun doing it, but he puts forth a great effort; and this year, he is doing double duty as our conference chair!

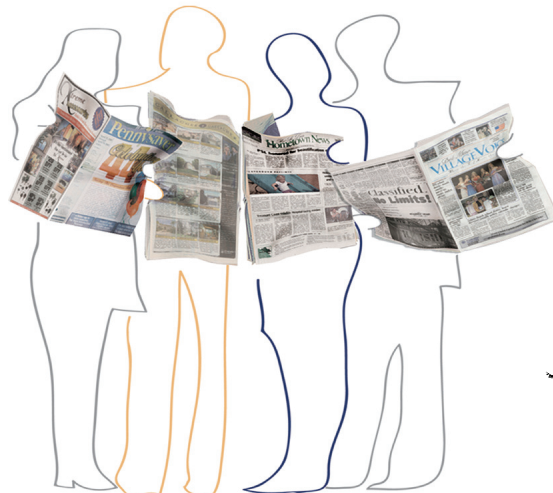
The new Bill Welsh Memo-

rial Rising Stars Scholarship Fund will help ensure that we can continue to fund this program well into the future. Thanks go to Kacie Connor and Gary Gerlach for starting this fund. Their generosity and belief in supporting young professionals in our industry and honoring our friend and colleague Bill Welsh is very much appreciated. Also thank you to all the silent auction item donors and bidders at the Savannah conference. I look forward to seeing all the cool auction items in San Diego! Please consider donating to this year's auction.

The membership committee has been working on recruiting new members for our organization and they could use your help with this. I am sure we all know of one free publication that is not a member of AFCP. I would love for you to recommend that they join AFCP. In fact, if you would email the AFCP office ([cassey@afcp.org](mailto:cassey@afcp.org)) with any leads, we will make sure someone follows up and asks them to join. How easy is that?

Loren and Cassey have both gone through training for Cruise Planners and can help you with any future travel plans, including but not limited to cruises and resorts. If you are planning on doing any vacations in 2016, give them a call at 877.270.7260 to check out all the options open to you. Wouldn't it be nice to have someone you know help plan your next trip?

I hope you have a great New Year, and don't forget to make plans to attend the San Diego conference April 28-30, 2016! **INK**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Greg'.

GREG BIRKETT  
**AFCP PRESIDENT**  
DUBUQUE ADVERTISER

# Set Sail for Success

by John Draper, Conference Committee Chair

**IN THE PAST EDITION OF INK MAGAZINE, I** highlighted some of the standard questions we as publishers routinely face. Specifically, I touched on my question, "How do I find a salesperson for a territory that has been open for some time?"

As of this writing, I have extended an offer for the position; and if all goes according to plan we should be back up and running in a short time. I will keep you posted.

This process went down in a manner that has some relation to our AFCP journey to Set Sail for Success. We kept our eyes and ears open, networked, and were not timid to pursue.

The lead for this potential hire was brought to me by another sales employee. She started a dialogue at a non-work related event with a contact who mentioned that her sister might be interested. This ended up with a lunch meeting between the two of them, an official interview, and so on. This employee kept her eyes open with a purpose in mind. In addition, this employee maintained optimism and positivity in going about the process.

As we Set Sail for Success in our businesses, maintaining optimism and positivity always prove to make the navigation much easier. Through networking and training, AFCP offers a great venue to build one's resources. These resources give us the confidence to push forward with optimism and positivity.

Our endeavor to again develop the industry's best conference and trade show continues to push forward as well. The schedule is in place, social events are taking shape, and we continue to add trade show vendors to the line-up.

Something new this year is a T-shirt design contest. Given the high interest in our Savannah Pub Crawl shirts from 2015, we have decided to make available a souvenir shirt for the 2016 event. This contest is being conducted by the Rising Stars and complete details are posted at [www.afcp.org](http://www.afcp.org). The contest is open to all AFCP members so I urge you to get your designers involved and have some fun as they endeavor to have their work published for all to enjoy.

The AFCP Rising Stars Silent Auction is also beginning to take shape. Now in its second year, this silent auction is conducted to support funding for confer-



The kissing sailor at the Bob Hope Memorial at San Diego Bay, near the Midway museum.

*Credit: Brian Flaigmore | Dreamstime.com*

ence attendance scholarships that are made available to our industry's Rising Stars. I encourage you to make a contribution to the auction and join in the fun of bidding in San Diego. The AFCP website has information available or you can contact Alix at the AFCP office for other specific questions.

Registration details are available for the upcoming 2016 AFCP Conference and Trade Show. I ask you to join us in San Diego, to come with your eyes and ears open, to not be timid, and to build your navigational resources as you Set Sail For Success. **INK**



# Introducing **Keynote** Speaker Shannon Kinney



**SHANNON KINNEY HAS AGREED TO** be one of the keynote speakers at the annual Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP) annual conference and tradeshow scheduled April 28-30 in San Diego, Calif.


Kinney is the founder and client success officer at Dream Local Digital.

She has over 20 years of experience in the development of successful Internet products, online sales and marketing strategies. She has worked on the teams developing successful Internet brands such as cars.com, careerbuilder.com, and over 60 online

media properties for newspapers all over the U.S. and Canada.

Prior to that, she spent over 10 years in media sales and sales management in Maine.

Kinney is an experienced speaker, trainer, advisor and consultant. She has worked with small and large companies alike, and has served more than 28,000 small businesses in on-line marketing workshops.

She has been recognized as a Woman to Watch by Maine Biz, and as a Local Digital Innovator by the Local Media Association. 

## "What were you thinking?"



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OUR DATA SPEAKS VOLUMES

# Bill Bowman: In the Spotlight

THE CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE, N.C., RECENTLY honored Up & Coming Weekly with a proclamation for the publication's 20th anniversary.

The proclamation read:

"This proclamation celebrates and recognizes Bill Bowman and the creation of Fayetteville's first weekly community newspaper, Up & Coming Weekly.

"WHEREAS Up & Coming Weekly became Fayetteville's first sanctioned North Carolina Press associated "Free" community newspaper; and,

"WHEREAS Up & Coming Weekly has been locally owned, written and published in Fayetteville; and

"WHEREAS the Up & Coming Weekly is an award-winning weekly community newspaper known throughout North Carolina and the Southeast; and

"WHEREAS Up & Coming Weekly has provided a continuous, unbiased journalistic voice for all the residents of Fayetteville and Cumberland County; and

"WHEREAS Up & Coming Weekly has been dedicated to accentuating and illuminating Fayetteville's traditions, amenities, valued assets and quality of life; and

"WHEREAS Up & Coming Weekly has provided continuous support of our local governmental agencies, arts and cultural venues and valued community non-profit organizations.

"NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the City of Fayetteville:

- (1) "Recognizes the significant and positive journalistic impact of Up & Coming Weekly in the daily lives of its residents; and
- (2) "Acknowledges the importance of a vibrant free press to democracy while recognizing the role of

"free" community newspapers like Up & Coming Weekly in that process.

"We congratulate Up & Coming Weekly on its 20th Anniversary of serving the residents of the City of Fayetteville and surrounding communities."

In a note to SAPA Executive Director Douglas Fry, Bowman said, "Check this out. Wow!

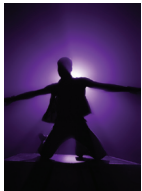
20 years. Can you believe it? I remember attending my first SAPA meeting in Atlanta in 1996! I literally knew nothing about the newspaper publishing industry and depended solely on the help, expertise and friendships of SAPA members to proceed and succeed. Sales, distribution, layout and design – I learned it all through SAPA and humbly admit I would have not survived without such an organization and dedicated advocacy.

"I also remember coming into this industry without any preconceived notions of the newspaper industry or the bias and prejudices we encountered and endured from the 'paid' dailies. In December 1995 we defiantly made history in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

"Now, on December 14th, 2015 we will reach another benchmark in the 'free' community newspaper industry when Up & Coming Weekly community newspaper is recognized for pursuing all the 'right things' for the 'right reasons'. All valuable lessons I learned from SAPA and the free paper industry nearly 20 years ago. These free paper associations are valuable to the success of our industry." **INK**



Bill Bowman



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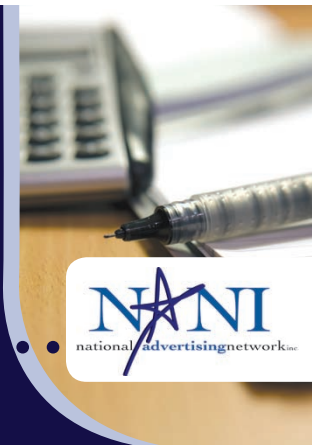
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# The LEADERSHIP Institute

by Jim Busch

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

***"Very often the only way to get a quality in reality is to start behaving as if you had it already."***

**– C. S. Lewis**

**I BELIEVE THAT "BORN" SALESPEOPLE OR "NATURAL"** leaders are mythical creatures like unicorns or dragons. The great sales people and managers I've known are self creations. They didn't exit the womb with the innate ability to persuade others to see things their way; they acquired their skills along the way.

While one can study sales and leadership techniques, selling and leadership are not technical disciplines—they are artistic pursuits. No one ever became an artist by reading a book about painting, or about selling or management. While it is important to study one's craft, selling and managing can only be learned by doing.

When I go out into the field with young sales reps I often hear comments like, "I wish I could do that. You always seem to know just what to say." I wish that I could take them back to the 1970s so that they could see me when I began selling. I was an absolutely terrible sales person. Because I wanted to be a sales person and because I needed to support my family, I didn't let this deter me. I kept pretending that I knew how to sell.

Of course there is a lot more than "fake it till you make it" involved in becoming good at your chosen profession. You must have the fortitude to "stay the course" and not lose patience with yourself. It is difficult to get up in the morning, put on your business clothes and a smile on your face and go out to do something you're not so sure you can do.

Selling and leadership are difficult ways to make a living, and take a long time to learn. To become good – and then great – at doing these jobs, one has to keep slogging past his own mediocrity. Many people do not survive this period of their career. They decide that they are "not cut out for this" and move on.

The best people learn from every call and from every mistake. They become just a little bit better each and every day. They admit their own shortcomings and talk to more experienced people about how to improve their skills. Instead of obsessing about being a bad salesperson or leader, they focus on becoming better at what they do.

The people who become great salespeople or leaders "fake it while working hard to make it." **INK**





# An Advertising Lesson in TOMBSTONE, ARIZONA

by John Foust

**ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE ADS** I've seen was a billboard on Highway 80 north of Tombstone. I was in southern Arizona on business and had some free time to make a side trip to the town where the Earp brothers and Doc Holliday had their famous gunfight in 1881 with the group known as the "Cowboys" at the OK Corral.

The billboard promoted the Tombstone Motel with the simple line, "Rest in peace."

That's a phrase which wouldn't work for any other business with any other name in any other town. But for a motel in an Old West town named Tombstone – with the main attraction being the site of a gunfight which has been the subject of movies and books – the line seemed entirely appropriate.

I didn't spend the night in Tombstone and I've never met anyone who has stayed at the Tombstone Motel, so I can't speak for that establishment. All I know is that – years after the trip – I still remember that billboard. I mention it here because it illustrates some important principles of advertising:

1. Billboards can teach us a lot about advertising. Newspaper and billboard advertising face the same basic challenge of being readable and attracting attention at a glance. As you drive, you have a few seconds to read a roadside sign in its entirety. And as you turn the pages of a newspaper or scan a website, you have only a few seconds to decide if a particular ad is worth further reading.

If a message doesn't communicate at a glance, it will miss the mark.

2. The best ads are targeted. Tombstone is a tourism destination. It's a safe guess that a large number of out-of-towners traveling to Tombstone are plan-

ning on visiting the OK Corral, the Boot Hill cemetery and various buildings which have been preserved as they were when Wyatt Earp was Marshall.

It's smart to appeal to those travelers' knowledge of what made Tombstone famous. And it's smart to place the sign on the road leading into town.

3. Uniqueness is an advantage. In the environment of Tombstone, Arizona, "rest in peace" does not appear offensive at all. Sure, it's a little corny. But the slogan is not likely to generate outrage among consumers. On the other hand, can you imagine "rest in peace" in an ad campaign for Hilton or Marriott?

I think it's safe to say the Tombstone Motel adopted a slogan that was uniquely theirs.

4. The best messages are simple. Obviously, "rest in peace" had a double meaning. While acknowledging the town's well-known background, it suggested a reason to stay at the Tombstone Motel. With the combination of the headline and the motel's logo, that simple sign communicated: (1) a clearly stated consumer benefit (rest), (2) a connection to history (the Old West), (3) the advertiser, and (4) the location (which was part of the advertiser's name).

All of that was communicated in just a few words. In a few seconds.

That's a worthy objective for all advertisers. **INK**

*(c) Copyright 2015 by John Foust. All rights reserved. John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. Email for information: john@johnfoust.com*

# Are You Good With Design?

by Amy Hansen, 2014 Rising Star

**DO YOU HAVE THE TALENT TO TAKE A FEW** shapes and turn basically nothing into something awesome? Do you like a good challenge? Would you like one of your designs to gain immortality?

The Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP) has just the thing for you! This year, AFCP is doing a contest for the design of the back of this year's conference T-shirt. CVC will sponsor the shirts again this year with their logo on the front, but that leaves the entire back to be the canvas for your winning design.

There are a few rules for the contest that participants must follow. The design has to reference the AFCP 2016 Annual Conference and Trade Show, which is taking place in lovely San Diego, California. The design cannot include any more than four colors capable of being screen printed.

Here's your chance to really be creative with your skills. What do you think of when San Diego pops into your mind?

- Is it the city's common reference as "America's Finest City?"
- Is it the full sail of a sleek sailboat navigating the harbor?
- Is it the abundance of white, sandy beaches nestled next to the Pacific Ocean?
- Is it the delicious, authentic Mexican food that lingers on your taste buds?
- Could it be the world-renowned San Diego Zoo?

The ideas are endless, and here's your opportunity to show us what you've got.

Any questions, as well as design entries, can be directed/submitted to [alix@afcp.org](mailto:alix@afcp.org). The deadline for submissions is March 1, so get started today.

The winner of the contest will receive a free shirt and all of the recognition - which means "to the winner goes the spoils."

Good luck! 



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

# Print is More Than Ink & Paper

by Kylah Strohte, Rising Star

**I WORK FOR EXCHANGE PUBLISHING, A COMPANY** based in Spokane, Wash., that publishes a weekly shopper and a quarterly equine magazine. We also have an excellent website and a couple of thousand Twitter followers. We know we are more than just print. A billboard is always just a billboard. But a paper – or as I prefer to say, a publication – encompasses so much more. It becomes a guide, a resource, a fixture that transcends the confines of any single medium.

A couple of years ago, I scoffed at the idea of working for a paper. I had just moved to Spokane and I was about to interview for a job with The Exchange. Just a few minutes before the interview I said to a friend, “A newspaper? Ugh, print is dead. I don’t want to work here.” Famous last words. Within five minutes, the publisher, Barbara Powers, had changed my entire view of the industry – or at least in regard to Exchange Publishing in particular. Her clear vision and enthusiasm for the future was infectious, and I was soon absolutely certain that this was the place for me. She showed me that print isn’t dead; print is just so much more now.

I am also the executive director of our Regional Association, the Pacific Northwest Association of Want Ad Newspapers (PNAWAN) and Western Regional Advertising Program (WRAP), which is hosted by Exchange Publishing. I’m also an AFCP Rising Star, and I’m on three AFCP committees: Rising Stars, Membership Committee, and the Conference Committee. You could say I’m starting to get pretty involved in the Free Paper Industry!

As director of PNAWAN, I work with many free community publications on a regular basis. Some of those publishers are staunchly members of the “old guard” of the industry, who see no value in going digital while at the same time bemoaning the decline of their print products. But then others in the

industry, such as Exchange Publishing, look forward to the future and the many different avenues our publications can grow to encompass. Some may choose to look at a changing industry with trepidation, but I choose to see it with excitement.


At last year’s AFCP Conference in Savannah, I was impressed (and a bit surprised) with the size and strength of our industry. Even though I viewed the company I worked for as an example of suc-

cess, I think my old “print is dead” mentality was still lurking in the back of my mind when it came to the free paper industry on a larger scale. But being surrounded by so many innovative thinkers and enthusiastic leaders finally gave that old stereotype the boot.

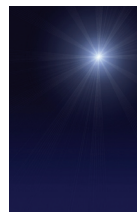
Furthermore, being involved with the planning process for the upcoming 2016 AFCP Conference in San Diego has given me a glimpse into just how strong the free paper industry has grown and how far we’re capable of going.

One of the things I find so exciting about AFCP is the overall attitude embracing change, adaptability and new

ideas. This innovative and forward thinking mentality of the AFCP leadership has allowed the free paper industry to thrive. It’s invigorating to work with professionals who are able to successfully balance nostalgia and tradition with the cutting edge, all the while maintaining a successful product that can be consumed multiple ways via an array of platforms.

While there may still be some factions in the print industry that still bring that “print is dead” cliché to mind, I feel that number is now greatly eclipsed by the overwhelming positivity, passion and ingenuity the majority of our publications and leaders now exemplify. I feel excited and proud to be involved with PNAWAN and AFCP, and I’m continuously inspired by the many great leaders and innovators in the free paper industry. 

It’s invigorating to work with professionals who are able to successfully balance nostalgia and tradition with the cutting edge, all the while maintaining a successful product that can be consumed multiple ways via an array of platforms.



# I've visited a lot of Successful PAPERS

by Kevin Slimp

**I'VE BEEN TRAINING AND ADVISING NEWSPAPERS** for 21 years, every since Larry Smith asked me to come look over his operation in LaFollette, Tennessee back in 1994. I worked with more than 100 papers in my travels this year, not counting the thousands of papers that attended conferences and training events I led.

That's a lot of years and a lot of papers, and in that time I've come to recognize the traits that correlate with success. I don't have to spend very long at a newspaper office to tell you how they're doing in terms of circulation, readership, ad sales and profits. No one has to tell me. There are qualities that lead to successful newspapers, and without them it's a good bet that there are some problems in one or more of those four areas.

I could have listed fifty newspapers in this column, because I ran into a lot of papers that are doing things right in 2015. And it's showing in their numbers. Due to space limitations, here are a few that stood out in my memory:

## ***The Community News & The Wellington Advertiser: Fergus, Ontario***

I spent two days with the staff of this community paper located 45 minutes from Toronto. It didn't take me long to realize that this group does a lot right.

Dave Adsett is one of my heros. Cutting isn't in his vocabulary; and while other papers in his area have cut pages and staff, leading to decreasing circulation, Dave's papers have done the opposite, with the opposite results.

Here's what Dave told me. "We make a good living and are interested in the long game, rather than managing by a month or quarter. We have also



Kevin points out a design tip with staff members of The Community News in Fergus, Ontario during a visit in November 2015.

Credit: Pat Raftis, The Community News



Dale Gentry tries his hand at a new software application as staff members of The Standard Banner in Jefferson City, Tennessee look on.

continued to hire staff and grow our business, as opposed to making cuts to achieve bottom line results."

## ***The Standard Banner: Jefferson City, Tennessee***

"The work ethic of our staff and their dedication to excellence are the two keys to our success," Dale Gentry told me as we discussed the secrets to his newspaper's success. "We work hard to cover, and serve, our community well – whether it's in the quality of our writing and photography, the effectiveness of our ads, the excellence of our final printed product, or the service we provide to readers and customers."

## ***The Piedmont Shopper: Danville, Virginia***

I got to know the folks in Danville after receiving a frantic call about ads printing wrong. It took a little geographic magic, but I made the six-hour journey to Danville on my way to Minneapolis, where I was speaking the next day at a convention.

Kathy Crumpton is the publisher of The Piedmont Shopper. She explains their success like this: "Over the past 15 years, we've been blessed to establish relationships with our readers and advertisers that go beyond newsprint. That relationship with our community led us to see the need for our other publications: a monthly paper delivered to all public and private schools, free to the students and staff, and Red Bird Times, which serves the other end of our readership spectrum and is enjoyed by seniors 50 and 'wiser.' No matter which of our publications you pick up, you'll find the same commitment to serving our community."





Hmm. I'm starting to notice a trend among successful newspapers with that "serving community" thing.

### **Sauk Centre Herald: Sauk Centre, Minnesota**

I considered several newspapers in Minnesota for this column, but limited myself to two. One is the Sauk Centre Herald. You might remember the column I wrote about my experience with Dave's staff while visiting in November.

Dave had this to say about the Herald. "Respect is a key word for us: Respect for readers, advertisers, staff and competitors. We've always embraced technology and innovation. We try to tell the human drama which can be many things from tragic deaths to losing the state high school basketball game to funny stories from an old timer or a hog that escaped the meat packing plant and ran down Main Street."

Dave's staff is larger than many daily papers I visit, and the payoff is seen in their success. Large readership base, quality journalism and success in the bottom line.

That seems to be another quality that correlates with success at newspapers: Rather than cutting staff to the bone, they seem to maintain their staffs, leading to greater readership and ad sales.

### **Hood County News: Granbury, Texas**

Every so often, I'm invited to visit Granbury, Texas, a town of roughly 10,000 folks located just southwest of Fort Worth. It was in Granbury that I trained the first newspapers outside of Tennessee to use the PDF method to print their pages 20 years ago.

It's no surprise that newspapers like Hood County News are successful. As you walk throughout the building, you sense the pride the staff takes in put-



The staff of The Sauk Centre (MN) Herald look on as Kevin explains how to get colors to match between ads.



Hot off the press: Wade Weber displays the latest issue of the Kenabec County Times during a visit in March 2015.

ting out a good newspaper. It's local. All local.

Publisher Jerry Tidwell has always believed in quality, and brings in trainers and experts on a regular basis. It shows. Unlike some papers, the building isn't near-empty. There's a lot going on. And it all starts with the publisher.

Interesting. That's another quality that seems to correlate with successful papers: An engaged publisher who knows and cares about his/her community and staff.

### **Kanabec County Times: Mora, Minnesota**

I've liked Wade Weber, publisher, since I first met him years ago when he invited me to train the staffs of his papers in Central Minnesota. Since then, his papers have grown and so have his staffs. In addition to his paper in Mora, Wade has publications in Pine City, Cambridge, White Bear Lake and Grantsburg, as well as the Amery Free Press in Northwestern Wisconsin.

There's no feel of "centralization" in Wade's papers. He told me, "Even though we are a group of newspapers, each location focuses on its own community. We are very focused on being local, in both advertising and in news content."

Hmm. There's that "local" thing again. I'm starting to believe that really does make a difference.

I could have mentioned so many other papers. The Akron (Iowa) Hometown, for example, or the Cresco (Iowa) Shopper. I wouldn't normally mention a pure shopper in my list, but Peggy and John Loveless keep a real community focus to their publication. As John told me about a major national newspaper group that offered him a tidy sum for his paper, I was so inspired when he said, "I didn't want it to lose the community feel."

I was also inspired in 2015 by a new generation of publishers and newspapers. Mark Fortune comes to mind, starting a successful new weekly in Ohio. There's Michelle Van Hee, who publishes the newspaper in Madelia, Minnesota. The list could go on.

There are a lot of newspapers out there doing things right. Due to space limitations, I'll stop there. But believe me, this list could go on for several pages. **INK**



# Associations IN the NEWS

**THE SOUTHEASTERN ADVERTISING Publishers Association (SAPA)** will conduct its first Leadership Retreat March 5, 2016 at the LeMendien Hotel in Atlanta, Ga.

The "Leading Toward Tomorrow" session is designed for department heads or anyone else publishers want to help their organizations in the future.

**ONLINE INFORMATION SEARCH SECRETS** to know more will be one of the key topics at the Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP) annual conference April 28-30 at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina in San Diego, Calif.

The opening keynote speaker, Sam Richter, will provide attendees' sessions on how to discover the "Impersonal Web" and to "Personalize" your business relationships.

**THERE IS STILL TIME FOR MEMBERS OF THE Association of Free Community Papers (AFCP)** to enter the annual "Best of the Best" Awards Contest and show the free paper industry the best work of your composition and editorial personnel.

Entries are due January 25. To enter, go to [www.afcp.org](http://www.afcp.org) and download your entry materials today!

**THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION of Want Ad Newspapers (PNAWAN)** board of directors has decided not to conduct an annual conference in 2016.

Instead, they have allocated a budget to help members to attend either the IFPA or AFCP conferences.

To submit your "associations in the news" story, please contact Dave Neuharth by fax (1.352.347.3384) or email: [DJNeuharth@aol.com](mailto:DJNeuharth@aol.com).

## AFCP Board Establishes **Bill Welsh** Foundation

*Continued from page 11*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the AFCP Board of Directors authorizes and approves having the AFCP provide administrative and other support services required to administer the operation of the Bill Welsh Foundation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the AFCP Board of Directors encourages

all AFCP members to consider making donations to the Bill Welsh Foundation in order to fund the Foundation's operations and to fund the Bill Welsh Foundation's mission of providing educational and other professional development opportunities for young professionals and others associated with community newspapers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the

AFCP express its thanks to the Gary G. Gerlach and Karen A. Conner Charitable Foundation, Inc. for its commitment to donate \$10,000 to the Bill Welsh Foundation upon its organization, and its commitment to contribute an additional \$10,000 to the Bill Welsh Foundation when AFCP members have made contributions of \$20,000 or more to the Bill Welsh Foundation. **INK**



| feb.

SAN DIEGO, CA :  
FEBRUARY 22-23, 2016

North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA). Niche CEO Summit in San Diego, Calif. For information contact Gary Calligas at gary@maturepublishers.com.

| mar.

ATLANTA, GA :  
MARCH 5, 2016

Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association (SAPA). Leadership Retreat at the LeMendiant Hotel, Atlanta, Ga. For information contact Douglas Fry at info@sapatoday.com.

ALTOONA, IA : MARCH 10-11, 2016

Midwest Free Community Papers (MFCP). Spring Conference at Prairie Meadows in Altoona, Iowa. For information contact Kevin Haezebroeck at 319-341-4352.

| apr.

AUSTIN, TX :  
APRIL 4-6, 2016

North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA). Niche Media Conference in Austin, Texas. For information contact Gary Calligas at gary@maturepublishers.com.

GREEN BAY, WI :  
APRIL 15-16, 2016

Wisconsin Community Papers (WCP). Annual Conference at the Tundra Lodge, Resort and Waterpark, Green Bay, Wis. For information contact Janelle Anderson at janderson@wisad.com.

| apr.

SEVEN SPRINGS, PA :  
APRIL 22-23, 2016

Mid-Atlantic Community Papers Association (MACPA). Annual Conference, the Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Seven Springs, Pa. For information contact Alyse Mitten, info@macpa.net.

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.

| may

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS :  
MAY 4-6, 2016

International Classified Media Association (ICMA). Annual Conference ICMA's head office in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The site of the conference will soon be announced. For information visit www.icmaonline.org.

| sept.

DENVER, CO :  
SEPTEMBER 25-28, 2016

North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA). National Convention, the Magnolia Hotel, Denver, Colo. For information contact Gary Calligas at gary@maturepublishers.com.

ORLANDO, FL :  
SEPTEMBER 28 - OCTOBER 2, 2016

Independent Free Papers of America (IFPA), Southeastern Advertising Publishers Association (SAPA) and Community Papers of Florida (CPF). Joint Conference, the Caribe Royale All-Suite Resort, Orlando, Fla. For information contact Douglas Fry, info@sapatoday.com, or Dave Neuharth, djneuharth@aol.com.

| 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.

*To list your conference information  
in Free Paper INK, send it to:*  
**DJNeuharth@aol.com**

*To list your conference information  
on the AFCP website, send it to:*  
**Loren@afcp.org**

# GRAPEVINE

**THE GOTHENBURG TIMES IN** Gothenburg, Nebraska, has new ownership for the first time since 1977.

Scott Wesner and Scott Wood, high school classmates who both have extensive newspaper experience, purchased the newspaper effective December 2, 2015, under the name Platte Valley Media, LLC.

The Gothenburg Times is a weekly newspaper that is recognized as among the very best in the state of Nebraska. The Gothenburg Times has previously been owned by only two families in its history, which dates back to 1908. Greg Viergutz and his father, Vance, purchased the paper in 1977 from the Holmes family, founders of the Times.

Julie Bergman of W.B. Grimes and Company represented Greg and Kathi Viergutz and Gothenburg Publishing Company in the sale.



## BIZWEST MEDIA LLC

announced that the company has sold The Wyoming Business Report to APG Media of the Rockies LLC.

In the wake of the deal, the Wyoming Business Report became the sister publication to several community newspapers in Wyoming, including the Wyoming Tribune Eagle.

The Wyoming Business Report was created almost 16 years ago when the publishers of the Northern Colorado Business Report (now BizWest Media) brought in veteran AP reporter Dennis Curran to cover Wyoming business, first as a few pages in the Colorado paper and then as a stand-alone publication. The Wyoming Business Report remains the only statewide newspaper devoted to business news.

BizWest Media, which has offices in Fort Collins and Boulder, is the publisher of BizWest, the biweekly business newspaper formed out of the merger of sister papers Boulder County Business Report and Northern Colorado Business Report in early 2014. Under APG Media of the Rockies, Wyoming Business Report will join the Wyoming Tribune Eagle in Cheyenne, the Laramie Boomerang, the Rawlins Daily Times and the Rock Springs

## WHAT'S GOING ON...

Rocket-Miner in a new media family started when APG bought the McCracken Newspaper Group in October. It also bought the Post Register in Idaho Falls, Idaho, in November.

APG is a subsidiary of Adams Publishing Group LLC, a family-owned media company headquartered in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.

The sale marks the first time the Wyoming Business Report has been directly affiliated with any other Wyoming newspaper. Wyoming Tribune Eagle Publisher Scott Walker said the sisterhood between Wyoming's only statewide business publication and four community newspapers across the I-80 corridor will lead to great synergies and improve all the papers. "None of the daily papers have a business reporter," he said. "I think it's just a good opportunity and Wyoming Business Report's always been a big part of the state. We want to continue that tradition."

Ken Amundson, senior associate for W.B. Grimes & Company, represented BizWest Media in the sale. **INK**

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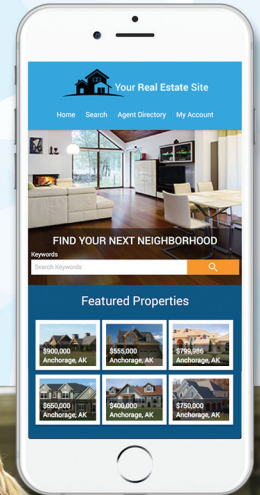
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