

The Kentucky Press

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Official Publication of the Kentucky Press Service - Vol. 62, No. 4 - April 1991

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Of service

Warren R. Fisher Jr. (right), publisher emeritus of *The Carlisle Mercury*, accepted the 1990 Edwards M. Templin Award during KPA's winter convention. Presenting it was Tom Caywood of the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, which gives the award each year in recognition of outstanding community service. Read more about Mr. Fisher on page 2. (Photo by Ken Metz)

Ad seminar focuses on new sales

"Getting new business and keeping it" is the theme of the 1991 KPA Spring Advertising Seminar, set for April 18-19 at the Galt House East in Louisville.

Advertising consultant Bob Berting of Indianapolis takes the floor for most of Thursday as he gives pointers on the following topics:

- *The smart way to get new business
- *Using creativity to sell
- *Yearly promotion schedules
- *Layout/copy nuts and bolts
- *Service to keep satisfied customers.

His presentation will be followed by roundtable discussions in which participants can share ideas, questions and problems.

Friday morning's program is a discussion of the results of the 1991 Kentucky Retail Shopping Habits Survey, presented by members of The Preston Group of Lexington, which conducted the survey for KPA. Participants not only can hear the survey explained, but they can also learn how to use the results in sales calls.

The seminar culminates Friday at noon with an awards luncheon honoring the winners of the 1990 KPA Advertising Contest.

Seminar leader Berting has more than 30 years experience in advertising and sales. President of Berting Communications, he has been advertising manager for a drug store chain, vice president of a suburban newspaper chain and executive director of a regional community newspaper association.

He also teaches continuing education courses in advertising and sales and is the author of *New Guide to Greater Advertising Sales and Image Power*, a manual for community publishers, general managers and sales staffs.

Representing The Preston Group, a KPA Associate, will be founder Tommy Preston and vice president Phil Osborne, who oversees the public relations firm's public opinion and attitude surveys. A former newspaperman, Preston is the only Kentuckian ever elected to the Public Relations Society of America's College of Fellows.

Cost for the full seminar is \$55 per person. Participants may register for one day only for \$45 or for the awards luncheon only for \$25. For more information, call KPA at 1-800-866-1431 or 502/223-8821.

Computers and open records: Are they compatible?

By Mark R. Chellgren
Associated Press

LOUISVILLE — Will people, or programs, determine public access to state-held information?

A computer programmer said exploding technology will mean that machines will likely make the decisions about what information is available and in what form.

Others made the case that the government itself is in the best position to determine what the public should learn.

And still others said all government-held information is public property and should be withheld only under extraordinary circumstances.

The questions and answers were posed at a state-sponsored con-

ference on government information policy on March 7-8.

The discussions at the conference sponsored by the Kentucky Information Systems Commission ranged from policy considerations to technological breakthroughs.

Making the case for the machines running things was David Bearman, publisher of a periodical on information technology.

Bearman said the electronic storing of information means the computer and its program decide what information is accessible and how.

Random information is useless until organized by the machines and programs, Bearman said.

Ann Sheadel, director of civil law for the Attorney General's office

and chief interpreter of the Kentucky Open Records Law, said practical considerations must also be recognized.

"Do we want to burden the government?" Sheadel asked.

There was also a departure about whether basic information quali-

fied as a record the public should be able to obtain.

Jon Fleischaker, a Louisville attorney who has been a leading advocate on government access issues in Kentucky, said defining information is a trap.

See **Computers**, page 6.

Are \$\$\$ the real issue in computer records?

"It's not just (a question of) open records laws any more. It's more complex," said Hugh Archer of PlanGraphics during the March 8 session of the Conference on Current Issues in Government Information Policy.

The Friday meeting, which closed the two-day conference in Louisville, was aptly titled "Financial Issues Needing Policy Considerations."

Money is a topic that cropped up throughout the meeting that attracted primarily state employees who maintain electronic records.

Government records as sheets of papers in files are becoming as outdated as the manual typewriter, replaced by electronic equipment, expensive to buy, to operate, to maintain.

See **\$\$\$**, page 6.



Time for bifocals?

Actually, Tim Ballard, editor of *The Kentucky Standard* in Bardstown, was just being modest about getting his picture taken. He and Teresa Sapp, *Cumberland County News* editor, were among KPA members who helped to judge entries in the Mississippi Press Association contest. (Photo by Nathan Johnson)

Writers, photographers turn judges

Kentucky newspeople who normally enter editorial contests tried out the other side of the bench as they volunteered to judge contests for their colleagues in Mississippi and Georgia.

Poring over stories and photographs in Elizabethtown for the Mississippi Press Association contest were: Theresa Sapp, *Cumberland County News*; Celia McDonald, *Emily Morse* and Amy Hogg, *Danville Advocate-Messenger* (with Bob McDonald); Mark Chandler and Joe Imel, *McLean County News*; Stan Reagan, *Bowling Green Daily News*; John Rob-

erts and Missy Baxter, *Shepherdsville Pioneer-News*; Ben Sheroan, *Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer*; Wayne Vaughan, *Green River Republican*; Tim Ballard, *The Kentucky Standard*; Camilla Box, Kenny Barkley and Linda Robinson, *Union County Advocate*; David Greer, Nathan Johnson and Jonathan Roberts, *Elizabethtown News-Enterprise*.

KPA judges who met in Lexington to examine Georgia Press Association contest entries were: Jim Rector, Rick Jenkins and Byron Brewer, *Georgetown Graphic*; Terry O'Connor,

Recorder Newspapers; Hank Bond, *Carlisle Mercury*; Lucienda Denson, *Berea Citizen*; Pam Logue Spradling, *Mt. Sterling Advocate*; Mike Johnson, Tom Woods and Rob Kaiser, *Lexington Herald-Leader*; Sacha Devroomen, *The Kentucky Post*; Ron Bridgeman, *Jessamine Journal*; Don White, *Anderson News*; Jeff Kerr, *Winchester Sun*; James Mulcahy and Lalie Dick, *Bourbon Times*; Cathie Shaffer and Kevin Goldy, *Ashland Daily Independent*; Bill Mardis, *Somerset Commonwealth-Journal*; Kevin Kerfoot and Rick Baker, *Georgetown News and Times*.

Longtime Mercury publisher merits Templin

One of Nicholas County's foremost civic leaders, Warren R. Fisher Jr., was recognized for service to his community during KPA's annual winter convention in January.

Fisher, publisher emeritus of *The Carlisle Mercury*, was presented with the Edwards M. Templin Award by the *Lexington Herald-Leader*.

The award is given annually by the Lexington newspaper to a Kentucky newspaper person who has performed outstanding community service.

Mr. Fisher was publisher of the *Mercury* from 1947 until 1986, when it was sold to Hank and Marilyn Bond. His wife, Kay, was managing editor of the paper from 1964 until the couple's retirement from the business.

The newspaper had been in the Fisher family since 1912, with his father, the late Warren R. Fisher Sr., serving as editor and publisher until his death in

1937. The honoree's mother published the paper from her husband's death until 1944.

During World War II, the paper was leased to R.M. Feese, 1944-45, and Paul Brannon, 1945-47. Returning from military service, Mr. Fisher took over the operation in 1947.

The Fishers are active in the Carlisle Presbyterian Church, where he is a deacon. He is a life member of the Kentucky Historical Society and served 20 years on the KPA board of directors.

He was also instrumental in working with the Carnico Development Corp. and in the establishment of the Nicholas County 4-H facility, as well as many other local civic projects.

Under his guidance, *The Carlisle Mercury* was among the state's first newspapers to use electronic typesetting, to switch to offset printing, and to use electronic desktop publishing. He

also led the paper to many state and national press association awards.

The community service award was first presented in 1968 in honor of Edwards M. Templin, promotion director of the Lexington paper and president-elect of KPA when he died in 1967.

Past recipients include Albert E. Dix, Lawrence W. Hager Sr., James T. Norris Sr., Roscoe I. Downs, Barry Bingham Sr., Ben E. Boone III, John L. Crawford, Mrs. George Joplin Jr., May Rogers, Jane Bird Hutton, Enos Swain, Larry Stone, Thomas L. Adams, John B. and Ray Gaines, Floe Bowles, Creed C. Black, Niles Dillingham, Elizabeth Spalding, George Joplin III, Don Towles, Louise Hatmaker, Betty Berryman and David McBride.

(The information about Mr. Fisher came from an article in the Jan. 24 edition of *The Carlisle Mercury*.)

The Kentucky Press

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The Kentucky Press (ISSN-0023-0324) is published monthly and second class postage paid at Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription price is \$4 per year. Postmaster: Send change of address to The Kentucky Press, 332 Capitol Avenue, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, (502) 223-8821.

How to avoid public notice-itis

Question: What group of advertisers provides most newspapers with a most consistent source of revenue, but are often treated with the least respect?

Answer: Public/legal notice advertisers.

That's one of the points that came out of a session at the Newspaper Association Managers Legislative Conference last fall (and reported in the South Dakota Newspaper Association Bulletin).

There is evidence, the conference leader said, that non-competitive newspapers, especially, tend to take public notice advertisers for granted. They treat these advertisers with arrogance, acting as if publishing the notices is a "God-given right."

In reality, legislatures in several states have been seriously debating public notice regulations, which may point to the need for soul-searching on the part of publishers and ad managers.

The NAM conference session gave some pointers on ensuring good relations with public notice customers.

(1) Take care that billing is correct and fair; inconsistencies in billing damage the paper's credibility.

(2) Heed the advertiser's deadlines for publishing, and treat the public notice advertiser in the same way you would your best retail customers.

(3) Play up the notices so that your readers will be drawn to read them. If the case can be made that readers don't pay attention to public notices, then what is the purpose of their publication? Suggestions include summaries of the public notices in each edition and page one indexes of the legal ads.

(4) Call on city clerks, school board secretaries and other persons who place the notices, just as you would a retail advertising customer. Ask how you can better serve them or if there are problems in the way the paper has been handling the ads.

(5) Educate officials on the importance of publishing public notices. Point out that the ads help readers understand how the officials are using tax dollars and upholding the public trust.

'Revenue blitz' set for 6 cities

Inland Press Association and its foundation are taking a "revenue blitz" to six cities to help newspapers find new sources of revenue.

Each seminar will feature a half-day exchange of revenue development ideas and a half-day of instruction on easy-to-administer sales training programs, practical incentives for staff and new revenue products including non-traditional ideas for newspapers.

The seminar schedule is: April 11, Madison, Wis.; April 25, Kansas City; May 16, Lansing, Mich.; May 30, Champaign-Urbana, Ill.; June 27, Troy, Ohio, and July 18, Longmont, Colo.

Registration is \$85 for the first participant from each newspaper and \$75 for successive participants. For more information, call 708/696-1140.

Items

Beware those who prey

The Council of Better Business Bureaus warns that during slow economic times advertising of fraudulent schemes/scams is rampant. Ad managers are advised to be wary of advertisements that offer "pie in the sky" solutions to economic problems. CBBB advises particular vigilance toward advertisers of credit repair companies, job listing services, advance fee loans, work at home schemes, mail order businesses, investment/pyramid scams. If you have a question about an advertiser whose product seems to fit one of these categories, call the CBBB at 703/276-0100.

Familiar faces?

Domestic Relations officials in Delaware County, PA, used the local newspaper in December as a way to track down child support offenders. They took out a full page ad in the Delaware County Daily Times with pictures of eight of the county's most elusive "deadbeat dads," and names of another 14. The ad ran under the heading, "Most Wanted For Failure to Pay Child Support." Pictures were furnished by the children's mothers. Officials said all other means of tracking down the delinquent parents had been exhausted.

Hometown Most Wanted

In the same vein, the sheriff of Winnebago County, Wisc., runs 2-column X 3-inch ads on people wanted for local crimes in the legal notices section of the Oshkosh Northwestern. Some of the cases have been more than 10 years old and have ranged from traffic citations to felonies; all have been of people the sheriff's department has failed to locate by other means. The sheriff, whose list includes 1,400 names, says he's pleased with the results and intends to advertise the rest of the list.

A word to the wise

A study by the Professional Training Institute listed five things customers like least in a salesperson: flattery, overstaying a welcome, too much talking, not keeping promises and arguing. What do they appreciate? Product knowledge, presentable appearance, courtesy, honesty, sincerity.

Recycling promos wanted

The Southern Newspaper Publishers Association is asking members to submit copies of ads/editorial material used to promote recycling, as well as information on in-house recycling. Send to Information Dept., SNPA, Box 28875, Atlanta, Ga. 30358.

Legalese

Recent legal cases among KPA members:

● The Kentucky Court of Appeals ruled March 1 that a judge incorrectly dismissed *The Courier-Journal's* request to review guardianship records of children injured in the Carrollton bus crash of May 1988. The appeal goes back to Hardin Circuit Court where the judge must consider the merits of the case. The paper had asked the judge to unseal the records relating to a series of stories about laws on guardianship of minors.

● Guy Hatfield of the *Citizen Voice & Times* in Irvine had to challenge the Estill County School Board in March over a bill that charged him with personal fees for copies of materials he

requested. Agencies are to charge only for the actual cost of the copies, under the law, but Hatfield had been charged for the time involved in finding and copying the materials.

● A federal appeals court ruled in March against the *Lexington Herald-Leader* in the paper's attempt to access documents in a 1981 antitrust lawsuit filed by the US Justice Department against Kentucky Utilities Co. The government later dropped the suit. The appeals panel said the documents are not in the court record, and are private.

● A state Supreme Court opinion is expected in April or May on a dispute between *The Times-Tribune* of Corbin and the *Whitley Republican/News Journal* over legal advertisements.

● A lawsuit in Bourbon Circuit Court, pitching *The Bourbon County Citizen* against *The Bourbon Times*, has been delayed pending the Kentucky Supreme Court's decision on the Whitley County case.

● According to published reports, an official of the Administrative Office of the Courts has admitted that a mistake was made when the AOC placed legal advertising of a special session of Perry Circuit Court in *The Perry County News*, rather than the larger circulation *Hazard Herald-Voice*.

● What goes on in legislative party caucuses apparently is not accountable to the public. Gene Cantrell, editor of *The Green River Republican* and *Ohio County Messenger*, requested information on a Jan. 30 Senate Democratic caucus during which the governor's nominees to the State Board of Education were discussed. Majority Caucus chairman David Karem replied that the group "does not maintain any records of the proceedings." Thus, Cantrell could not find out who or how many senators attended or what they discussed.

Legal workshop slated for Nashville

"Managing Newspaper Circulation" is the title of a one-day legal workshop, set for May 2 in Nashville, Tenn., and sponsored by the law firm of King & Ballow.

The workshop will focus on legal developments that affect publishers and circulation managers.

Sessions include: "Independent Contractors," "The Lawsuit — Preventing, preparing for and prevailing in circulation litigation," "Administrative Investigations — What to do when (and after) the auditor calls," "IRS Enforcement Update — The good, the bad and the unknown," "Assessing Your Distribution Options — Youth or adult, buy/sell or per piece," and "First Amendment Update — Protecting newsracks and hawkers."

Cost is \$50 per person. Contact Tracie Albright, seminar coordinator, at 615/259-3456.

Three named to Hall of Fame

By Jackie Bondurant, UK News

A former newspaper publisher, a retired veteran reporter of the Kentucky capital press corps and a photographer for a nationally-circulated magazine have been named to the Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame at the University of Kentucky.

They are Barry Bingham Jr., editor and publisher of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Louisville Times* from 1971-86; Sam Abell, photographer for National Geographic, and Livingston Taylor, Frankfort bureau reporter for *The Courier-Journal* from 1964-87.

The awards were presented in ceremonies at the UK Singletary Center for the Arts as part of the 14th annual Joe Creason Lecture on March 26. Bernard Shaw, world news anchor for Cable

News Network, was the Creason lecturer.

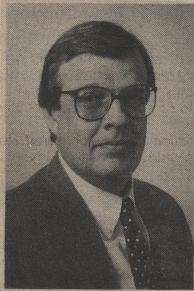
The Hall of Fame now includes 66 journalists, who are either from Kentucky or have worked in print or broadcast journalism in the state and who have made a significant contribution to their profession. Plaques honoring each are on permanent exhibit in the UK School of Journalism building.

Every journalist has a novel in him, which is a great place for it. —Russell Lynes

Good judgment comes from experience, and experience comes from bad judgment. —Barry LePatner

Naming names

STEVE AUSTIN, publisher of *The Gleaner* in Henderson, has been named vice president of operations for Gleaner and Journal Publishing Co. His added responsibilities include supervision of six weekly newspapers and their associated publications: *Benton Tribune-Courier*, *Cadiz Record*, *Franklin Favorite*, *Union County Advocate*, *McLean County News*, as well as *Portland Leader* in Tennessee and radio station WFKN in Franklin. He has been with the company for more than 20 years.



Steve Austin
Gleaner VP

Newly appointed publisher/general manager of *The Richmond Register* is **RAAMIE BARKER**, former managing editor of the Monroe (N.C.) *Enquirer-Journal*. He replaces **RUTH BRYANT**, who has been named publisher of the *Leader-Call* in Laurel, Miss., her hometown. A graduate of Marshall University, Barker has worked with papers in Beckley, Logan and Madison, W. Va., and is a former labor commissioner for West Virginia.

JAMES D. MARCHAL, vice president/advertising for *The Courier-Journal*, is president-elect of International Newspaper Advertising and Marketing Executives.

Recently re-elected to a three-year term on the board of directors of Mid-America Press Institute was **KARL HARRISON**, executive editor of *The Paducah Sun*.

MIKE BOAZ is the new sports editor at *The Messenger* in Madisonville. He replaces **JIM PICKENS** who moved to the sports department of *The Messenger-Inquirer* in Owensboro, after eight years in Madisonville. Boaz, who attended the University of Evansville, has covered sports in Kentucky, Indiana, Oklahoma, Europe and North Africa. Pickens is a Western Kentucky University alum.

The new advertising manager at *The Sentinel-Echo* in London is **DAVID SPARKS**, former classified ad manager for *The Commonwealth Journal* in Somerset.

Former general manager/publisher of *The News-Enterprise*, **FRANK BATTEN JR.** is the new president/publisher of *The Virginian-Pilot* and *The Ledger Star* in Norfolk. He was with the Elizabethtown paper from 1986-89 and is a former Associated Press reporter.

Five newsroom employees at *The Messenger-Inquirer* have been promoted. Former city editor **BEN SHEROAN** is now managing editor. He worked for *The News-Enterprise* in Elizabethtown and for the *Nashville Banner* before joining the Owensboro staff in 1990. The new night editor is **ANNE WOOTEN GREEN**, former sports editor. A Murray State University graduate, she has experience with *The Paducah Sun* and the Elizabethtown paper. **RICH SUWANSKI** succeeds Green as sports editor, a job he held from 1977-79 before returning to reporting. With the paper since 1974, he is an alumnus of Kentucky Wesleyan College. Former news editor **TOMMY NEWTON** fills the post of Sunday editor. Before joining the staff in 1987, Newton, a Western Kentucky University graduate, worked with *The Crittenden Press* and *The Daily News* in Bowling Green. **PAUL RAUPP**, former city staff reporter, is the paper's new editorial writer. The University of Kentucky graduate worked for *The Winchester Sun* and the *Bowling Green* paper before joining the Owensboro staff in 1990.

The Kentucky Standard has added **BETH DOLEZAL** to its roster of staff writers. An Indiana University graduate, she formerly worked as a photographer at *The News* in Tell City, Ind. The *Bardstown* newspaper has also promoted two employees. **SHELIA JOY CECIL**, who joined the staff in 1980 as office supply clerk and later worked in page and ad composition, is a new advertising sales representative. **SHERRY SMITH**, production coordinator/office manager of the printing department for three years, is now commercial printing sales representative.

LIN HOBBS is the new advertising director at *The Pineville Sun-Courier*. He has ad sales experience in Middlesboro and in Tennessee.

New to the staff of the *Manchester Enterprise* is **EDD SAYLOR JR.**, a 1988 graduate of Clay County High School.

Two new employees at *The News-Enterprise* in Elizabethtown are **STEPHEN NAGY**, copy editor, and **DANNY BRANDENBURG**, reporter. Nagy is a graduate of Kent State University, and Brandenburg, a former United Press International reporter in Frankfort, lists Eastern Kentucky University as his alma mater. **MARCIA BURRIS** has left the paper's advertising department for a sales post at TeleCable Targeting.

WAYNE VAUGHAN has joined the advertising sales staff of the *Ohio County Messenger*. A former employee of *The Daily News* in Bowling Green, he attended WKU.

Former composition manager **CANDI JONES** has left *The Grant County News* to join the staff of *The Boone County Recorder*.

The Springfield Sun has added **KAREN THOMPSON KOOS** to its composition department. She is a design graduate of Eastern Kentucky University.

ELLEN BALLARD has been named editor of *Visions*, the monthly members' magazine published by KET, a KPA Associate. Ballard also edits KET's weekly press packet. She is a former staff writer for *The Winchester Sun* and former editor of *The News-Democrat* in Carrollton.

KENNETH M. FAULKNER JR. has joined *The Clay City Times* as reporter/photographer. He is a student at the University of Kentucky.

The LaRue County Chamber of Commerce honored former *Herald News* publishers **BOB** and **CELIA CREAL McDONALD** for their many years of community service at a Jan. 29 meeting. Celia is 1991 KPA president.

Scholarships open to weekly editors

The International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors is offering two scholarships to young weekly newspaper editors who would like to attend the society's annual conference July 10-14 in St. Louis.

Each scholarship covers conference costs plus up to \$600 in travel expenses. Weekly newspaper editors who have been in the field fewer than 10 years are invited to apply.

Applicants should send a letter of no more than 250 words describing their job, their philosophy of community journalism, and why they would like to attend, to Donald Brod, ISWNE, Dept. of Journalism, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115. Application deadline is May 1.

EVELYN M. BOONE, formerly with the *Todd County Standard*, found she couldn't get newspapering out of her blood after moving to Louisiana to be near her daughter and grandchildren. Since last September, she has been office manager for *The Tensas Gazette* in St. Joseph. She sends greetings to her KPA friends.

Two KPA members were to have roles in the Kentucky Center for Public Issues' 1991 Conference on "Our Common Wealth: Making Democracy Work," March 28-29 in Lexington. **DAVID HAWPE**, editor of *The Courier-Journal*, was to be a panelist in a discussion of "What role should newspapers and television play in strengthening democracy?" **DAVID DICK**, director of the UK School of Journalism, was to be moderator of the conference's synthesis session on "How can we improve democracy in Kentucky?"

HAWPE is among 65 nominating jurors charged with initial judging of 1990 entries for the Pulitzer Prize in journalism. He spoke recently at Brescia College, as part of its GTE Lecture Series, on "Ethics and the Newspaper" and "The Public's Right to Know and the Limits to Probing."

IRENE NOLAN, managing editor of *The Courier-Journal*, is one of 14 candidates for seven seats on the board of directors of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Election is to take place during ASNE's April convention.

At *The Recorder* papers in Northern Kentucky, **TERRY O'CONNOR**'s title has changed to managing editor, and **CHRIS BURNS** is the new associate editor of the *Kenton County Recorder*.

KENZIE WINSTEAD has been named sports editor of the newly merged *Corbin! This Week and Whitley Republican News Journal*. A 1985 University of Kentucky graduate, he previously covered sports for the *Aiken (S.C.) Standard*.

Morehead State University graduate **GLEN GREENE** is a new general assignment reporter for *The Mt. Sterling Advocate*. He was formerly on the staff of *The Morehead News*.

RICHARD SWIHART has resigned as sports editor of *The Hancock Clarion* in Hawesville after almost 10 years at that post.

LALIE DICK has stepped down as general manager of *The Bourbon Times* to devote more time to the family farm and to assist her husband with the writing of a book. Editor **JAMES MULCAHY** has donned the manager's hat.

JANICE YEAROUT-PATTON, publisher of *The Allen County News* in Scottsville was recognized during February ceremonies in Louisville as one of five Outstanding Young Leaders in Kentucky by the state Jaycees. Her husband, editor **MICHAEL PATTON**, received the honor in 1984, making the couple the first husband-wife team to win the award.

LOU ANN GREEDY is the new regional manager for Metro Creative Graphics, a KPA Associate.

A former columnist for *The Mountain Advocate* in Barbourville has published her first book. **DES MCKEEHAN** is the author of *The Earth and Beyond*, a collection of short stories, poetry and a play.

Speaking on media relations at Conservation District area meetings during March have been **TERESA S. HOCKENBERRY** of the *Cumberland County News*; **STUART SIMPSON**, *Pulaski Week*; **STEWART JENNISON**, *Messenger-Inquirer*; **GENE CLABES**, *Recorder* Newspapers, and **PAM SHINGLER**, KPA central office. Scheduled to speak at an April 4 meeting is **PAUL GOTTBRAITH**, local news editor at *The Daily Independent* in Ashland.

DR. GLEN KLEINE, head of the mass communications department at Eastern Kentucky University, has been named dean of EKU's College of Applied Arts and Technology, effective July 1.

Two KPA members are presiding over their community's chamber of commerce this year: **STEVE LOWERY**, publisher of *The Kentucky Standard* in Bardstown, and **LUCY VANHOOK**, advertising manager at *The Cynthiana Democrat*.

G. BART DeLASHMET has been named president of a KPA Associate member, Southeast Publishers Newsprint Sales Company. He joined the Georgia company, which produces recycled newsprint, in 1989 as assistant to the president. He has been involved in newsprint sales since 1955.

Milestones

The Hancock Clarion in Hawesville recently celebrated its 98th birthday. The first issue came off the press on March 4, 1893, and was edited and published by Clarence Sterett and John Maston. An article in the March 7 edition of the paper noted the appropriateness of the anniversary during National Newspapers in Education Week.

CHRISTINE TAYLOR of Independence has been selected by the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund to receive a scholarship, two-week pre-internship editing residency at the University of Missouri and summer editing internship at the *Lexington Herald-Leader*. A junior at Western Kentucky University, she was one of 45 college students nationwide chosen for the award from among 786 applicants.

New to *The Central Kentucky News-Journal* staff is camera technician/driver **BOB REFF**.

OOPS . . . Last month's edition of *The Kentucky Press* garbled some information. **DICK BARRY**, former president of Landmark Community Newspapers Inc., headquartered in Shelbyville, has been promoted to vice chairman of the parent company, Landmark Communications of Norfolk, Va.

Special thanks to **Tim Ballard**, *The Kentucky Standard*, and **Jim Rector**, *The Georgetown Graphic*, for helping with *The Press'* photo processing needs.

Position wanted

Seasoned sports writer seeks position on daily or weekly. Have covered preps, JuCos, SEC and pros. Call Chris at 904/246-2193.

Ad director position with 15,000-25,000 circulation paper, or general manager of weekly group. Would also make good RAM for a medium to large publication. Increased paid lineage for a daily 35% in just 10 months. Increased sales \$48,000 for five paid weeklies in three months. Projected increase is \$200,000. Can do same for your daily or weekly group. Paul Lewis, 205/621-8110.

1984 University of Alabama graduate seeks position on daily sports staff. Has six years experience working for dailies in Alabama and Mississippi. Has writing, layout and pagination experience. Call Henry Matuszak, 205/586-5876.

Job openings

General assignment reporter/photographer for award-winning daily paper. Salary negotiable; benefits package. Send resume and clips to Harlan Daily Enterprise, PO Drawer E, Harlan, KY 40831.

Small weekly needs experienced **general manager**. Newspaper ad sales & promotional experiences a must. Successful sales ability mandatory. Must possess impressive ad promotions calendar and have several years newspaper managerial experience. Excellent wages & benefits. Send resume and references to Weekly, c/o The Kentucky Press, 332 Capitol Ave., Frankfort, KY 40601.

Pick ups

The Lexington Herald-Leader won Awards of Excellence for its redesigned Weekender section and its book page during the Society of Newspaper Design's 12th annual Best of Newspaper Design competition.

Sporting a new design, as of the end of February, is *The Daily Independent* in Ashland. The makeover, nine months in the making, was assisted by Edward F. Henninger, director of ReaDesign Ltd. of Xenia, Ohio, and features bolder headlines, larger type and more information graphics. The flag underwent the most dramatic change; it now runs "The Daily" stacked and in smaller type, with "Independent" large enough to take up most of the flag space. The new text and headline type face is Nimrod.

The Times-Tribune in Corbin has increased the price of home delivery by 35 cents per month — a 5.3 percent increase.

Rising rates and production costs were cited in an announcement of a subscription increase by *The Columbia News* and *The Adair Progress*. Effective April 1, area subscriptions go from \$10 to \$13, and out-of-area rates increase from \$15 to \$19 for either paper. Combination rates for both papers rise from \$18 to \$24 (local) and \$28 to \$36. Single issue price also goes up, from 25 cents to 35 cents.

The Murray Ledger & Times added several new editorial features during March, including cartoons by Pulitzer Prize winner Pat Oliphant and James J. Kilpatrick's syndicated column. Also new to the paper's pages are astrologer Jeane Dixon's horoscope column and three comic strips.

The Kentucky New Era in Hopkinsville now publishes Carl T. Rowan's weekly syndicated column.

The Appalachian News-Express in Pikeville hosted "Business After Hours" on Feb. 27 for the Pike County Chamber of Commerce. The event gave local people a chance to tour the paper's facilities and meet its staff. About 150 visitors dropped by, according to editor Terry Spears. The Pikeville paper was also one of many in Kentucky to run special tributes to local troops stationed in the Middle East.

In its February company newsletter, Landmark Community Newspapers Inc. announced increases in revenue of more than 11 percent and in profits of 7.8 percent in 1990. Of the company's multi-state holdings, two Kentucky papers were among those showing the greatest improvement in revenues last year. *The News-Enterprise* in Elizabethtown was number one, and *The Kentucky Standard* in Bardstown, number three.

The Kenton County Recorder has switched from tabloid format to regular newspaper size, and new publisher Gene Clabes reports that the paper's paid circulation has increased by about 1,000 in the last couple of months.

The LaRue County Herald News changed from a Thursday to a Wednesday publication date, effective Feb. 27.

During the conflict in the Middle East, the *Central Kentucky News-Journal* published *Newsletter from home* for family members and friends to send to military personnel. The newsletter provided a digest of weekly happenings in Taylor County, such as news, births, sports, deaths, marriages, etc.

In its spring subscription campaign, the *Central Kentucky News-Journal* gave away chances on an RCA camcorder to persons who purchased a new subscription or renewed an old one.

The Cynthiana Democrat organized and sponsored a support group for friends and family members of military personnel serving in Operation Desert Storm. Also, staff members **Dee McIntosh**, **Rosemary Whitaker**, **Becky Barnes** and **Tammie Holt** spoke to several school classes on newspapers.

Eastern Kentucky University has been granted certification by the Public Relations Society of America, making it the first school in Kentucky and only the third in the country to receive the distinction. KPA Associate Thomas Preston, a PRSA Fellow, presented the official certificate during EKU's Mass Communications Day on March 14. Prior to granting the Certificate in Education for Public Relations (CEPR), a team of PRSA members conducted a preliminary study and on-site review. The CEPR credential is granted for a six-year period.

The Sentinel-News in Shelbyville recently published a special section in which all copy and ads were done by middle school students. Advertisers were invited to a reception, and the paper donated \$400 to the school. Several employees also were volunteer readers during "I Love to Read Week." **DuAnne Puckett**, **Debbie Ballard**, **Julie Pfeifer** and **Belinda Stiglets**.

The Advocate Brass Band, sponsored by *The Advocate-Messenger*, will host the Great American Brass Band Festival on June 14-16 in Danville.

Advertisements contain the only truth to be relied on in a newspaper.
—Thomas Jefferson

Computers, from page 1

If random information is withheld until it is compiled in a more organized format, the government is allowed to hide what it is collecting and how it is being used, Fleischaker said.

"I have a real problem with the government interjecting itself and saying, this is a good reason for releasing the information and this is a bad reason for releasing the information and we're not going to," Fleischaker said.

Paul McMasters, the deputy editorial director of USA Today, warned that technology is dictating policy, instead of people.

"Access to government must be an overriding principal in an open society," McMasters said.

McMasters, who is freedom of information chairman of the national Society of Professional Journalists, also dismissed worries about invasions of personal privacy by open access to government records.

If government collects information... it has an obligation to share it with the taxpayers who paid for it.

Paul McMasters, USA Today

"If there's any threat to individual privacy, it comes from the government," McMasters said.

Questions were also raised about the growing trend toward governments selling the information they have compiled.

McMasters said the trend is troubling because it was the public who paid for the collection and storing of the information through tax dollars.

"If government collects information... it has an obligation to share it with the taxpayers who paid for it," McMasters said.

\$\$\$ from page 1

The speed, efficiency and capacity of computers also add other factors to the records issue. Not only can computers store public government records, but they can also maneuver the information.

"You can create so many things that don't exist until you ask for it," Archer said. This leads to questions about whether and how much the public — including journalists — pays for not only the information, but also its analysis.

Jamie Love, who works with consumer advocate Ralph Nader, related one of his confrontations with government records. After requesting data from a federal official, Love was told that if he signed a paper saying he wouldn't use the information in a lawsuit, he could have it for free. Otherwise, it would cost him \$250.

It's not difficult to imagine a newspaper involved in a similar scenario.

Love suggested that Kentucky consider establishing a clearinghouse of information, a center for all kinds of computerized government records. Referring to the concept as "one-stop shopping," Love said the state should then publish lists of what it has on record and conduct public hearings on what is needed.

In the roundtable discussions that followed each session, the money question was a common topic. Many of the state records keepers harped on the high cost of the computer systems and personnel to run them.

They were particularly concerned about the costs of providing data analyses for requestors and the time

and software required to separate out information that is not public, such as financial and personal data.

Under present law, agencies can recoup "reasonable" expenses for providing records to the public, but this has traditionally meant the cost of copying paper records. Also under present law, agencies can charge added fees to requestors with a commercial purpose, such as attorneys who want a list of workman's compensation cases to market their services.

Printouts of computer-stored records and access to the software and computers themselves add another dimension.

Jon Fleischaker, one of KPA's Freedom of Information Hotline attorneys, contends that charging for use of public records constitutes "double billing" since citizens have already paid through their taxes.

"The public must have access, not only to data, but to the means of accessing data," he said. "Government should not have to do the job of the media, but neither should it hide behind computers."

The attorney said the state is going to have to grapple with issues surrounding computerized records. "How are we going to operate a democracy in the computer age?" he asked.

Other KPA representatives at the conference were FOI Hotline attorneys Kim Greene and Bill Hollander; Stan Macdonald of *The Courier-Journal*; Steve Lowery of *The Kentucky Standard*; Pam Shingler, News Bureau Director, and David Dick, University of Kentucky Journalism School director, who moderated the discussions.

No legislators from the Task Force on Open Meetings and Open Records attended.

Case study in open records law:

One paper's experience

Folks at *The Messenger-Inquirer* in Owensboro got a basic education in open records confusion this winter as they tried to report a story with major impact on their community.

Before the state legislature agreed to a generous incentive package to lure Scott Paper Co. to Daviess County, the newspaper attempted, through open records channels, to get some idea of what local and state governments were proposing to the tissue giant.

Managing editor Ben Sheroan specifically requested the following documents:

- *The final incentive package to Scott Paper.
- *The special presentation by Neal Advertising.
- *Agreements or actions authorized directly or indirectly by Owensboro City Commission or Daviess County Fiscal Court.
- *Final or preliminary communications made between local elected officials and company executives.

To cover the bases, he made the requests of the Owensboro mayor, Daviess judge-executive and Secretary Gene C. Royalty of the state Cabinet for Economic Development.

An article on the corporate and government maneuvering would have made a powerful story of statewide interest, particularly since the legislature ultimately allocated millions of taxpayers' dollars to the Daviess project.

All three government agents denied Sheroan's request.

The city chose to shunt the responsibility for responding to the county and state, saying it was not the "appropriate agency" to disclose the documents.

The county contended the deal might be jeopardized if its particulars were revealed before the manufacturer gave final approval.

The state begged out by saying that no "final action" had been taken and that "preliminary" actions are protected from open records requests.

The editor then took his case to the Attorney General, but with few positive results.

Writing the AG's opinion, attorney Ann M. Sheadel could only cite the current laws.

She chided the county for not including the specific statutory exception it was using to deny the open records request — a technical error.

Sheadel's opinion was a little rougher on the city. "... there is no specific exception in the Open Records Act that authorizes a public agency to withhold public records from an applicant because access to the records may be obtained from another public agency, even if the requested records might more appropriately or more easily be obtained from that other public agency," the attorney wrote in the opinion.

Thus, the city's contention that it was not the "appropriate" source of the information was invalid since it did apparently have copies of the documents.

Sheadel also took exception to the city's response that the records were protected because there was no prior public disclosure. She pointed out that Scott's interest in a Daviess location was already widely known in the community before Sheroan's request.

She agreed with the Economic Development Cabinet's belief that preliminary actions are exempt from the Open Records Law. However, she declared that some final decisions had been made because the Cabinet had submitted documents to the Secretary of Finance and Administration after Sheroan made his request.

"The documents that have been so submitted constitute final agency action by the Cabinet for Economic Development and must be made available to Mr. Sheroan for inspection," Sheadel wrote.

She concluded that the advertising presentation was part of preliminary negotiations and thus not open.

She rapped Sheroan's hands for not being specific enough in his request for "any" agreements or actions from the city and county. She advised him to "clarify" his request.

She also rejected Sheroan's argument that communications between government and corporate officials should be open, on the grounds that final determinations had not been made. Further, she pointed out that Scott officials remain private individuals even though they might write on behalf of the company.

Ironically, the day before Sheadel's opinion came out the Daviess judge-executive had a change of heart and turned the documents over to Sheroan.

He also received copies from the Cabinet at the AG's order.

The question by then, Sheroan said, was moot because the General Assembly was already voting on the incentives.

Under the present system, the process of getting an official opinion takes so long that the impact of a story is often diffused, Sheroan said later.

- The timetable of this case:
- Nov. 19, the documents were dated.
 - Dec. 3, paper made open records request.
 - Dec. 14, paper contacted Attorney General about urgency of situation.
 - Dec. 20, paper made formal request for AG opinion.
 - Jan. 10, issue was assigned to Sheadel.
 - Jan. 30, AG opinion was issued.

What this country needs is more unemployed politicians.
-Edward Langley

By Mike Farrell
The Kentucky Post

(From *The Kentucky Journal*, March 1991)

When the General Assembly passed the Open Meetings Law in 1974, it spelled out in the preamble what should be the philosophy of every democratic government toward public bodies:

Government records must be open to every citizen because the records are about the public's business. Government has no right of ownership over its records because all it has and all it does is "of the people, by the people and for the people." As high-faluting as that may seem, it is in truth a fundamental difference between a democracy and an autocratic system — the government belongs to the people who empower it.

But records in 1974 consisted of reams and reams of papers and reports and books, some maps and some tape recordings. Officialdom was still figuring out how to put computers to work.

Despite laws that require openness, people and agencies wanting to hide information are able to find ways around it.

That was another time, another era. A period as primitive as judges who rode the circuits on horseback.

Today everything is on computer. Even my newspaper's library. Some futurists think newspapers one day will be news not on paper. Maybe the circulation department will throw a floppy disk on the front porch of our subscribers.

Today, government has unlocked the computer code. A recent study for the Associated Press Managing Editors reported that the United States government has 32,000 mainframe and mini-computers and about 26,000 tape drives hooked up to those computers.

Kentucky state government has one large mainframe and 167 mini-computers, 24 of which are in vocational education schools, according to the Department of Information Services. (This doesn't include the computers the state universities use.)

Off the mainframe, the state operates its entire accounting system, purchasing, payroll personnel information, income tax information, collections information, accounts receivable, tangible property tax data, surface mining information, voter information, prison data, corporation information, vehicle registration, state police files on crime statistics, public assistance programs — eligibility for food stamps, Medicaid, family dependent programs, Job Training Partnership Act.

The list goes on. Long and deep. If it were all on paper, it would certainly fill whole rooms full of file cabinets.

Government information, according to the executive director of Missouri Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting, is becoming more and more computer and less and less paper.

"In the near future, if newspapers want to cover government, they're going to have to access computers," Elliott Jaspin told APME. "The reality is that government is quickly moving information from paper to computer, and that has enormous implications. If newspapers and reporters are computer illiterates, they've got real problems."

"The challenge is to learn enough about computers to gain access to this wealth of information. The opportunity is to revolutionize news-gathering because electronic records give journalists the ability to retrieve and analyze information quickly."

All of those computers storing all of that information in their cells are changing the face and meaning of open records. And undoubtedly, as the government collects a broader profile of each citizen, new concerns will arise about the privacy of an individual.

In a report for APME, Tim McGuire, managing editor of the *Star Tribune*, Minneapolis-St. Paul, outlined some of the issues computer information raises:

~Computer access. Getting access to a computer is not like asking to see the file on a road project. You can't open a drawer, look for the name of the road and pull it out. Pulling out the information means having access to a computer compatible with the one storing the data, and then having software to read it the way you want to read it.

Should reporters have access to the software the government purchased or developed for its computer?

~Privacy. Computers will make it easier for the government to paint a fuller picture of each of us. How to sort out what is public information from what is private will make record-gathering more difficult. Convincing computer operators they can use system security measures to block out private information will also be a battle.

Future battles over open records seem certain because of the history of the state's Open Records Law.

Despite the fact that the law has been on the statute books for 16 years, the state of open records in Kentucky is still appalling.

The Kentucky Post last fall asked Northern Kentucky University and the state Finance and Administration Cabinet for access to bids submitted for new dormitories at Northern. The university said that information had to come out of Frankfort. A spokeswoman for the cabinet not only kept the records secret, she also initially wouldn't tell a

Open meetings, open records



keys to democracy

All of those computers storing all of that information in their cells are changing the face and meaning of open records.

reporter how many bids had been submitted.

This, despite the fact that the bids were for a project at a public university. Until a winner was announced, the records were kept under wraps.

Twice in recent years *The Kentucky Post* has sued the city of Covington because it refused to provide access to information. Twice the courts ruled in our favor.

And in one of the biggest public access cases, the state's three largest newspapers sued the University of Kentucky to review all of the documents the university put together in response to charges the university basketball program had run afoul of in the NCAA.

The suit is before the state Supreme Court to determine whether a public university must unveil information compiled by public employees and consultants paid with public money about recruiting practices of coaches and assistant coaches — who were paid by that public university.

If logic prevails, the university should lose. But it will have won anyway. Three years — or longer — after the documents were turned over to the NCAA, the public will get its first look into much of it.

No one will care much anymore; the information is ancient history, not news. The anger generated by the violations and sentence suffered by the state's most glamorous athletic program has long since simmered into leftover stew.

And why not? The NCAA has handed down its sentence, the basketball team has served almost two-thirds of it, and Rick Pitino has done such a masterful job of transforming a collection of

talented-but-not-superstar players into a Top Ten team that Kentucky fans can only salivate over.

If anything, those ideologues who follow in the train of Jefferson would believe that universities would be leaders in dispensing information rather than concealing it. Obviously, our centers of learning are willing to turn their heads to basic principles of openness when it is to their own selfish advantage.

The General Assembly appointed a task force to discuss changes in the open records and open meetings laws after a proposal failed to make it out of committee during the 1990 session. Part of the discussion during the session focused on computer software.

Despite laws that require openness, people and agencies wanting to hide information are able to find ways around the laws. Reporters and editors can only dream of the stories that could be written if they could hook up a computer that would search through all of the candidate filing reports and find every donation an individual — his wife, his business, his whatever else — had made to a candidate, then hook into another master file and find out how much that individual — his wife, his family, his company — had received through state contracts.

Openness might turn the tide so that government would not be for sale. It might restore some of the confidence voters have in their elected officials.

As long as government insists on hiding information from its citizens, the perception will remain — and rightly so — that something is not on the up and up.

Kentucky views

Editorials from across the commonwealth

Odds & Ends

Licking Valley Courier

Like most weekly newspaper editors, for the past three weeks we've been trying to figure out the Postal Service's new mailing procedures for newspapers. Not only did the postage increase hit us hard in the pocketbook, the new revised postal forms we have to fill out for each mailing of *The Courier* are complicated and inconvenient to use.

The latest edition of the Domestic Mail Manual, which is about the size of a New York City phone book, has all the rules we mailers must follow to get our mail processed.

It's obviously written by the same people who write insurance policies and bicycle assembly instructions, meaning of course that you can't just read it, you have to decipher it. By the time you think you've got it whipped, the Postal Service whips out a revised edition.

The original never-ending story, accompanied by the never-ending rate increase, which, by the way, saw a 25-cent stamp go up to 29 cents.

We would suggest that you write your Congressman to protest the latest hike, but it's probably cheaper to call.

On second thought, don't waste the call. Why should Congress care what a stamp costs? They get to mail their letters free.

Praying for a 'jailhouse lawyer'

Steve Lowery
The Kentucky Standard

The legal folder is over an inch thick. It represents the handiwork of a jailhouse lawyer who doesn't have enough to do. It also includes court briefs and answers from attorneys representing *The Kentucky Standard* — and that adds up to thousands of dollars.

I'm about to add yet another civil summons to the file.

Merton Bond has raised his head again. This time he has sued *The Kentucky Standard* and Circuit Judge Larry Raikes.

In the past he has sued Raikes, *The Kentucky Standard*, the newspaper's attorneys, Dr. James Hedrick and others.

His latest suit states that *The Standard* and Raikes conspired to misrepresent the facts of Bond's legal problems. He claims the newspaper has defamed him and that he has cause to file a libel suit against the newspaper.

He "prays that the court will award him \$100,000 for harm and damages."

I pray that the US Supreme Court will find a way to stifle Bond and all of his kind.

A little background is in order. Bond was convicted in 1983 by a jury in Nelson Circuit Court on seven counts of rape in the first degree and two counts of rape in the second degree. He was sentenced to life imprisonment for each of the counts of first degree rape, and 10 years imprisonment for the two counts of second degree rape. The victims were 12, 10 and 8 years old. The rapes took place in 1983.

Bond was sent to prison. He is still in prison and, if there is any justice, he will remain there till the day he dies.

But he is obviously bored. Since 1988 he has been filing civil suits against nearly anyone who has ever

written or testified about his case.

Each time he files a suit the party who has been sued must obtain an attorney to represent him. Bond does not have to hire an attorney to file suit. All he must do is pay the court clerk a small filing fee.

In essence, he can legally harass anyone who had anything to do with his ultimate incarceration or reported the facts surrounding the rapes that led to his confinement.

Something is wrong here. The state's circuit court system is backlogged if not constipated. There are too few judges to handle all of the legitimate criminal cases and civil suits that are filed.

The system doesn't have time to deal with nuisance suits.

And the public shouldn't have to underwrite Bond's hobby, which is filing civil suits.

Legal scholars will argue that the system must suffer the Merton Bonds of this world if we are to truly have a court system that is fair to everyone.

Perhaps. But Bond and his kind should have to pay the legal fees of the defendants if the civil suits are dismissed or aren't successful. And they should be able to prove to the court that they have the financial means to pay those legal fees — should they lose — before they are allowed to file suit.

I have no doubt that this case will be dismissed, just as all of the rest of Bond's cases have been dismissed.

I have no doubt that it will cost this company a few thousand dollars to deal with this nuisance.

I have no doubt that we haven't heard the last from Merton Bond.

The system is broken. The legal scholars of the nation need to join together

to come up with some reasonable ways to fix the system before it collapses under the weight of legitimate and illegitimate claims made by the Merton Bonds of this world.

Open meetings, open minds

The Daily Independent

Members of the Boyd County Urban County Charter Commission are taking the right approach by promising to conduct the group's business meetings in well-publicized open meetings throughout the county. Getting the input of as many people as possible is the best way for the charter commission to address concerns many have about a single government for Boyd County and to gain support for the idea.

However, for the open meetings to be effective, those attending must have open minds.

When members of an ad hoc committee appointed to explore the possibility of urban county government attempted to have open meetings on the subject a few years ago, they were greeted by mostly hostile crowds. Many of those attending were so adamantly opposed to the idea that they didn't even want to hear any of the possible advantages of a single government for Boyd County.

If those with closed minds on the subject are allowed to dominate the public meetings of the charter commission, little can be accomplished. Instead, we hope those with reservations about merged government will calmly express their concerns so the commission can attempt to address them.

Most of the 24 members of the charter commission realize they face an uphill battle in convincing a majority of county residents that merging Ashland, Catlettsburg and Boyd County governments into one would be advantageous. However, they hope that by being open in their deliberations, they will be able to dispel misconceptions many residents have about urban county government and build support for the idea.

The commission members are volunteers who have agreed to donate a lot of time and effort in hopes of creating a more efficient, more responsive system of government for all people of Boyd County. The commission members deserve a chance to be heard. Instead of rejecting the idea from the start, residents should wait until the commission completes its proposed charter and then base their opinions — on whether urban county government is best for Boyd County — on facts instead of misconceptions.

A censor is a man who knows more than he thinks you ought to.
—Granville Hicks

As scarce as truth is, the supply has always been in excess of the demand.
—Josh Billings

When men are pure, laws are useless; when men are corrupt, laws are broken.
—Benjamin Disraeli

Public's right was at stake

Winchester Sun

Fighting for principle is not always easy. Indeed, it can be extremely complicated on occasion. Certainly that was the case for this newspaper in what turned out to be nearly a year-long quest for information it believed should be public.

It all started on Feb. 19, 1990, when a suit brought against the City of Winchester by former firefighter Kenneth Blair was settled out of court for an undisclosed amount, with both sides claiming they were bound to confidentiality.

The Sun immediately submitted a formal request for details of the settlement, noting in the request that there was legal precedence for such disclosure. When that request was denied, this newspaper promptly wrote the Attorney General asking for a legal interpretation.

Specifically, we asked if documents relating to the case were not public record, even if retained by a special attorney employed to represent the city, and if the city was not bound to disclose details of the settlement paid by its insurance company since fees for that insurance were paid from public funds.

On April 9, 1990, after hearing the city's view, an Attorney General's opinion was issued stating that the city failed to act consistent with Kentucky Open Records provisions in denying *The Sun's* request to see the settlement. That opinion noted that settlements of a civil suit by a city are subject to full public disclosure. Even if in the possession of an attorney for the city, those records are the record of the city, the opinion stated.

Unfortunately, the Attorney General's opinion failed to resolve the impasse that had developed and continued efforts to obtain details of the settlement proved unsuccessful. At that point, *The Sun* — for the first time in its 112-plus years — went to court to obtain information it sought.

The decision to sue the city was not something we entered into easily or lightly. We have endeavored through all the years of our existence to maintain a good, albeit occasionally adversarial, relationship with all agencies of local government. We endeavor daily to report the news of our community because the public has a right to know what government is doing to and for it. We are merely the instrument whereby

the public obtains its information.

In the final analysis, it boiled down to a matter of public trust, and legal action was filed in Clark Circuit Court, asking that the city be compelled to disclose the details of the settlement. The decision to sue was made in late May. The first of several rounds of legal paperwork was filed in June.

Finally, on Jan. 31, at an evidentiary court hearing, the city was instructed to request a copy of the settlement from its special attorney and to provide that information to *The Sun* as a public document. The information was released to the newspaper on Feb. 15, nearly a year after it was first requested.

Was it worth the effort? Possibly not, if you attempt to assign a monetary value to the countless hours of work expended to obtain what ultimately amounted to a two- and one-half-page document, or weigh all the legal fees involved by both sides.

But there are some things on which no price can be fixed. And at the top of any list in our book is the constitutional guarantee of the public's First Amendment rights, for which we'll do battle wherever and whenever called upon!

Oops, where did those rights go?

By Anita Sharpe

(From Editor's Forum, Georgia Press Association, Winter 1991)

On the eve of its 200th birthday, the US Bill of Rights was nowhere to be found when Pennsylvania state officials began to hunt for their copy.

"It could have been lost any time in the last two centuries," State Archivist Harry Whipkey told Knight-Ridder Newspapers.

Perhaps inanimate objects really do have minds of their own, as author Tom Robbins suggests in his latest novel. Perhaps the Bill of Rights disappeared because it knew it isn't wanted or appreciated right now.

Of the 10 constitutional amendments framing the Bill of Rights, the cornerstone is the First Amendment: freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

Freedom of speech — the basic right to say what you think — is in a sorry state today, and you don't have to work for a newspaper to see it. (Although if most people really knew how much their right to know has been crippled by court rulings against newspapers, they would be flabbergasted and infuriated over how much information they are being denied.)

Congress isn't the villain robbing Americans of their basic freedom of speech. So far, there is no law holding a club over US citizens telling them they can't speak up and say what's on their minds.

Rather, the threat is much more subtle and insidious. Some of it is social

forces, much of it is corporate pressure. In the end, though, people are doing it to themselves.

I wonder what the authors of the Bill of Rights would think about people who can't mention who they supported for governor because The Company backed the other candidate and speaking out would hurt their chances of promotion.

I wonder what the authors of the Bill of Rights would think of employees of Charter Medical Corp. getting fired for publicly discussing conditions at the company.

I wonder what the authors of the Bill of Rights would think about Southern Baptists who disagree with the church's current fundamentalist direction but refuse to speak up because it might alienate neighbors and business associates. And I wonder what the authors of the Bill of Rights would say about people who chuckle and pretend to like jokes about blacks and gays because to do otherwise would be rocking the boat.

But keeping quiet is virtually the same as an endorsement.

After a while, after years of measuring words and keeping quiet, the tradition of upholding the status quo passes into Common Law. It becomes so accepted that anyone who dares break the

tradition is branded a kook or a criminal.

There is no constitutional protection against social and corporate pressure. But every time we bite our tongue and back away from our beliefs, we contribute to the demise of the basic rights this country was founded on.

"I think we're going to see a time when the Russians have a lot more freedom than Americans," the most conservative person I know said recently.

She may be right. Those who have lived under communist or fascist oppression know what it means to spend their lives weighing their words and looking over their shoulders. They know that the freedom to speak the truth is the basis for all freedoms and the primary right worth fighting for.

America doesn't need an Iron Curtain keeping out alien ideas or government spies monitoring our conversations; too many of our citizens are willing to go quietly, to stop speaking the truth and standing up for their beliefs on their own accord.

Good luck, Pennsylvania, I hope you find the Bill of Rights. I hope we all do.

(Sharpe is the editor of the Atlanta Business Chronicle.)

Put public in public meetings

George Ferrell

Jackson County Sun

There are two types of events we cover routinely here at the paper. One is public meetings. The other is sports events.

On the one hand, public attendance at open meetings is often scarce.

On the other hand, go to a ball game and there will be dozens, if not hundreds, of people in the stands.

This symbolizes the fact that people are more interested in the recreation provided in a community than they are in the civic nature of their community.

Oh, sure, I guess I've been to a few school boards where there have been over 100 people in attendance. But I've also been to a few sporting events that captured the interest of more than 10,000 people, willing to pay to get in and watch.

They aren't interested in and don't want to take the time to attend what they perceive is a long, boring meeting.

But give these same folks a ball game, everything from JCHS to UK, and they'll turn out.

... it would be nice if more people went out to see the way their government handles the business of the community. Sure, it's often dry and dull, but it's also quite often very instructive.

I've reported meetings in three counties. I've sat through midnight school boards, city commissions, health boards, fiscal courts, planning and zoning commissions.

Over the years, I've learned a lot about the fabric of communities from attending their public meetings.

Some meetings are held without the public in attendance. Others draw large

crowds when it's something that could directly impact (them).

... the public plays an important role in the process of public meetings. Were it not for the watchful eye of the public, and of journalists, meetings would be no more than a farce. If government bodies and ruling boards could act behind closed doors, it would stifle the process of democracy — the public is a needed part of the process.

While we wouldn't want voting and attendance at meetings to be compulsory, I do believe the public is neglecting a fundamental right by their lack of interest.

It is the right to see their government officials in action. That's one thing that should be done out in the open so that everybody is free to see the process of government work.

There's another reason why the people should attend — so they can evaluate their elected leaders and give them feedback.

The next time you want to do something really different, find out when a public meeting is and take the time and trouble to attend.

It may be a fiscal court (the second Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m.), a school board (the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.), the Annville Council (first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.) or any other public meeting you might be interested in.

If you do go, you might learn something about how your government functions in the community.

Elected officials only improve when challenged by the public. Take the time to come out for a meeting.

One small step for the public, one big step for government.

The Kentucky Press, April 1991, Page 9

Caesar at the forum

Scott Perry

The Floyd County Times

March Madness.

It isn't just for basketball anymore.

Crazy things happen in March, and they have for a long time.

Julius Caesar was, you'll remember, slain on the Ides of March by members of the Roman Senate who, rumor has it, were upset that Caesar was taking all the credit for education reform, economic development and new bridges and roads.

The oddest of March oddities, however, comes once every four years. That's when candidates for governor begin their assaults on state voters and voters, in turn, seek answers to truly meaningful questions.

For example: Is Dr. Floyd rich or Poore and did he change his style of dress to prove that clothes do, indeed, make the man?

What kind of parents would name their son Brereton?

Do you pronounce Scotty's name BAYsler or BAZZler?

What kind of parents would name their son Gaitwood?

What will Republicans, already distraught at having to make a choice in the primary, do when they discover that their choice is either Larry or Larry?

What kind of parents would name their son Martha?

Unfortunately, March Madness tends to carry through May in these cases. Seems like it would be more appropriate to set election day a little earlier.

April 1, perhaps?

Quote of the week:

"I don't think a public forum is the proper place to try a disciplinary case against an attorney." — David Yewell.

Yewell is president of the Kentucky Bar Association and, you guessed it, an attorney. The comment was made in reference to a possible challenge of a state secrecy rule which gags public disclosure or discussion of complaints against lawyers.

In Florida, a federal judge threw out that state's gag rule, contending it violated the First Amendment and that protecting lawyers' reputations did not justify suppression of free speech.

Hip, hip, hooray. Mark one up for Average Joe who has no comfort of secrecy under laws which are, more often than not, written by lawyers, enforced by lawyers and adjudicated by lawyers.

What, pray tell, makes a lawyer's reputation any more sacred than a plumber's?

Let there be light.

The First Amendment, wrote Judge Learned Hand in 1943, "presupposes that right conclusions are more likely to be gathered out of a multitude of tongues, than through any kind of authoritative selection. To many this is, and always will be, folly, but we have staked upon it our all." Quoted by Judge Gilbert S. Merritt, 6th US Circuit Court of Appeals, in *presstime*.

"Most newspaper writing is extremely dull, probably because too many college graduates have chosen journalism over Wall Street law and would rather order a last meal than be caught with a cliché.

"In their heyday, most American papers were read by a not terribly literate population which didn't mind a cliché as long as it produced an image with some juice.

"Cliche-ridden journalism of the past produced images in the reader's mind by seamlessly stringing together a lot of familiar phrases. Now, newspapers have surrendered images to TV, which strings together the same tired old pictures again and again: the fire, the body bag, cars skidding in blizzard, scattered airplane wreckage, president arriving at airports, president entering helicopter. What tired clichés these all are; yet, Americans say it's their favorite way to get the news.

"Hackneyed treatment of trivial events is what fetches the crowd. Newspapers have abandoned their great hack tradition."

—Russell Baker in his syndicated column, Jan. 17, 1991

By Pam Shingler
KPA News Bureau Director

A few weeks ago I read the name of the man who's credited with making the infamous statement about the two things you don't want to watch being made — sausage and laws. I made a mental note of his name and meant to remember it, but, as with many of my mental notes, I didn't.

The legislative special session still fresh in my mind, I want to give that man credit. I can only imagine that seeing sausage being made is stomach-turning. Now having seen laws being made, up close and daily for six weeks, I understand the comparison.

I've wondered how Kentucky voters would react if they could see their laws being made. Sure, a fraction of voters watched the delayed telecast on KET, but it's simply not the same as being there. I suspect that if all the voters could see the proceedings up close (assuming they care), they'd make massive changes next election day.

Although members of the media are allowed choice seats at the front of the house and senate chambers, I chose to sit in the gallery. I couldn't see all the bodies from there, but I could get a broader overview, especially in the larger chamber.

From the gallery of the house, I witnessed the cacophony — a word that actually *sounds* like what takes place. Think of a down home auction house. Better yet, think of a rowdy saloon.

The house members are demonstrative. A lot of physical touching goes on — back slapping, knee patting, shoulder gripping, acceptable hugs. This is clearly a man's place. The atmosphere is frisky, bombastic, aggressive, sometimes crude.

From the gallery, I watched the house members walk around and talk to their colleagues during bill debates. I watched as some reached over and pushed the voting buttons for their absent seatmates. I watched men in their best suits boo and hiss and grunt at fellow members who tried to interrupt the revelry with seriousness.

I listened to their attempts to out-shout each other in voice votes and mulled over, many times, how the speaker could tell that the ayes outnumbered the nays. Loudness often seemed the deciding factor.

In the gallery, I sat near high paid lobbyists with designer briefcases who told jokes about these elected officials and discussed their nightly reception rounds.

Many days, I was surrounded by flocks of school children, bused in from the far reaches of the commonwealth to see democracy in action. I wondered if they were surprised that adults in business suits behaved this way, and I wondered what they would tell their classmates back home.

A look back at the special session

What the students saw as often as not were five minutes of bill discussion and 15 to 30 minutes of resolutions, observing deaths, births, anniversaries of members' constituents. By the end of the six weeks, these "simple" resolutions took up far more pages in the daily Legislative Record than the complex bills.

The senate, smaller by almost two-thirds, presented a study in contrasts. A much more subdued crowd, the senators seemed to work hard to maintain the decorum of their rank as members of the upper house. They carried with them an air of personage, not so much in a haughty manner as one of tempered experience. Even the freshmen senators exuded the aura.

From the senate gallery, I saw little of the raucous atmosphere of the lower house, perhaps simply because of the smaller number, the smaller room, the smaller gallery. The oral roll call votes, as opposed to electronic votes in the house, added to the dignity.

The contrasting decorum, however, led to the very strong sense that battles over issues and the language of specific bills had already taken place before the gavel opened the daily session. Even with many of the public debates, the sense was that the senators had already sat through the rehearsals for the floor performances.

On the couple of occasions that the two houses met in joint session, the differences were obvious. The senators came into the larger chamber. Entering, they frequently stroked their ties as they shook hands with house colleagues whose body language suggested deference.

The senators' suits were finer, their shoes shinier, their smiles more refined. They seemed to realize that in a world of equals they are more so. Interestingly, their presence affected the

bearing of the representatives, making the house members more subdued than normal.

The hostility between the governor and the legislators, particularly in the house, was open and armed. The really sad part is that neither side is blameless in the ongoing war, neither merits a badge for compromise, civility or adult behavior. The faster the accusations fly, the more they boomerang. The darts from both sides return and, in doing so, prove their point. The taxpayer — the mommy to whom both children cry — is the one left hurting.

By the end of the first week of the special session, I felt like I'd been watching sausage made. I'd walk down from the capitol feeling as if I'd seen the grizzliest part of the hog. The fat and blood of the innards fouled my mood.

Into the second week, I began to enjoy the show, like a professional wrestling fan or someone who's seen The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 20 times.

During the fifth week, from my gallery seat I witnessed a beautiful scene, one in which I saw the system work in civics textbook precision, one that made the whole session worthwhile.

The senators were almost evenly divided over an amendment to the DUI bill. For a brief 30 minutes or so, they seemed to discard the rehearsals. The speeches, pro and con, appeared to be full of honest emotion and thoughtful opinion, as well as dark political realities.

The vote was close, not wildly lopsided as it was in almost every other case in both houses. And though the average citizen in me would have liked the losers to have won, I was elated because I had seen the system working at its best, as it's set down on paper to work. For a time, those people we elected were taking an issue seriously and carefully; they did not seem to be playing games or using their office and the taxpayers' money for their own egos — something that can't be said about the rest of the session.

That 30 minutes was worth the price of admission. I needed to see it. I'm glad I didn't miss it.

Miraculously, a couple of decent pieces of legislation came out of the million-dollar session. They're not perfect and they'll likely experience some changes next time around.

Having seen the legislature in session, I now have some questions about us. Perhaps we in the media are too gentle when we report on lawmaking — at whatever level. I tried to read many of the stories written about the session, and most all were concerned with results, lacking the stench of the process — the tomfoolery, the time wasting, the inattentiveness, the cavalier attitudes, the ego tripping (not with all legislators, but definitely with more than is comfortable).

I wonder if we don't do readers a disservice when we concentrate only on the outcome and neglect the seaminess of how it was reached. By homing in on the result, we sometimes make heroes out of people who don't deserve to be, whether US Senators or county magistrates.

And we sometimes make the law appear to be the end of efficiency and planning, when it's as often as not an accident or a miracle.

Too often, we give the readers the sausage in the shiny wrapper and don't tell them about the intestines and tongues and hairs and spit that sometimes go into the product. Is that really giving our readers, the voters, an accurate basis for future decisions?

Democracy substitutes election
by the incompetent many for appointment
by the corrupt few.
—George Bernard Shaw

Worth sharing

KPA executive director David T. Thompson received this letter from consultant Gene Chamberlin, who conducted a seminar in Lexington, prior to the winter convention. It's worth sharing because it contains some positive words about KPA members.

Dear David:

Thank you for your hospitality while we were in Kentucky. . .

I was impressed with your publishers — first impressed that so many attended this presentation, and second that so many attended this presentation who did not attend the convention. You obviously have many publishers who care about newspapering and improving their skills. The size of the group reduced participation, but still there was an impressive amount of participation by those attending. Margy and I also enjoyed visiting with your publishers during the rest of our stay — great people!

We were concerned that going to war would put a real damper on this seminar, and perhaps on your entire convention. You and your publishers seemed to handle that well, too.

Please share with me any reaction you had from publishers who attended this session. Also let me know if there are any requests from any of them — I would be happy to provide more handouts or information to any who may have had special requests.

Best regards,
Gene Chamberlin

Got a legal ?
Call the KPA FOI Hotline.
502/589-5235

On tap . . .

- April 1-5: ANPA, Web Offset Newspaper Press Operation, 703/648-1319.
- April 5-7: Mid-America Press Institute, Improving Opinion Pages: 618/453-3281.
- April 6-10: ANPA/ICMA/NPRA Leadership in Circulation Department: 703/648-1319.
- April 14-17: ANPA, Sr. Management.
- April 14-17: SNPA Copy Editing. 404/256-0444.
- April 14-20: API, Sports Editors. 703/620-3611.
- April 15-19: ANPA, Desktop Newspaper Publishing.
- April 18-19: **KPA Advertising Seminar, Galt House East, Louisville.**
- April 21-24: ANPA, Compensation and Benefits.
- April 21-26: API, Exec. Development Program (under 75,000).
- April 28-May 1: SNPA, 1990 Census.
- April 28-May 3: API, Management of the Weekly.
- April 28-May 3: API Ad Execs, 75,000+.
- April 29-May 3: ANPA, Management Intro to Newspaper Technology.
- May 5-11: API, Managing Editors, 75,000+.
- May 12-15: SNPA, Layout, Design Graphics.
- May 13-17: ANPA, Management Development.
- May 13-17: ANPA Newspaper Quality Control.
- May 15-17: ANPA Foundation Conference on Newspaper in Education & Literacy.
- May 19-21: SNPA, Editorial Clinic.
- May 19-21: ANPA Multicultural Management.

Use the Frankfort Connection

The KPA News Bureau can be your bureau in the state capital.

- *Covering news conference or news events that affect your area.
- *Gathering information that will round out your locally based story.
- *Getting quotes or interviews with state officials about issues involving your coverage area.
- *Covering public hearings of agencies that consider or decide on projects in your area.
- *Other assignments that you can dream up that apply to state government.

KPA News Bureau
332 Capitol Ave.
Frankfort, KY 40601

1-800-866-1431

Income tax returns are the most imaginative fiction being written today.
—Herman Wouk

Welcome, Associates

A number of individuals and organizations have joined the KPA Associates Division since the publication of the 1991 Directory in December. Welcome to:

- Faith Miller Cole, 1617 Kensington Way, Lexington 40513;
- General Telephone of Kentucky, PO Box 1650, Lexington 40592;
- Pam Vest, KY Cabinet for Workforce Development, Capital Plaza Tower, 12th Floor, Frankfort 40601;
- Del Carter/Jenny Stewart, Meridian Advertising, 444 East Main, Lexington 40507;
- David Keller, Kentucky School Boards Association, Rt. 3, Box 96A, Frankfort 40601;
- Lacy Miller Marketing, 431 S. Broadway, Lexington 40515;
- John Blomberg/Phyllis Liebman, IBM, 740 New Circle Rd., Lexington 40511.

Taking recycling message to the younger generation

In line with the recycling trend, papers across the country have been promoting recycling of newsprint in the schools. Some have shared how to make recycled paper with teachers and parents, and others have seized a promotion opportunity with newspaper personnel giving demonstrations in classrooms.

Here's a common formula:

*Chop or tear newspaper into small bits.

*Soak the bits in water. Rinsing the mixture several times washes out most of the ink and makes a white product.

*Chop paper by beating it with an egg beater or blending about one-quarter paper and three-quarters water in a blender. The result is called "slurry."

*Put the chopped paper in a tub with more water. Then scoop out a layer of slurry on a picture frame covered with window screening. An empty frame on top will keep the slurry in place.

*Pat water out of the slurry, remove the top frame and cover the slurry with a pad of several sheets of newspaper. Quickly turn the paper and slurry over onto a flat surface.

*Remove the wire-covered frame.

*Put another paper pad on top of the mixture, and press the paper with an iron.

*Turn the paper over and iron it on the other side.

*As the pads dry out, replace them with dry pads.

*As the paper dries, peel away the pads and iron directly on the paper.

*Voila! You have new paper, which can be used for art projects or for writing.

Courting the customer

Like any retail operation, newspapers have to keep the customer coming back. And every facet of the business is involved in good customer relations.

Michael Davis, editor/publisher of the Hartford (Conn.) Courant is quoted as defining good service as:

**A dry paper on the porch, on time.
**A reporter answering the telephone quickly and courteously.

**Coverage of a town zoning meeting or a high school football game.
**Color photos always in register.

**A reader's complaint that gets a quick, fair hearing.

Gary Couture, in the North Dakota Newspaper Association Bulletin, suggests that, to provide quality service, publishers do what reporters do: Listen and actively seek out information. He proposes hiring a readers' representative, getting a toll-free complaint line and commissioning surveys to find out what readers want.

Among other suggestions:
**Don't dismiss complaints or questions with "It's our policy." Couture calls that the parental equivalent of "Because I say so." Explain.

**Respond at the highest management level.

**Don't just take calls. Make them. Return calls from customers who missed a paper or have a comment.

Quality service, Couture says, is its own reward. It pays off in increased circulation, better sales, cost effectiveness and profit.

The trouble with using experience as a guide is that the final exam often comes first, and then the lesson.
—Unknown

Databank

Student BOR ads

International Newspaper Advertising and Marketing Executives is giving complimentary copies of winning ads in its collegiate contest on the Bill of Rights. Specifically, ads address what life would be like without the BOR, 200 years old this year. For a copy and a list of revenue-producing ideas for using the ads, call Lynn Erickson at 703/648-1168.

Getting the competition

Selling Against Broadcast is the title of an INAME report presenting guidelines on selling against broadcast and developing a media mix ad campaign. Cost is \$3 each. Call INAME at 703/648-1233.

Productivity manuals

INAME has produced three training program manuals to assist in increasing sales productivity. *Successful Newspaper Telemarketing* is a 200-page manual whose title says it. *Retail Marketing* discusses changes in retailing and their impact on how newspapers sell and serve. *Customer Service* is a guide to recruiting and retaining customers. Call INAME at 703/648-1172.

Career guide

Suburban Newspapers Association has published a career guide, *Newspaper: What's in it for Me?* with first person accounts of newspaper work. Single copies are free; 2-50 copies, \$2.25 each. Contact Newspaper Careers Project, 1970 Chain Bridge Rd., McLean, VA 22109; phone 703/648-1000.

Save money!

265 *Money-saving ideas for your newspaper* is an accumulation of the experience of Ken Bronson, Stauffer Communications, Topeka, Kan. Covered are general management, newsprint, newsroom, advertising, circulation, distribution, camera, composing, production and maintenance. Cost is \$10. Inland Press Association, 777 Busse Highway,

Park Ridge, IL 60068; phone 312/696-1140.

Behind the mask

Iowa State University Press has released *The Newsprint Mask: The Tradition of the Fictional Journalist in America*, which traces the development of journalists' pseudonyms from Ben Franklin's "Silence Dogood" to the present. Author is Welford Dunaway Taylor; cost is \$25.95. Call Beverly Fisher, ISU Press ad/publicity manager, at 515/292-0155.

Careers & scholarships

The Dow Jones Newspaper Fund has published its 1991 Journalism Career and Scholarship Guide listing more than 300 collegiate journalism programs and more than \$3 million in scholarships. The 180-page book has a section on opportunities in journalism and one on internships, fellowships and special training programs. A single copy is free, with additional copies available at \$3 each. Contact PO Box 300, Princeton, NJ 08543-0300; phone 609/452-2820.

Controlling comp costs

Kentucky Chamber of Commerce is offering *How to Control Your Workers' Compensation Costs*, tips and techniques that apply to any type of business and workers' comp program. Cost to Chamber members, including sales tax and postage, is \$77.15. Call Martha Coleman at 502/695-4700.

Dealing with independent contractors

Preserving the Independent Contractor Status of Newspaper Distributors and Free-Lancers is a new booklet from American Newspaper Publishers Association. It deals with termination, compensation, fringe benefits, equipment, supplies, submission of material and controlling journalists' work. For a copy, write ANPA Human Resources Department, The Newspaper Center, Box 17407, Dulles Airport, Washington, DC 20041.

More answers to more postal questions

By Max Heath

Several questions surrounding the implementation of the Feb. 3 postal rates have been clarified. Recently, a number of NNA postal committee members and NNA staff met with Postal Service headquarters staff in an effort to clarify some of these issues.

Second Class

(1) Exceptional dispatch/additional entry under new DMM 424.712.

As a result of an NNA Postal Committee Task Force meeting Feb. 27 in USPS headquarters, relief is on the way. Ernie Collins of Classification (202/268-5316) said his staff will look at additional entry with some form of Centralized Postage Payment at additional entry or original entry post offices, with verification at the delivery unit (as in exceptional dispatch).

NNA argues, and classification had agreed in December, that exceptional dispatch papers qualified for DU discount since transportation cost was borne by the mailer. Final regs seemed to allow the DU discount only for additional entry papers.

(2) Pay one \$75 fee for ALL additional entries.

Under present regs, required additional entries for DU discount, there was for a short time a question about the payment of multiple \$75 fees. USPS has clarified that mailers must only pay ONE \$75 FEE PER APPLICATION, not per entry. All desired additional entries must be listed on one Form 3510.

(3) Walk-Sequence eligibility on rural routes.

New DMM 424.731c states "each piece addressed for delivery on a rural or highway contract route must bear a simplified address" to earn the walk sequencing rate.

Many local postmasters have ignored this piece of nonsense, which is also being changed by Collins' staff to read "either a complete address or simplified address." It came about due to the fact that carriers are paid a higher rate for complete-addressed mail than simplified address mail, such as "Postal Patron."

(4) Walk-Sequencing by computer disk.

Despite what's heard from some field sites, Walk-Sequencing services are not yet available from USPS on computer diskette or tape.

Jack Thompson of HQ Address Information Systems (202/268-3522) told NNA Feb. 27 that only sequencing of cards (or computer printouts, should local offices prefer) is available. In October DSF (Delivery Sequence File) services will be available through licenses in private industry.

(5) Charge for Walk-Sequencing; 90 percent household requirement.

There is no charge for Walk-Sequencing service, nor must you have 90 percent household saturation, as some newspapers have been told. Garey West of HQ Address Information Systems (202/268-5790) verified Feb. 7 that DMM 946.3, Sequencing of Address Cards, should be taken in its own context. The 90 percent requirement is for correcting undeliverable or incorrect addresses (see DMM 946.5). DMM 946.3 also prescribes 15 days turnaround. West reminds that you may be charged 15 cents for any cards removed as incorrect or undeliverable, but only if returned to you BUNDLED SEPARATELY.

(6) Use whole number on Nonadvertising Percentage.

Both mailers and postal workers have been confused by the new computation for "Nonadv. Percentage" at Line 29 out-of-county. The computation from Line 10 on the old 3541 has indeed been simplified. Common sense computation reveals you must use a whole number (42, for example) rather than a fraction (.42). The decimal has been built in, multiplying now by .0005 rather than the old .04. Substantial savings here if done right. If not, have it recomputed and the difference refunded.

Third Class

(1) Plant-Verified Drop Shipment can be simplified.

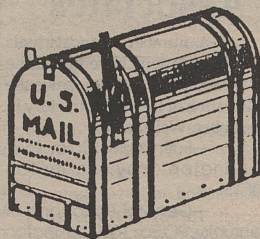
The stickiest problem facing shopper mailers so far has been the detailed provisions of new DMM 664, Plant-Verified Shipment Postage Payment System.

Some mailers are being told they must follow the stringent requirements to the letter, building a secure area with two scales, phone, etc., inside their plant. Others are being told that their volume is too small to qualify for this service.

Some are being granted the option of verification inside the post office of main entry, with mailer hauling to other offices via sealed truck (sometimes waived). Others are denied this option.

Leo Raymond, HQ Classification Specialist (202/268-5199) who wrote the regs, thinks local officials "should use their heads." (That's a novel approach.) He advises that postal workers can come out with seals and paperwork and verify without setting up a complete, secure DMU (Detached Mailing Unit) for small mailers like weekly shoppers, or verify in post office.

NNA has advised HQ that until they clarify that point in the regulations, or otherwise simplify these regs so burdensome on small mailers like NNA members, troubles will persist. I hope



... BULK RATE, US POSTAL PAID, John Doe Company). See DMM 145.35 for authority. Don't even think about printing various permit numbers and making plate changes!

(5) 125-piece Walk Sequence Discount.

No word yet on the registration of the 125-piece Walk-Sequence Discount in 3rd-class as recommended by the PRC. As NNA Executive Vice President Dave Simonson has pointed out, reconsideration of this rate case should be complete in another month or so. NNA is working hard on this one, along with American Newspaper Publishers Association and third class associations.

for relief on such points in the next 30 days or so.

If you have more than 2-3 offices to go to, you should look either at SCF entry (half-cent per piece more than DDU) or hauling to DDUs under some form of DMM 664.

(2) 200-piece minimum at DU offices.

Under both old and new regs, the minimum 3rd-class mailing is 200 pieces or 50 pounds. Shoppers qualified when mailing at one office. Unfortunately, enforcement of this rule at some small offices with less than 200 deliveries prohibits DDU rate on Plant-Verified mail.

I contend since the mail was verified at a central location and met the qualifications, one should not be denied DDU downstream based on minimum quantities after it is split up. Bob Mitchell of Rates seemed to agree with this assertion during NNA's Feb. 27 meeting. We hope for clarification fixing this problem.

(3) Rate error on 3602-R

The piece charge rate of .028 in Section D (pound rate section) under DDU Entry, Carrier Route, SHOULD BE .018. If you've paid postage at the higher rate, ask for a recomputation and refund to your account.

(4) Company Permit usage.

When holding permits at two or more offices, you may use a Company Permit in place of permit numbers. See DMM 145.41c (upper right for a sample

Sealed trucks for 3C mailings

By Max Heath

Effective Wednesday, March 12, until Sept. 30, 1991, the provision in the new DMM 664.12(C) requiring a sealed truck for transportation of 3C mail that has been plant-verified HAS BEEN SUSPENDED.

Word will be filtering down through the Postal Service chain of command in due course. Anyone wanting to change now can suggest local postal officials call HQ Mail Classification at 202/268-5316 for Ernie Collins or any available specialist to verify this.

This change is in part a result of a meeting of NNA Postal Committee leadership Feb. 27 at HQ in which I represented your views on such difficulties. We hope for still more changes, including relief on the exceptional dispatch recognition for DU entry in 2C, the 125-piece W/S discount in 3C, and others.

Oh, no, not again

Advertising Age reports that federal budget problems may force the Postal Service to ask for another rate increase in mid-1992, rather than in 1994 as had been predicted.

The President's budget calls for the USPS to repay \$1 billion, representing interest on unpaid health and retirement benefits, over five years starting next year.

The budget calls for another \$378 million in cuts for programs that subsidize rates for certain magazines, newspapers and nonprofit mailings.

(From Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers' Association)

Attention, Editors & Publishers!

Please share your copy of *The Kentucky Press* with your staff members.

Or... let us know and we'll add your top editors and managers to our mailing list.

Communicating is **always** worth the time and effort.

Review: *Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media*

Book condemns media's alleged pro-establishment stance

By Randy Patrick
Richmond Register

"As a rule, we are, if not handmaidens of the establishment, at least blood brothers of the establishment."

—ABC's Sam Donaldson

Remember Lou Grant?

Ed Asner played the part of the tough city editor in the 1980s TV drama about the Los Angeles Tribune, a fictitious newspaper owned by a wealthy widow.

Lou was an editor from the old school. He was independent and irreverent, and he made sure his staff reported all the news that was fit to print, without fear or favor.

When I was a journalism student, Lou was my idol. He exemplified what a newspaperman should be. I think I learned as much from him as I did from my teachers.

I met Asner last year in Managua while writing about the Nicaraguan election. He said he was there to make sure the reporters told the truth. He grinned when he said it, but he was half serious. He had reason to be cynical about the media. After five years as Lou Grant, he was allegedly pulled off the air because of his views on Nicaragua.

Asner's fate is cited by Martin A. Lee and Norman Solomon in their new book, *Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media*, as an example of how money and politics shape today's mass media.

The authors contend that, far from playing the adversarial role, the media work to "keep legitimizing the country's most powerful institutions."

The problem, they say, lies mainly with the "corporate zeitgeist" that dominates the media. Conscientious owners like the Trib's "Mrs. Pyncheon" have become rare. Most daily newspapers are now owned by huge chains that are more concerned with making money than serving the public. This attitude is even more prevalent in broadcast media, which get almost 100 percent of their income from advertising.

The authors say that corporate censorship in television is pervasive. Advertisers believe that, since they "foot the bill, they are entitled to call the shots."

Journalism has traditionally been thought of as a profession, but it has become a business. Many news managers are no longer protectors of the public trust, but marketers of "infotainment," the authors believe.

"Stuffed with celebrity gossip and other bite-sized light items, the innards of many newspapers largely resemble fluffy bon-bons," the authors write.

Some surveys indicate that a paper's quality usually declines when it

is purchased by a chain. So does its independence, although there are exceptions. Some companies allow local control over editorial decisions, but others dictate even which candidates their papers endorse.

"Self-serving myths about the Free Press conjure up images of a journalistic Superman, ready to battle for truth, justice and the American way. But the reality is much closer to Clark Kent..."

"Concentrated power over public information is inherently anti-democratic," says Ben Bagdikian, former dean of Berkeley's School of Journalism. "If a nation has narrowly controlled information, it will have narrowly controlled politics."

Solomon and Lee present convincing evidence that government does control information to a large extent. They found that 78 percent of stories surveyed in the Washington Post and the New York Times come from official sources. The Pentagon alone employs 3,000 people to put its "spin" on the news. So passive is the press that, when reporters look for facts on their own, it is given a special name, investigative reporting.

Careful not to offend "the powers that be," publishers often discourage enterprising journalism.

In the 1980s, Robert Parry and Brian Barger of the Associated Press were the first mainstream reporters to expose the contra arms network's drug trafficking. AP sat on the story until the Miami Herald broke it, according to Solomon and Lee.

"Self-serving myths about the Free Press conjure up images of a journalistic Superman, ready to battle for truth, justice and the American way. But the reality is much closer to Clark Kent, the mild-mannered reporter, who dutifully does what his boss wants," the authors write.

Most Americans think of propaganda as something practiced by other countries. But in 1986, Newsweek learned that reports about a Libyan terrorist plot in the US were the result of a government disinformation campaign.

More than 20 years after Spiro Agnew's attack on the press, "the myth of the 'liberal media' endures," the authors say.

In 1985, a survey by the Los Angeles Times showed that journalists were significantly more conservative than the general public.

Since 1932, every Republican candidate for president except (Barry

Goldwater has won a majority of the endorsements of daily newspapers.

The conservative bias also shows in the way the press covers events, the writers contend. In the late 1980s, a Soviet coal strike was front page news in the US, but the huge Pittston coal strike in Appalachia hardly got noticed.

Even the language of the press indicates a rightward tilt. For years, we read about the "communist" government of Nicaragua, but never about the "fascist" regime of Guatemala.

The book points out that the group Accuracy in Media, which claims the press has a liberal bias, is also misnamed. It is funded by large corporate interests to hound independent journalists.

"Journalists are correct to see it as a badge of honor if AIM or similar groups attack them," says Jeff Cohen, founder of FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting).

What hope is there for a more independent press? Solomon and Lee say that the ultimate solution lies in reducing the power of corporations that own the media. They suggest adherence to the fairness doctrine and strict enforcement of antitrust laws that would require a company like General Electric to divest itself of NBC or force the breakup of monopolistic newspaper chains. But that won't happen "unless a broadbased democracy movement

emerges in the US on a scale comparable to recent popular upheavals in China and Eastern Europe," they argue.

People can, however, have some effect on the media by becoming more critical consumers of information. The authors recommend that people read alternative publications, such as The Nation or In These Times, in addition to getting their news from the mainstream press. They also urge them to pressure their local newspapers and radio stations to offer more balanced presentation of news and opinions.

I would add that journalists can also make a difference by remaining faithful to the ideals and ethics of their profession. What the press needs now is reporters and editors who have the courage to take a stand for what's right, and who won't bow down to the corporate hierarchy.

What it needs is more Lou Grants.

Unreliable Sources: A Guide to Detecting Bias in News Media. Martin A. Lee and Norman Solomon. Carol Publishing Group, New York, NY, 1990. ISBN: 0-8184-0521-X. \$19.95

—Editor's Note: What do you think? Do you have a reaction to reporter Patrick's review or to the content of the book? Write it down and send it to Pam Shingler, Editor, The Kentucky Press, KPA, 332 Capitol Ave., Frankfort 40601.

Idea exchange

Honor volunteers

Each year the Telegraph Journal and Evening Times Globe in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, publishes a special section in honor of community volunteers and volunteer organizations. Called "Thank You, Volunteers," the 20-page tab carries profiles on individuals and organization activities. Greeting ads come from the organizations and businesses that regularly support them. Businesses can also salute their employees who are volunteers.

Grow your own employees

The Saginaw (Mich.) News has an effective program for recruiting long-term employees from the local area, particularly minorities. Using a bank of "talent scouts," made up of teachers and other community leaders, the paper targets youngsters who are "curious, good with words, aggressive in their questioning and presentable in demeanor." Depending on their age, the paper's staff acquaints them with the paper and its people, sets them up with good role models and arranges advice from college counselors. The paper

provides, "at a minimum:" (1) Shadowing opportunities for elementary school students to see firsthand what newspaper work is like; (2) A longer-term mentoring arrangement from seventh grade through college; (3) An annual competition for a paying clerkship for a high school senior or first-year college student; (4) Scholarship-internship opportunities.

Better communication

Despite the public goals of a newspaper, in-house communication is generally awful. The Columbian in Vancouver, Wash., has established a "link process" to keep employees informed. Following a weekly executive team meeting, top managers meet with their department heads to pass on critical information. Then the department heads transfer the information to their people, and so forth. The process also allows for employees to communicate back up the link, as well. The concept smacks of simple common sense — something that's too often in short supply in our internal communication.

KPA News Bureau brings capital doings, records to state papers

Now six months old, the KPA News Bureau continues to explore ways to be of service to members of the Kentucky press who need an information representative in the state capital.

Its activities fall primarily into three categories: (1) sharing of information regularly generated by capital agencies that involve people in other parts of the state; (2) responding to specific requests from member papers; and (3) generation of stories with a statewide scope.

Here's a sampling of some of the services provided during January and February.

Regularly generated information
*Weekly checking of suits filed in Franklin Circuit Court that involve people and businesses in counties other

than Franklin. Commonly these are suits filed by Revenue and Natural Resources cabinets. Notice of the suit is sent to local papers; a copy of the complete file is sent at the paper's request.

*Monthly reports of actions of the Board of Medical Licensure. Basic information is sent to paper(s) in the subject's home county.

*Monthly eligibility lists from Parole Board. Copy sent to requesting papers in counties where inmate was sentenced.

*Minutes of Parole Board meetings, generally covering two or three months. Decisions of the board are sent to requesting papers by county breakdown.

*Quarterly campaign finance reports. Papers are notified of availability

of listings, and, on request, reports are searched for local contributors. (15 papers requested)

Responses to specific requests
*Secretary of State's office: checked on more than 30 corporations at request of three papers.

*Cabinet for Natural Resources and Environment: reviewed waste management files for two papers; provided tire recycling regulations for one paper.

*Attorney General: obtained information for three papers.

*Tourism Cabinet: obtained materials for one paper.

*Franklin Circuit Court: followed up on 10 specific requests.

*Workforce Development Cabinet: obtained materials for one paper.

*Bicentennial Commission: covered presentations for one paper.

*Public Service Commission: checked files for one paper.

*Board of Election Finance: covered meeting for one paper.

*Department of Insurance: checked on lawsuit for one paper.

*Senate: covered certificate presentation for one paper.

*Governor's Office: covered press conference for one paper; sent story to other papers in areas affected by announcement.

*Department of Agriculture: kept track of commissioner's fate for one paper.

Information/stories generated

*General Assembly Special Session: covered session and wrote weekly wrap up story for weekly newspapers.

*News releases: sent to selected papers articles on Associates officers, coal severance tax, executive orders on tax deferments and patriots day.

*Interpretive/feature-type releases: wrote and submitted to most member papers articles on contributors to gubernatorial candidates, candidates filing for all state and regional elections, profile of the legislators, solid waste management legislation, drunk driving legislation.

*Editors' advisories sent on newsprint recycling issues, error in booklet version of Open Meetings/Open Records law, and suit against municipal insurer.

The following papers requested specific information at least once during the two months: *Pulaski Week, Ashland Daily Independent, College Heights Herald, Floyd County Times, Appalachian News-Express, Kentucky Post, Union County Advocate, Cumberland County News, Fulton Leader, Greensburg Record-Herald, Russellville News-Democrat/Logan Leader, Kentucky Standard, Paintsville Herald, Anderson News, Jessamine Journal, Whitley Republican, Bourbon Times, Bourbon*

County Citizen, Greenville Leader-News, Scottsville Citizen-Times, Jackson Times, Georgetown Graphic, Clay City Times, Grant County News, Messenger-Inquirer, Oldham Era, Citizen Voice & Times, Harlan Daily Enterprise.

In addition, about 40 papers have a standing request for parole board minutes and parole eligibility lists, and papers across the state receive other regularly disseminated reports that pertain to their areas.

The News Bureau director also shares ideas from other press associations with members of the News-Editorial Steering Committee and edits *The Kentucky Press*.

Making it easier on the consumer

From Professor Daryl Moen of the University of Missouri School of Journalism come some more tips on making a newspaper more enticing to readers.

1. Readers spend an average of 15.25 minutes with their newspapers, a figure that doesn't vary much with the size of the paper. That means bulky papers are read less thoroughly than smaller papers.

2. From that finding grows the conclusion that only a small percentage of items in a newspaper are even glanced at, let alone read.

3. To attract scanners, there must be more points of sale. That means breaking long stories into smaller pieces by using subheads, pullouts, graphics or any method that provides information in smaller pieces.

4. Use more display type. Headlines often can't tell and sell a story without the help of kickers, decks, subheads and other graphic helpers.

5. Readers spend more time with briefs than with stories.

6. Readers want things to be in the same place every day. Readers who have to search the paper for their favorite items will soon stop searching.

7. Most readers don't want a lot of information. They want the important and interesting information packaged so it's easy to read. Newspapers still should provide in-depth coverage when called for, but it should be packaged to attract the reader.

8. Newspapers need to make information more usable. In a story about tax rates, for example, tell the reader how he can determine what it will cost him.

9. Records copy is the foundation of the community newspaper. Carry all the police, fire, hospital, real estate, legal and calendar copy you can get. (From *Arizona Newspapers Association Bulletin*)

A teacher writes about **NIE** Newspapers In Education

“What a wonderful teaching tool!”

"I teach at Bloomfield Middle School and have been using NIE with my sixth-grade Reading and Language Arts classes.

My students have really been excited about using the newspaper and look forward to getting *The Kentucky Standard* each Wednesday. The teaching materials that you have provided are very helpful, too.

In Language Arts, it's no longer so hard to drill on the parts of speech or punctuation. We just identify them in the articles we read in *The Standard*. It's especially fun for the students to be searching for something in grammar and come across their own names or the names of someone they know. You can't do that in an English book!

In my Reading class it's easy to check for reading comprehension when students are reading articles relating to "hometown" news. We can identify time and place relationships, and sometimes find figures of speech and idioms. There's always some way the paper can provide examples for us.

We are grateful to our sponsor, Salt River RECC, and all the sponsors who were so generous to provide this opportunity for our students, at no expense to the students or school. Thanks for helping to make this a great school year!

The following are some comments that the students have made about using the newspaper:

“I like *The Standard* because it's fun to read. I like the sports section best of all.”
— Michael Humphrey

“I like it because it tells me about Nelson County. I like the sports and marriage sections.”
— Gale Coulter

“I think it is very outstanding. I also think it is very educational for sixth-graders. My favorite part is the classified ads. I think Mrs. Keeling made a good choice about getting the paper every Wednesday.”
— Laura Ayer

“I like it because I like to find out what is going on in the county and the state. I'm interested in finding out who is going to Saudi Arabia. I also like the sports section. It's fun and I like reading it.”
— Robble Stevens

“I like it because it keeps me up to date about what's happening in our county. I also like Dear Abby because it makes us laugh.”
— Jason Hagan

“I like to see what movies are playing and hear who died and was born.”
— Brian Lockett

“I really like it because it's interesting to read and because when I get home it's usually torn up.”
— Julie Walker

“I like the sports because it's neat to find the names of my friends, Jamie Hundley, Crystal Hagan and Katrina Fenwick.”
— McCray Ashby

“I like to read about people I know and I like reading other people's horoscopes.”
— Wesley Keaton

“I like *The Standard* because it is different and more interesting than regular school work. I like the sports, too.”
— Katrina Fenwick

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON THE NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION PROGRAM - NIE, PLEASE CONTACT KARIN THOMASON AT 348-9003 OR 348-9168

Valerie Keeling
Sixth-grade teacher, Bloomfield Middle School

A house ad promoting Newspapers in Education Week featured statements from sixth graders about *The Kentucky Standard* in Bardstown. The 6-1/2x12-inch ad ran in the Bardstown paper's March 6 edition.

The great midwest earthquake scare

Why did we editors ignore our routine 'kook alarms' in this case?

by Jim Paxton, Editor
The Paducah Sun

Reprinted from ASNE Bulletin, January/February 1991

On Nov. 15, 1990, a New Mexico scientist/business advisor named Iben Browning spoke to a gathering in St. Louis. The Associated Press said Mr. Browning gave his listeners the following heretofore little-known bits of info:

1) Tidal forces triggered a chain of events that caused the rise of Nazism.

2) Tidal forces in 1992 will lead to the worst depression in US history, but for "climatological reasons" we will start pulling out by the end of that year (an economic oxymoron, if one considers the Great Depression).

On the very day that Mr. Browning made these remarks, two more school systems in our 32,000-circulation daily's coverage area announced they would cancel classes Dec. 3-4.

Within 10 days, all but a handful of schools in our 17-county coverage area would follow suit. The reason: the same Iben Browning who associates tides with the Holocaust had made a prior, grossly overpublicized claim that tidal forces would create a 50-50 chance of a terrific earthquake in our region. It could occur on Dec. 3, give or take two days, on the nearby New Madrid Fault, he said.

For me, Mr. Browning's "tides and Nazis" comments were the final kook alarm. I decided our newspaper had gone too far in providing the man and his "projection" a forum.

A lecture to that effect to my reporters and editors fell mostly on deaf ears. Realizing I had a runaway train on my hands, I did what some consider journalistically unspeakable. I banned all mention of Mr. Browning and his projection during the week leading up to and the week following Dec. 3.

In a news story about our decision, I explained that the information we possessed in no way justified the attention we had given Mr. Browning's "projection." Yet our coverage of it had helped cause fear and hysteria. I said such coverage had been an editing mistake on my part, and I apologized.

People observing this situation from afar will never fully appreciate the breadth and the reality of the suffering we in the press and other media helped to cause in the Midwest by our mishandling of this story.

I feel the press ran into a quite comparable situation to the Browning claim a year or so ago when two Utah scientists announced they had almost by accident produced a "cold fusion" reaction in a kitchen-table experiment.

It was the stuff of science fiction, and if true, it also was the greatest discovery since fire. The press jumped all over it. But when the rest of the scientific community voiced serious and near-unanimous doubts, most of us did the right thing. We backed way, way off that story.

Why we did not handle the

Despite the fact that almost no one in either the scientific community or the press believed Mr. Browning's earthquake projection was credible, we shouted it from the rooftops, often adding only the most perfunctory disclaimers.

Despite the fact that almost no one in either the scientific community or the press believed Mr. Browning's earthquake projection was credible, we shouted it from the rooftops, often adding only the most perfunctory disclaimers.

We did this despite the fact that most of us knew:

*Browning's doctoral degree is in bacteriological physiology and genetics, not geology.

*Browning based his quake "project" on science he calls "climatology," which, as best I can discern, is a sort of souped up astrology. It is a field in which he says he's self-educated and that he pursues as a hobby.

*An advisory panel of the US Geological Survey issued a highly publicized report in October 1990 saying there is no scientific basis for Browning's theories about tides and earthquakes. They have been studied and discounted.

*Claims that Browning had accurately predicted previous disasters with his methodology proved unverifiable.

Other than not covering the chaos in nearby New Madrid on "quake day" our moratorium had little net effect on editorial content. We held up a handful of letters to the editor for six-to-12 days (all but one supporting our moratorium) and reported a few school closings without reference to Browning.

By the time of our ban, we had covered the Browning issue seven ways from Sunday anyway. We also had written reams about the fault zone and quake preparedness both before and after Browning's debut.

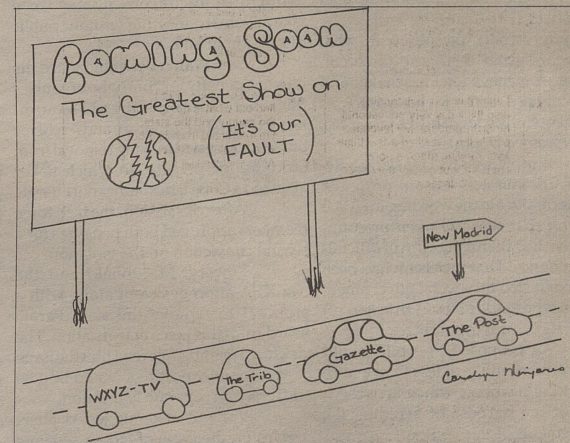
Our computer system automatically kills unused copy every 24 hours. Yet just before noon on Dec. 4, I counted 27 stories in our system about the quake, filed by such varied organizations as Newsday, the Washington Post, the Baltimore Sun, and multitudes of AP and UPI staffers and members.

This is not a case of a bunch of reporters getting out of hand. It is, in the case of newspapers, a failure of editors to edit.

We all asked ourselves the easy question: Is this a good story? It was one heck of a story. But professionalism demands we ask ourselves a second question in volatile scenarios such as this: Knowing what we know, is it responsible to report it?

At some point, some point well before Dec. 3, deep down we all knew the answer to that question was no. But we pressed on, pursuing the story with such ferocity that Browning's scientifically ludicrous assertion took on an almost monstrous legitimacy in the minds of a great many people.

The press had a lot of fun with this story. Problem is, a great many people suffered as a result. I doubt that any of you really need a contentedly-obscure western Kentucky newspaper editor like me to tell you this was wrong.



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Another trip in the time machine

From the archives of *The Harrodsburg Herald* comes this photograph of the paper's 1910 staff. Even the names have been preserved. Responsible for putting the Mercer County paper out 80 years ago were, from left, Neva Williams, Mrs. J.M. Dalton, John Pulliam, Annie Mae Scanlon, Nancy Stopher, Lucy Powell, A.L. Gibbs, editor/publisher D.M. Hutton and L.C. Woods.

Open meetings draft undergoes change

Compromise and consensus were hallmarks of the March 14 session of the Open Meetings/Open Records Legislative Task Force, as members tackled language and penalties in the proposed legislative revision.

KPA representatives Steve Lowery (*The Kentucky Standard*) and Stan Macdonald (*The Courier-Journal*) were, for the most part, pleased with what they heard from their task force colleagues. Attorneys Jon Fleischaker and Phil Shepherd, both of whose opinions were frequently sought by the task force, also expressed optimism.

Scott Varland, Legislative Research Commission liaison, proposed five alternatives to the wording in KPA's bill draft that seeks to open meetings that have less than a quorum of officials in attendance. That provision had been hotly contested by several government groups who said it would threaten officials' right even to socialize.

As proposed, the bill would open "any meetings of less than a quorum of the members which are scheduled for the purpose of avoiding the requirements of this section."

Realistically, Sen. Fred Bradley said, "No one will ever admit they scheduled a meeting to circumvent the law. I don't know how you'd prove it."

Varland's first alternative approached the issue in "serial fashion." The group agreed to his revision which

reads: "any scheduled series of less than a quorum of the members, held for the purpose of avoiding the requirements of this section."

The revision seeks to hamper those officials who meet in groups of two or three, reach a consensus and then take action at a meeting without public discussion of an issue.

Sen. Walter Baker broached the idea of a penalty for "one who organizes this covert meeting." James Nelson, director of the state's Library and Archives branch, suggested making removal from office as the penalty, to which Baker attached a Class B misdemeanor charge.

After discussion, the task force members approved both penalties for a second conviction on the violation.

Lowery, Macdonald and the two KPA attorneys went along with a proposal to remove the state Parole Board from this piece of legislation. The task force members agreed that the issue of open parole meetings would best be addressed in separate legislation.

Varland also suggested alternatives on the issue of closed sessions for litigation to make the law more specific. He offered the choices of using the adjectives "specific," "imminent," "likely" or "probable" to define litigation.

Shepherd testified on behalf of making it more difficult for agencies to

use litigation as an excuse for closed session. "Public tax dollars are ultimately being used in that litigation, and the public has a right to know," Shepherd said.

He also argued that an agency's discussions with its attorney should be as open as possible, because "the attorney is representing the public, not just the agency."

The task force finally decided to leave the language regarding this issue as it now stands.

The group compromised on the bill's public meeting notice section with a subsection on emergencies. The new provision requires agencies to make a "reasonable effort, under emergency circumstances, to notify members of the agency, the media, and the public of the emergency meeting."

Going a step further, it requires the chairperson, at the beginning of the meeting, to describe the emergency circumstances preventing compliance and for the comments to appear in the minutes of the meeting.

Rep. Bill Donnermeyer, who chairs the task force, called for an all day meeting of the group on April 11. Facing an August deadline for a final draft, the group still must haggle over other sections on open meetings and tackle the issue of open records.

Whitley papers merge

The *Whitley Republican* and *Corbin! This Week* have merged and added *News Journal* to their respective names.

The combined paper will continue offices in Willamsburg and Corbin and will have two editions a week, according to publisher Don Estep.

The Corbin paper had had a third class mailing permit.

Estep claims the merger will give the *News Journal* the largest paid circulation in Whitley County, an issue that has been the subject of legal controversy between *The Whitley Republican* and *The Times-Tribune* in Corbin.

Photos needed

Attention, award-winning photographers.

presstime, magazine of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, plans to run a spread of photos that have won top awards from state press associations. If you'd like KPA to submit your first place photo - color or black & white - send a copy to Pam Shingler, KPA, 332 Capitol Ave., Frankfort 40601.



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With television, when the advertising comes on, everybody runs to the bathroom. With newspapers, you can take the advertising to the bathroom with you.

-John S. Straiton, quoted by Russ Metz in the *Bath County News-Outlook*.