

THE KENTUCKY PRESS

— Of, By, And For Kentucky Newspapers —

Volume Seven

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Number Nine

Advertising Rackets Bane Of Publisher

By J. L. BRADLEY

Just why the program committee saw fit to have me attempt to lead a discussion on "Advertising Rackets" is hard to understand when I have probably been as gullible as any other publisher. Perhaps they felt that I would understand the problems inasmuch as I had experienced so many of them.

All publishers of country or small daily newspapers have been confronted with various forms of "advertising rackets" and the reason is that the publishers and a large number of the small-town merchants have been easy prey. Each publisher is afraid that if he turns down an order that his competitor or a printer in a neighboring town will get the business. Each merchant is afraid that his competitor will be listed and that he will be branded as a slacker if he doesn't take part in the scheme.

Recently, the Publisher's Auxiliary said in an editorial that "one of the duties of the newspaper is to protect the people of its community from being exploited by outside promoters whose only interest lies in putting over their schemes, collecting as much money as possible and getting out of town as quickly as they can without regard to possible after-maths and their effect upon the community. Some editors are quick to sense the dangers of such schemes and warn their people against them. Others hesitate to do this, especially when local organizations are hooked up with the outsiders."

The methods of practically all of the promoters of advertising rackets are the same. They come in and either get some organization to sponsor the scheme or else get local girls to help sell the advertising. Usually, the rate is about five to ten times what the newspaper or printing establishment realizes from the scheme. The girls are given about a dollar or so each and are well satisfied.

One of the greatest nuisances is the method of the producing companies. They send out contact men or women and paint in glowing terms how much money can be realized by an organization by sponsoring a "stage spectacle." They will usually agree to almost anything to get the contract but when the director arrives in town the fun begins. In the majority of instances the directors are novices or do not understand the real fundamentals of producing a play. Their main

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Gus Robbins, Retiring, Gives Stirring Valedictory Address

By A. ROBBINS, Retiring President

Changing trends in the country newspaper field made it more and more imperative that country newspaper publishers work closely together in both the Kentucky Press Association and the National Editorial Association. If the country newspaper is to prosper and progress, in fact, if it is to continue to survive at all, it must pay closer attention not only to the business end, but to the editorial side as well.

There has been a slow growth of better business practices in the country field and the Kentucky Press Association can well work closely with the National Editorial Association, helping them to push the standard bookkeeping system and the simplified cost accounting system. I believe there is a growing realization of the importance of correct business practices, but there is much work yet to be done in this field, especially along the line of educating publishers to the very real need for sending checking copies and statements promptly to the agencies and advertisers.

On the editorial side we must realize that our readers are not satisfied with the kind of newspaper our predecessors published fifty years ago, twenty-five years ago or even fifteen years ago. Even many of the larger daily newspapers have not seen the changing trend in its entirety and the sooner country publishers realize just what this trend is and meet it, the better position we will be in.

It seems to me it would be helpful to have various authorities in this field to outline in the Kentucky Press the changing editorial trends of today, and how we can meet them and hold our readers. The world is a small place today, and happenings in distant parts of the world have a direct effect on all of us. There is no community so isolated that it is not effected by national and international affairs and issues. When a news flash can go around the world in two minutes, when a man can fly around the world in less than a week, the entire world is not as large today as the state of Kentucky was a hundred years ago.

Our readers not only want to know what is going on at Frankfort and Washington, they must know. And they want to know something of what is going on in the world and they want it interpreted for them in terms of their own lives. This is a

trend that the country newspaper must answer, and it is a trend that enables us to compete, for no longer are people content with just the wire news in the big daily papers, they want the news behind the news, the interpretation, which I believe we can give them as well as the daily. In time the KPA and the NEA will have to provide us with news from Frankfort and Washington, I believe, but it will be up to us to interpret that news, provide summaries of national and world news, and interpret that for our readers.

Then news itself no longer completely satisfies our readers. This is a restless age. People want entertainment, in their newspapers as well as in their daily lives. They want features. Not necessarily syndicated features, for the very best features are local features that a paper can dig up itself, and every community has enough material to supply the local paper with local features for years.

They also want pictures, cartoons and comics. You can buy syndicated newscaptions and cartoons. They are not entirely satisfactory for a country newspaper, but I believe they will increase as the demand becomes greater. Comics are harder to solve. It may be that weekly publishers will have to band together eventually to secure good comics for their newspapers. In newscaptions the local angle is, of course, the best and the time is coming when all of us will have to use more local pictures. Already the NEA has splendid engraving plants, where you can get the best cuts being made in the country today at very reasonable cost.

Some time ago the West Kentucky Press Association planned to provide a series of features on West Kentucky. Each paper was to write the best feature from its community and provide the pictures and cuts for it, then the features were to be rotated around to all the papers, on the theory that everyone in West Kentucky would be interested in all the West Kentucky features. We may have been a little premature with this for it fell through, but I wonder if there was not the germ of an idea in it which could be worked out to advantage, either for the state as a whole or in the various sections of the state, under the guidance of the KPA?

(Continued on Page Three)

President Extends His First Message

The Kentucky Press association starts the year 1936 in fine condition. Under the able leadership of Gus Robbins, last year's president, and those other unselfish and hard-working presidents who preceded him, the association has weathered the depression, the "code" and all other besetting sins of recent years. To be sure the treasury is somewhat depleted, but what's a treasury for if you never bet anything out of it but always put in.

Speaking of the treasury gives me an opportunity to suggest that it would be well for all members who have not done so to pay their 1936 dues now. This will insure the financial success of the KPA this year.

I suppose every president starts out with the intention of enlarging the membership of the KPA and it is not my desire to break a precedent here. Let me urge each member of the KPA to aid in this membership campaign. There are many newspapers in the state that are not now affiliated with the KPA. Find out if one of them is in your section; and if so, contact the publisher and see if you cannot interest him in the association and its helpful and interesting program. You will be doing him and your association a real service.

It is still a little early to have anything to report from the various committees. As this is being written the Legislative Committee is right back on the job at Frankfort. The interests of the KPA and the citizens of Kentucky are being closely guarded. I believe everything will be in fine shape in this direction. In this connection I wish to thank the members of the KPA for their splendid response to my appeal for support of the committee through your legislators. This cooperation is always fruitful, and very necessary.

It would not be right to close this little piece without making an appeal to the newspaper folks throughout the state to cooperate with Vic Portmann in making the Kentucky Press what it professes to be—"Of, By and For Kentucky Newspapers." Send in your contributions regularly.

Cordially,
John L. Crawford

For Sale—A 38x50 two-revolution Babcock cylinder press suitable for both newspaper and job work. A bargain. Write for samples of work and price to the Commercial Printing Co., Lexington, Ky.

The Kentucky Press

Official Publication Of The Kentucky Press Association

VICTOR R. PORTMANN, Editor

Printed On The Kernel Press, Department Of Journalism,
University Of Kentucky, Lexington

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Jody P. Gozder Vice President News-Journal, Campbellsville
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BEST MEETING AT LOUISVILLE

The mid-winter meeting at Louisville, January 16, 17, 18, was aptly termed the best in many years, from the standpoint of attendance, program, and interest. The success of this fine program was due to Gus Robbins, retiring president, and his program committee. The success of mid-winter meetings in the last few years, thanks to the presiding officers, has been that the programs have been devoted strictly to business without every Tom, Dick, and Harry, with an axe to grind, taking up valuable time at the expense of the stated speakers. This one item alone has done much to improve the programs to the satisfaction, and attendance, of the newspaper folk at hand. The Press is not running a story of the meeting; it was reported in full in the Publishers Auxiliary. However, in this and future issues, we are printing the many excellent papers read.

PRESS IN NEW FORMAT

With this issue The Press reaches you in augmented form to permit a wider field of publication. The dress is in 7 point Ionic, with the headings in Bernhard Gothic. Again may we urge the editors to send in news items and other matters of mutual interest for publication.

OUR NEW PREXY

We asked our new president, John L. Crawford, for a thumb-nail sketch of his life. Here it is, brief and to the point:

Born in Gamaliel, Ky., at dawn of new century. Educated at Western Teachers College and University of Kentucky. Worked on farm, in country store, country bank, blacksmith shop, overall factory, YMCA, restaurant, daily and weekly news-

papers, and did small time magazine writing at intervals. Came to Corbin from Whitesburg Mountain Eagle in 1928 and stuck—chiefly because got married and had to make living. If there's a newspaperman in Kentucky who doesn't already know it, desire them to know now that has 9-months-old son who looks like his mother.

FEATURE PICTURES

Mr. Robbins, in his address printed in this issue, points out a plan, endorsed by the Western Kentucky association, to print more engravings of Kentucky life. This plan, in short, was that each newspaper procure and publish cuts of the many points of interest in his town and vicinity, and then exchange these with his brother editors in other localities. The Press believes that this is an important step in developing local and state interest in the community field, and calls your attention to this plan for active development within the near future. The Press offers its columns to any editor who would join in this plan by publishing his name and the titles of "cuts" now available.

INDIVIDUALISM ALWAYS BEST

The Press, as it has pointed out many times before, agrees heartily with Tom Wallace in his premise, as brought out at Louisville, that the individuality of the newspaper, emphasized by its editorials and editorial page, is the life-blood of the community newspaper. No newspaper is any better than its editorial page. On this page the editor can discuss the current issues of the community, their possible solutions, and their effect on community life and pursuit of happiness. The watchword of the community newspaper should be "Service." If the editor does not emphasize this Serv-

ice to his readers through the editorial page, he is neglecting the most important function of his profession. The editor should be a leader in the community; he should again emphasize this leadership on his editorial page. Mr. Wallace's premise was emphatically approved by Mr. Robbins in his annual address. It is gratifying, however, to approve the many fine editorial pages, and editorial columns, that enhance and dignify the majority of Kentucky newspapers. More power, and satisfaction, to their editors!

NEW COMMITTEES APPOINTED

The Press commends the new president and his executive committee in appointing two new standing committees, the Advertising Committee, and the Legislative Survey Committee, authorized by the vote of the membership. These committees can do much in building up the Fourth Estate in Kentucky, and can render much service to the association. Other committees will be appointed to facilitate the excellent work that the Association is doing.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Since our last issue the following Kentucky newspapers have celebrated their birthdays:

Murray Ledger-Times, Joe E. Lovett, editor, entered Vol. 104 with the January 2 issue; Sturgis News, Emil and Edwin Calman, editors, Vol. 51 on January 2; Russellville News-Democrat, B. A. Evans, editor, Vol. 31; Caldwell County Times, Princeton Twice-A-Week-Leader, edited by Marion Catlett, Vol 65 on January 3.

Benton Tribune-Democrat, published by W. E. Wyatt and W. J. Myre, Vol. 53 on January 3; Newcastle Local, E. Russell McClure, editor, entered Vol 56 on January 3; Breckinridge News, Cloverport, published by Miss Mildred Babbage, announced its sixtieth birthday with a half-page advertisement the first of the year; Irvine Times, Robert Barker, publisher, recently issued No. 1 of Vol. 17.

Kentucky Standard, Bardstown, published by A. S. Wathen, entered Vol. 36; The Trimble Democrat, Bedford, Frank C. Bell, publisher, entered the fortieth year of publication; Russell Dyche, London, recently steered the Sentinel-Echo into its sixty-eighth harbor; John Crawford's Times-Tribune entered its thirty-second year of publication and the Lebanon Enterprise, Oliver Kelly, editor, began Vol. 51 the first of the year.

The Press extends congratulations and best wishes for many more years of community usefulness.

THE K.P.A. BAND

Russell Dyche, versatile editor of the London Sentinel-Echo, inspired by the amateur musical ability displayed by K.P.A. members on the boat trip last June, proposes to organize a Kentucky Press Band and has forwarded the following membership list:

Jody Gozder, trumpet and leader;

Wesley Carter, trumpet; Harold Browning, baritone; John Crawford, bass, Vic Portmann, trombone; Lamar Bradley, clarinet; Martin Dyche, clarinet; Don Groat, clarinet; Albert Schumacher, flute; Charles Dickerson, flute, and Russell Dyche, bass drum.

Russell threatens to have this stupendous, colossal organization ready to salute Secretary Alcock on his twenty-fifth anniversary at the Danville celebration next June. He also requests that other publishers with talent and an instrument forward their names to him.

Many papers have been compelled to augment their pages during the month of January to handle the increased advertising patronage. Among these was the Hickman County Gazette, Clinton, H. L. Waterfield, editor, which issued a 16-page paper on January 16. A brief survey of the newspapers of the state shows increased advertising and the Fourth Estate reflects renewed business activity and confidence of their local fields. This is an encouraging sign.

In order to ascertain the kind and variety of features that the readers want in a typical community newspaper, Wesley E. Carter, Elizabethtown Enterprise, started a poll by means of a printed ballot for the reader's preference. Mr. Carter believes that plenty of features enrich his paper being well received, and even demanded by his subscribers.

Seymour B. Goodman, local editor and manager of the Central Record, Lancaster, who underwent an operation at the Richmond hospital the middle of January, is rapidly convalescing and will soon be back "on the job" again.

John E. Barry, editor of the Rolling Fork Echo, New Haven, is receiving the congratulations of the fraternity for his unique enterprise in republishing the original copy of the first issue of the paper and distributing it as a supplement with the regular issue. This first edition was a four-page, three-column sheet filled with humorous advertising and the only news was by personals. Mr. Barry reproduced the original typography and the fascimile makes a valuable library reference.

H. A. Ward, who founded the Allen County News, Scottville, a year ago, recently entered into Vol. 2. He is giving his county an interesting and worthwhile community newspaper and enters his second volume with all indications for another successful year.

Russell Dyche forwarded The Press a copy of The "Ki-Yi", a small, 12-page, two-column pamphlet published each New Year for the class of 1903 of the National Normal University, Lebanon, Ohio. It is full of news letters from former members of the class augmented with news items by Russell himself. We congratulate Russell on his enterprise in publishing this unique journal.

Miss Beulah Tillinger succeeds Miss Ruth Nicholson, resigned, as society editor of the Corbin Daily Tribune.

President's Address

(Continued from Page One)

Another idea the West Kentucky Press Association worked on I believe might be worked out to good advantage on a state-wide basis. That is to make arrangements with an engraving plant for a very low rate on so many single and double column cuts per month, then each newspaper agree to take so many of these cuts each month. Thao forces the paper to dig up local pictures to meet its cut quota each month and it also reduces the cost of cuts to a figure that most weeklies can pay.

Much has been said about newspaper make-up, about getting a good, clean print, about covering all the local news and handling it in a bright and interesting manner. I would assume that every country publisher realizes by now that those fundamental essentials must be carried out. It is to the country newspaper of the future that I am looking. We must provide a medium for our local merchants that will get them results and good results, or eventually the local merchant will lose his business and our newspapers will lose their business. To save ourselves we must save our merchants and our communities, for after all, one bulk of revenue comes and always will come from the advertising and printing of our local merchants and business firms.

These are things we should be thinking about, talking about and planning for, because more and more we must be on our toes to meet these changing conditions and trends.

In looking back over the year that has just passed, the outstanding event from the standpoint of the Kentucky Press Association was undoubtedly the decision of the United States Supreme Court knocking out the NRA and the consequent collapse of the Graphic Arts Code.

That is almost forgotten now, but it must be mentioned, first because so much effort, work and money went into the Graphic Arts Code and then because, in my estimation, the code did leave considerable good behind it. I think that the price situation has been better because of the code. I think it has given most of us a better understanding of the function of our press associations and how necessary they are for the protection and aid of country publishers. While the code did not last long enough to do anything like a complete job, I think it started many of us along the path to better business methods and closer cooperation with our fellow publishers, which will mean much in the future.

I cannot pass the grave of the code without paying some tribute to the men who so unselfishly gave of their time, energy and money during those trying and hectic days, in order that all of us might be saved. In many dark hours, when it looked as if the country publisher might be ground to pieces between the big job shops, the big dailies, the magazines, etc., the officers and directors of the National Editorial Association

and the Kentucky Press Association labored day and night, largely at their own expense, fighting our battles, and they won a victory that will forever be a credit to them. We owe them our continued thanks, even though the code lies still and cold beneath the sod, for their victory is now bringing the country press closer to that recognition it has so long richly deserved.

The Kentucky Press Association is in better shape than most of the state press associations, because we did not go into debt during the code days, as so many associations did, and the collapse of the code did not cripple us. We were still able to carry on its normal functions, though our finances required that we play the cards close to the vest the past year. However, with the advent of 1936, the KPA will be in about as good financial shape as ever and there is no reason why it cannot expand its assistance to the newspapers of the state. We have made an effort during the past year to get every member paid up and to get new members. These efforts have been only partially successful but I believe they have laid the ground work for more successful efforts along this line in 1936.

I believe that the greatest single step forward during 1935 was made when your executive committee voted to affiliate with the National Editorial Association and make every member of the Kentucky Press Association automatically a member of the NEA. We lead the parade in this and it is my belief that in time every state press association will do the same thing. I think the NEA must function as the national organization of the state press associations, rather than as a separate organization of individual members. Only in that way can it do its most effective work for us and I trust that the KPA will not only continue affiliated with the NEA under the present plan, but that the relations of the two will become even closer. We need the NEA just as the NEA needs us and in working together great good can be accomplished.

In reviewing the activities of the year one thing stands out in my mind. I spent a good deal of effort trying to line up state advertising for the state newspapers. As you know, the NEA is now working hard on national advertising and I believe that this will become one of the most important functions of the NEA in time. I believe that the KPA can also profitably work along this line for its members. So I would recommend the appointment of a permanent Advertising Committee, somewhat along the line of the permanent Legislative Committee, which the association has had for many years.

The function of this advertising committee would be to contact all possible sources of national advertising that might run in Kentucky newspapers. It would not and could not act as an agency, but would work with the agencies in promoting business. For instance, they could work on the Standard Oil Company of Kentucky, which surely would profit from more advertising in the weekly newspapers of the state, the

big Kentucky tobacco companies, the state distilleries and other state firms with a big business in the state as a whole, as well as the railroads in the state, the public utilities, the state fair, and during the elections, the political parties. A year is too short a time to do all this, but I believe that with a permanent committee constantly at work, the effort put forth would bear rich returns in the course of time.

This committee would have to have a little money to work with. It would be necessary from time to time to make merchandising surveys of the state. It would be necessary to contact the members of the KPA from time to time to have them write to prospective advertisers. It would be necessary for members of the committee to make trips now and then to contact prospective advertisers. So in setting up this committee the association should provide them with funds for their work, or the work could not be productive.

At the same time this committee could work with the NEA on other national advertising. The NEA does not intend to go into the agency business, but only to develop the necessary facts and data with which to sell the national advertising on the advantages of the country press. In time I am convinced the NEA will act as our representative in the national field and that our volume of national advertising will be greatly increased thereby. So I believe the time is ripe for the KPA to lend the NEA a helping hand in this very important work.

Another thing that has become more and more apparent is that the legal publication laws of Kentucky are in such a muddle that few papers are getting the legal publications they are entitled to. I do not know just how to tell you to go about having these laws enforced, for that is a ticklish proposition, but I would recommend the appointment of a special committee of the KPA to work on a codification of all legal publication laws, in order that they might be clarified and simplified. There is so much confusion over them at present that many honest officials have an apparently good excuse for not making the required legal publications. I feel sure that it would be much to the advantage of the taxpayers of the state, the elected officials themselves, as well as to the newspapers, to have all the legal publication laws of the state codified, simplified, clarified, brought up to date and assembled in one section, somewhat along the line of the new school code.

This is the only practical solution I can see at present to the very unsatisfactory situation existing in regard to legal publications, which has vexed us all for years. So I would like to urge that the KPA set up such a committee to work along this line and have such a code ready for submission to the legislature that meets in 1938. This committee would also require money to work with, but it would be well worth while if the project could be carried out successfully. After all it would be a real service to the state. The report and publicity law is almost

the only direct check the average taxpayer has on how the officials he has elected are conducting affairs. The publication of the details of all expenditures and receipts is something that in my mind is absolutely necessary to the conduct of honest, efficient and democratic government. Just as a business firm reports to its stockholders, so such governmental agencies report to the taxpayers, and because there are so many taxpayers, the only practical way for government to report is through publication in the newspapers.

Another legal move, which the association could very well back in the legislature now in session at
(Continued on Page Four)



MODERNIZE FOR PROFITS

Give your readers a more readable paper . . . set in one of the five faces of the Linotype Legibility Group.

Give your advertisers better typography . . . up-to-date faces, all freshly-set on the Linotype with no broken or worn letters.

Give yourself a profit by producing this better paper more economically . . . using a modern Linotype which sets both text and display from its single keyboard.

MERGENTHALER LINOTYPE CO.
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
San Francisco · Chicago · New Orleans
Canadian Linotype, Limited, Toronto, Canada
Representatives in the
Principal Cities of the World

LINOTYPE EXCELSIOR, CLOISTER BOLD
AND BOLD FACE NO. 2

Frankfort, is the law proposed by former president George A. Joplin Jr., in his address here a year ago. A law to make the source of a newspaper reporters information confidential, thus giving a reporter the status before the law of a doctor, lawyer or minister. Several states have enacted such laws and it is a necessary step for the protection of the press. The press has a function to expose to the light of day all those things that go on under cover in our modern civilization, but the press has no legal function and such a law is necessary to protect reporters and their papers. It seems to me that such a law should be introduced at once in the legislature and pushed through, if possible, by our association.

I do not intend to try to cover in detail all the things we have tried to do or have actually done during the past year. This is merely intended as a brief report on what I think the association can do for its members in the future, in the light of what has happened in the past. I would be remiss, however, if I closed this report without a word of praise for the fine work, the splendid co-operation of our Secretary-Treasurer, J. Curtis Alcock, as well as that of every officer, the members of the executive committee and the other committees of our association, for every one of them has stood loyally by me the past year and worked for the best interest of our association all the time.

**SUPERIOR
ELECTION
SUPPLIES**

Service For
Kentucky Printers

RUSSELL DYCHE
London, Ky.

A young man, excellent student and a January graduate from the Department of Journalism, is looking for a position on a community newspaper. He has had some experience in the front office besides his studies, and is an excellent printer, a mighty fine combination. Write the Press editor if you have an opening.

Advertising Rackets

(Continued from Page One)

idea appears to be to sell as much advertising as possible, get as many local people in the play as possible so as to insure better attendance, kick about the cost of the printing and advertising and want gobs of publicity. Usually, the sponsor realizes about \$5 to \$15; the newspaper about \$5 to \$15 for printing and advertising; and the producing company gets about \$35 to \$50 from the sale of advertising and from \$75 to \$150 from attendance receipts.

Several of these "stage spectacles" have been produced locally and I have never known the sponsor to get more than \$20 whereas the time devoted to the scheme would probably be worth from \$75 to \$100. The merchants kick because they know

that the local organization will not reap the benefits but they are afraid to refuse to take the advertisement.

(Note: On account of lack of space, we must continue this article in the March issue.)

The Hardin County Enterprise, Elizabethtown, Ky., has added a Model 14 Linotype.

**★
WHO SELLS ELECTRICITY CHEAPER?
Government Agencies Report That Commercial
Power Companies Offer Lower Rates**

A GOOD many people honestly believe that government ownership of electric power plants (especially municipal government ownership) offers the public many advantages—particularly the advantage of lower rates for service.

Maybe you are such a believer. Maybe not. But as a taxpayer (and who isn't?) you will be interested in the following facts:

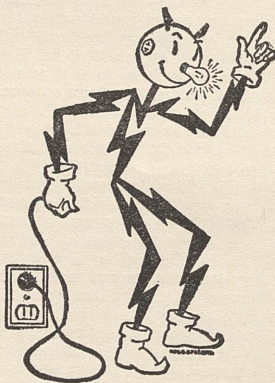
The United States Bureau of the Census reports, after a nationwide survey, that municipally owned plants sell electricity for an average price of 3.1 cents a kilowatt-hour, while commercial power companies (including our own group) get an average price of only 2.7 cents a kilowatt-hour.

And the Federal Power Commission reports, after a nationwide survey

That the average service rates of municipally owned electric plants are "extremely high" for properties exempt from taxation and capital charges.

That, while commercial power companies pay from 10 per cent to 18 per cent of their gross earnings in taxes and must also earn a fair return on their capital investment, almost all municipal plants wholly or partly evade these charges.

That, in spite of this differential in their favor, the municipal plants collect more per kilowatt-hour for their service than commercial electric companies receive.



KENTUCKY UTILITIES COMPANY

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AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES

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