

## GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING

February 9  
11 am  
teleconference

## Webinar: INTRO TO INDESIGN

February 12  
2 – 3 pm  
Register by February 8

## NIE/YOUTH READERSHIP COMMITTEE

February 18  
10:30 am – 1 pm  
NJPA conference room

## NJ PRESS FOUNDATION TRUSTEES MEETING

February 25  
10 am  
NJPA conference room

## Webinar: INTRO TO SOCIAL NETWORKING

March 5  
2 – 3 pm  
Register by March 1

## Webinar: AD SALES 101

March 12  
2 – 3 pm  
Register by March 8

## PRESS NIGHT Editorial & Photography Awards, including Online

April 8  
Trenton Marriott  
at Lafayette Yard

## NJPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

April 15  
10:30 am  
teleconference

## NJPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

April 20  
10:30 am  
teleconference

For more information about these events, please visit:  
[www.njpa.org](http://www.njpa.org)



**HELD HOSTAGE:** Obie, the beloved NJPA trophy, has been taken kidnapped and is being held for ransom. See details on Page 5.

## New NJPA webinars save times, slash costs

Get ready for a profitable 2010, get a leg up on the competition—get some training through NJPA webinars!

The association has announced its first seven webinars for the year and number one is coming right up. It is “Intro to InDesign” and it will be offered on Friday, Feb. 12 from 2 to 3 p.m.

“The beauty of these webinars is that they increase people’s expertise without all the cost, the logistics and the travel time that used to be associated with training sessions,” said Peggy Stephan at NJPA.

Registration is a one-cost-fits-all fee of \$35 per site, using one Internet connection and one telephone. NJPA members are encouraged to let as many people as possible participate at their end for the one low price. For details and registration information, email [pastephan@njpa.org](mailto:pastephan@njpa.org) or go to [www.njpa.org](http://www.njpa.org) and click on Events. (But hurry — “InDesign” registrations after Monday, Feb. 8 will be charged a \$10 late fee.)

“Intro to InDesign” will be presented by Lynn Warner, of the Graphic Arts Training & Consulting Group. She has worked with large and small newspa-

— Continues on Page 2

## NJPA’s Digital Audience Study:

# Newspaper websites thrive in Belden research survey

By Catherine Thomas Langley

“The results are in and it’s a great story!”

That’s what Amy Lear told 60 newspaper executives who attended the unveiling of NJPA’s brand new research about audiences at newspapers’ websites in New Jersey.

“This research will help our member newspapers sell print and online advertising,” she said.

Lear is director of ad placement services at NJPA. She introduced Ed Efchak of Belden Interactive, the research team that conducted the survey at NJPA’s behest. Efchak gave an overview of the results to association members who filled an auditorium at the Asbury Park Press on Jan. 29.

“This is a great story for newspapers,” he said, “the combination of strong print and online use, and great demographics!”

“No state has ever attempted what we’ve done here in New Jersey,” Efchak said, thanking his audience for participating in the study. “New Jersey is a complicated market. I can really appreciate that now, having worked in other parts of the country.” Prior to joining Belden, Efchak was the vice president of marketing for North Jersey Media Group and was an active participant in NJPA committees and projects.

“We have created the first statewide measurement of newspaper website audiences,” he told the gathering. It includes “demographics, buying habits, use of local websites and newspapers.”

“Nearly 50% of the 4,770 people surveyed said they use newspaper websites for local shopping. They are using the Web before going shopping. And to fol-

low up on ads they saw in print,” Efchak said.

“The summary is that New Jersey newspaper websites have a quality audience, compelling content, a local and frequent audience, and strong local opportunities....

“Breaking news is the single largest driver, bringing people back to your newspaper websites day after day. We’re back in the breaking news business!”

“Habits are important,” Efchak said. “And 73% of those

responding said that they check their local newspaper website every day.” He said that it is “interesting what people consider ‘every day.’ If they access the newspaper website from home, every day means seven days a week. If they access it from work, it’s five days.” When people were asked how frequently they visited their local newspaper site during the past week, 63% said “every day” – but to 44% respondents that meant seven days, and to 19% it meant five days.

### Frequent users

Not only do people visit newspaper websites frequently and throughout the week, the research shows that they visit multiple times a day. Fully 53% of respondents said that they visit their local site three times a day or more.

In addition to a strong interest in local news, the study shows what else the audience is seeking on newspaper websites. “We need to look at these other areas of interest – the 2% niche, the 5% – for new revenue opportunities,” Efchak said. “We need to create or find products that meet their needs.”

Take bridal sections, for instance. “Engaged to be married” was a 2% niche

— Continues on Page 6



**Efchak**

## Become a ‘fan’ of NJPA on Facebook

NJPA launched its Facebook page in January. “Our objective is to create a convenient site for our members, one place where they can go to get lots of resources they need,” said George White, who spearheaded the project. “But we need members’ help!” White, who stays on top of government affairs for NJPA, said, “We encourage members and friends to become fans of the page and tell us how to make it better. “Just go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and search for New Jersey Press Association.”

# INPRINT

a publication of

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As I see it...

# A public notice checklist

For several years I had the pleasure of serving on the board of the Public Notice Resource Center, a Washington, D.C.-based organization whose mission is "to collect, analyze and disseminate information on public and private notifications to the public through newspapers, and to educate the public on the value and use of its right to know."

Recently the PNRC issued a Best Practices Statement that includes a list of things newspapers can and should do to help them in their mission. With public notices once again taking center stage here in New Jersey, due to the expected introduction of troubling legislation to pull them from newspapers, this seems like a good time to pass along a few highlights from that statement:

- Newspapers should explain to readers regularly the importance of public notices and the newspaper's role in publishing them. Through advertisements and in other ways, newspapers should both stress the importance of public notices and illustrate how readers can use them to their advantage and to the advantage of their community.
- Newspapers should never assume that readers know where to go for public notices; they should continue



**John J. O'Brien**  
Executive Director  
New Jersey Press Association

to remind readers that they are the best source of information.

- Newspapers should police the right to know for readers by reminding governments, attorneys and others who are required to publish notices of the requirements in the law. Help them do their jobs.
- Newspapers should strive to be experts in public notices. By mastering the process of publishing them, a newspaper can cement itself in the community as the place to go for public notices.
- Newspapers should remember that while public notices remain an important part of the business of the

newspaper, first and foremost it is a community service. Public notices should never be viewed as a mere source of advertising dollars.

- Newspapers should publish all government public notices on their website (and/or their state press associations' websites) free of charge and free of password protection.
  - Newspapers should advertise their public notice website in the printed versions of their papers.
  - Newspapers should make public notices prominent in their newspapers. By consistently putting them in prominent positions, newspapers can stress the importance of public notices, as well as make them easier to find by readers.
  - Newspapers should attest through the prescribed process of affidavits that public notices have been properly run according to law.
  - Newspapers should encourage reporters to peruse public notices as sources for news stories. Some of the best investigative reporting has started with reading a public notice.
- If your newspaper is one of the many NJPA member newspapers eligible to carry public notices, why not use these points as a checklist to see just how well you are doing at publishing—and safeguarding—public notices?

## New NJPA webinars offer convenient staff training

*Continues from Page 1*

pers, has trained many InDesign users and has helped newspapers convert to digital processes and pagination.

This fast-paced webinar will teach all the basics to get your staff up and running with InDesign for ads and pagination. A beginner session, but useful for review, it will cover the important features of InDesign including:

- Overview of the interface, control panels, panes and tools.
- Customizing the workspace
- Setting and manipulating type
- Placing and working with graphics

It will be a "watch and learn" experience. Ms. Warner will share her screen so you can easily see what she's talking about, as well as how to use all the tools. She will answer questions both during the webinar and afterward.

### Intro to Social Networking

Scheduled for Friday, March 5 is a webinar on Social Networking, given by Nathan

Wright of Lava Row Consulting. The session from 2 to 3 p.m. will cover all the "need-to-know" facts about the latest social media. What are they? And what aren't they?

Social media have great potential to reach more audiences and report news faster. Wright will give examples and best practices for reporters and news organizations to use social media platforms effectively. He will also address:

- Who is using them and how?
- How can newspapers make their web presence more "social"?
- How to become more "findable" on the web?
- What kinds of content management systems are out there and which are easiest to use?

Wright has more than 10 years in social media, web culture, emerging media, user interface design, branding and digital communications. He founded Lava Row in 2007 after serving as the interactive lead at The

Meyocks Group, an integrated branding firm. He often participates in many Tweet-Ups and Social Media Breakfasts. He writes about web strategy for The Des Moines Business Record's IowaBiz.com.

Registration is \$35 per site and the deadline is Tuesday, March 2. Late registrations are subject to a \$10 fee.

### More training

Other webinars scheduled through early July are listed below. Details on these will be available shortly, as will the fall schedule.

March 12 — Ad Sales 101, with Steve Fisher, Woodward Communications

April 2 — Social Networking: Connecting to Your Community, with Nathan Wright, Lava Row Consulting

April 16 — Intro to Photoshop, by the Graphic Arts Training & Consulting Group

May 6 — Ad Sales 201, session two with Steve Fisher, Woodward Communications

July 9 — Ad Sales 301, session three with Steve Fisher, Woodward Communications

## People & Papers

### Greater Media closes two flags, spares one

Greater Media Newspapers announced that it was closing two newspapers at the end of January, the *Brick Township Bulletin* and the *Woodbridge Sentinel*.

In a letter to advertisers, major account manager Stephen Lazar wrote that, despite rising printing and distribution costs in recent years, “we have avoided passing on those increases to our advertisers. ...

“In order to maintain our high standards of local news coverage, strong household penetration and stable advertising rates we will be making some strategic changes for 2010. Greater Media Newspapers will be consolidating our publications and decreasing coverage in some outer

markets,” he wrote. “Our plans are to expand our core market publications to cover the zip codes that have been eliminated through our consolidation.”

Originally, *The Examiner*, which covers the Allentown-Cream Ridge area, was also listed to be closed, but readers rallied to save their paper. Lazar said in a follow-up memo last week, “Despite no formal announcement ... regarding the demise of the Examiner, many of our readers have written us to voice their displeasure over losing their community paper.

“Over the past several days we have reassessed our decision ... and decided to continue to publish the *Examiner*.”

### Advance digital strategy names Siegel president

Randy Siegel, president of Parade Publications, will become president of local digital strategy for Advance Publications. In this new role, Siegel will work with Advance Internet, the local digital arm of Advance Publications, and with individual Advance newspapers.

The appointment, effective Feb. 1, was announced by Steve Newhouse, who runs digital strategy for Advance, the parent company of *Parade*. He said, “We believe Randy is the perfect person to ... leverage our online and print assets, develop new capabilities, expand our revenue base, and meet the ever-changing needs of consumers and advertisers.”

“I’m excited to work with Peter Weinberger, president of Advance Internet, and the newspaper publishers in our local markets to better position the organization for digital growth,” said Siegel. “Though the media world is filled with tremendous challenges, there are many opportunities and the digital space remains extremely promising.”

Siegel joined *Parade* in 2001 after working at The Washington Post Company and running his family’s publishing business in his hometown of Cleveland. He has written for newspapers around the country and his first children’s book will be published this fall.

— Poynter Online

### Paton to lead Journal Register

Journal Register Company has named John Paton, 52, as its CEO. He had been chairman, chief executive and president of the U.S. Hispanic media company impreMedia LLC, which he co-founded in 2003

Paton, who is currently on the board at Journal Register, has more than 30 years experience in newspapers and online media in the U.S., Canada and Europe.

In the last six years he and his partners built impreMedia into the top news and information company in online and print for the U.S. Hispanic community. In 2009, *Editor & Publisher* recognized him as its “publisher of the year.” He was also named a “Media All-Star” by *AdWeek* magazine’s *Marketing y Medios*.

Paton was a copyboy, reporter,  
— Continues on Page 5



**READY TO SHIP:** Peggy Stephan, NJPA’s member services manager, has a cartful of NJPA contest entries ready for UPS to deliver to the judges. Newspapers will learn their results in March, in time to sign up for the awards banquets. Press Night, the editorial and photography banquet, will be held on April 8. The Spring Awards Banquet for advertising will be on April 23. Look for details about these events, including registration information, in the mail this month.

### NJPA welcomes 4 new digital news members

New Jersey Press Association welcomes four digital news organizations as its newest members.

Approved by the board of trustees on Jan. 29 were: Baristanet.com; The Alternative Press; Hoboken 411.com, and Bayshore Courier News.

They are the first non-newspaper organizations to join NJPA’s new membership category, Digital News Organizations, which was approved by members at the association’s annual meeting last fall. Member newspapers’ websites also are DNO members.

Baristanet.com, based in Montclair, was established in May 2004. Owned and edited by Liz George, the site does not charge for access to news and information. Baristanet.com uses Sitemeter to measure the number of unique visitors to its site. Last November, results show that the site had 71,178 unique visitors, who viewed 431,016 pages.

The Alternative Press, New Providence, launched its website — [www.thealternativepress.com](http://www.thealternativepress.com) — in October 2008. Pub-

lisher Michael Shapiro does not charge for news and information. Google Analytics verifies user information. In November, the site drew 37,909 unique visitors, who viewed 91,327 pages.

Hoboken411.com was founded by Perry Klaussen in December 2005. The free site does not use a third-party verification service to measure its unique visitors.

Bayshore Courier News, Middletown, runs the website [www.bayshorenews.com](http://www.bayshorenews.com), which was founded in 2002. Denise Reinle is its publisher. News and information is available for free. The company uses Daisy Counter to measure visitors.

NJPA Executive Director John O’Brien welcomed the new members as “pioneers, ground-breakers and perhaps even as teachers for some of the rest of us. Going forward,” he said, “I am sure that the interests and issues we share will far outweigh any on which we differ. Speaking for the trustees and all the members of NJPA, welcome aboard.”

### Star-Ledger ups its price, drops pledge

On Jan. 4 the *Star-Ledger* increased its single copy price. A front page editor’s note said that copies sold Monday through Saturday by newsstands, street vendors and vending machines now cost \$1.

The note said, “*The Star-Ledger* is committed to serving our readers with New Jersey’s best news coverage at the most affordable rate possible. We appreciate your readership, your enthusiastic support of the paper during these uncertain economic times and the opportunity to serve you.”

On Jan. 11, the *Star-Ledger* announced that will end its “no-layoffs” pledge for non-union employees as of Feb. 5. A memo from Publisher Richard Veza gave staffers the news. Former Publisher George Arwady had forecast the action last August.

“They had announced it to give everyone time to be aware of it,” said Veza. “Nothing is going to happen at the *Ledger* on Feb. 5.” But he did not rule out more job cuts this year: “I don’t know, I have been there a week and I have to go in and get a look at the budget, and do my own budget. But right now there are no plans to lay people off.”

### NJ Supreme Court rules for disclosure

On Jan. 25, the New Jersey Supreme Court upheld a 2009 Appellate Division ruling that required Monmouth County to disclose a settlement agreement arising out of a sexual harassment lawsuit filed by a county employee.

The court ruled: “A governmental entity cannot enter into a voluntary agreement at the end of a public lawsuit to keep a settlement confidential, and then claim a ‘reasonable expectation of privacy’ in the amount of that settlement.”

For more information about the ruling, go to: <http://ogtf.lpcnj.org/201024Ya//A809AsburyParkPressvMonmouth.pdf>

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## New Jersey Press Association Government Affairs Update

George White

# Public notices: ready for battle

### Art Hall joins the GAC

Art Hall, publisher of the *Cape May County Herald Times* and immediate past chairman of NJPA's board, is the newest member of NJPA's Government Affairs Committee.

Chaired by Charles Nutt, *The Daily Journal*, Vineland, the GAC meets monthly, often by teleconference, to discuss which of the myriad of bills introduced by state lawmakers may affect NJPA members. The committee determines an official position, discusses appropriate action, and continues monitoring the bill for possible hearings, amendments, or movement.

The committee also monitors court cases and state government regulations that may impact government transparency, press freedom in general, and the ability of NJPA members to do their work and run their businesses properly.

In addition to Nutt and Hall, the active committee includes Jennifer Borg, North Jersey Media Group; Jim Kilgore, Packet Publications; Brian Malone, *The Times*, Trenton; Elizabeth Parker, Recorder Community Newspapers; David Worrall, Worrall Community Newspapers; attorneys Tom Cafferty and Nomi Lowy, and the NJPA's John O'Brien and George White.

### N.J. Legislature re-forms

The new 2010-2011 two-year session began Jan. 12 with changes in key leadership posts for both the state senate and the assembly. Of the 600+ bills the GAC actively tracked for NJPA members last session, 254 were immediately pre-filed for introduction in early January; each to re-start the winding process for passage anew, regardless of its status at the close of the final session.

NJPA uses [www.govnetnj.com](http://www.govnetnj.com) as an effective online tracking service. Its elaborate key-wording system effectively flags us on bills that may be of interest to the newspaper industry, and to the constitutional principles of open government and a free press. It notifies us the instant a tracked bill is scheduled for a hearing or a floor vote. This is invaluable, as the notice required by law to

schedule a hearing is just two business days. We don't want to be caught unprepared. Early warnings help us, when necessary, to coordinate NJPA testimony quickly and to contact bill sponsors and committee members as appropriate.

### Legislation to be fast-tracked?

As reported last issue, NJPA is concerned by reports that the new leadership is behind bills allowing governments and agencies to fulfill their legal obligations to provide required public notices by posting them on their own government websites—"in lieu of newspapers." We are preparing to do whatever is necessary to keep public notification where it belongs, in newspapers and on their websites.

### Member assessment

In late December, the NJPA Executive Committee approved an assessment of NJPA member publishers (those eligible by statute to carry notices). The funds collected by the assessment will be available as needed for both education and other activities aimed at keeping public notices in local newspapers. There is no reason not to support efforts by governments to provide even more flexibility via self-posting on websites or other such initiatives.

Princeton Public Affairs Group, a highly regarded bi-partisan lobbying firm, was selected to provide NJPA with month-by-month services in the expectation that effective action and deployment of resources may be required in short order. We all hope that the bill's supporters can be made to see the wisdom of continuing to publish notices in print. If any change is warranted, New Jersey's citizens deserve increased transparency, surely, not less.

### Public notice education

Among the reasons "web-only" public notices are ill-conceived:

- The continuing "digital divide" and the disenfranchisement already being felt by key segments of the population like senior citizens, low-income citizens, and many minority groups; those residents who tend to have far less broadband access, computer ac-

cess and web surfing skills.

- The scary lack of permanence and "archive-ability" afforded by cyberspace for the publication of legally required notices—as opposed to the relative permanence of notices appearing in printed newspapers. Of course, self-posting on government websites is a worthy ADDITIONAL service to the public, promoting greater accessibility—but it is no substitute for the greater reach and more permanent record afforded by newspapers.
- Alteration after self-posting, or at least the unfortunate possibility of it, in any "web-only" public notice scenario. Even causing our public officials (no matter how well-intentioned) and the citizens they serve to wonder whether required notices have been altered after their posting in cyberspace is a lousy prescription for building "trust in government." This is why newspapers and their websites so well fulfill the need for notices to be published on a "third-party" basis.
- "Website security" is an oxymoron of the highest order. How tempting for hackers, whether unscrupulous or comedic, to wreak havoc with required government postings!
- "Why don't you just get on the Web and search for them yourselves?" is at best a lazy approach to public notification, and a poor recipe for engaging people in the business of their government. Requiring concerned citizens to visit any number of possible government websites, of countless shapes and sizes, for a chance to identify any number of notices that might somehow affect them is a silly notion on its face.

### A cash cow?

Beyond the issues of transparency and government openness, there are claims by some lawmakers that newspaper publishers care only about the revenue they derive from public notices. These lawmakers say they want to curtail government spending and save taxpayer dollars however possible, that every little bit helps, and that by resisting this change newspapers are becom-

ing part of the larger spending problem, not the solution. To this claim, here are a few points to consider:

- The rates newspapers charge for notices have long been set by state statute. Our legislature hasn't increased these rates in 27 years. Has any other business category faced such absurd stagnation of its fees for so long? Has any government?
- For most municipalities in the state, public notice expenses today account for about eight one-hundredths of one percent (0.08%) of their spending. As a fraction of public spending it is tiny. Yet the benefits to the public are great.
- What's more, that tiny fraction includes several categories of public notices for which every penny is reimbursed by the private entity or individual the notice concerns, as with sheriff sales, board of adjustment and planning board notifications, etc. In reality, the expense of public notices born by taxpayers is less than half of what is budgeted by local governments, since they recover the full cost of most notices they place.

\* \* \* \* \*

Had enough? So have I. For now we're counting on our new legislative leaders to be open-minded when considering the unintended consequences of this idea. We trust they'll realize that "we'll just put 'em on the Internet and save a lot of money" is both a bad idea and a bad way to serve their constituents, particularly at a time when more accessibility and openness is so desperately desired, not less.

Meetings are being arranged for a contingent of NJPA publishers to visit with legislative leaders and supporters of "web-only" legislation. We're counting on helping them to see that good government comes with a price and that the savings they expect from moving notices onto government websites would be dwarfed by the consequences.

The bill of high concern is A560. It can be found at [www.njleg.state.nj.us](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us) and entering A560. Call me at (609) 406-0600, ext. 30, if you want to talk live.



**HAPPIER DAYS:** The Obie Award was presented last April to *The Press of Atlantic City* at NJPA's Spring Awards Banquet, in recognition of their winning the most points in the 2008 Better Newspaper Contest. In this photo from that event, Larry Fusaro, Stacy Wagner, Obie and Dave Caywood celebrate their success.

## 'Obie' award held hostage!

The Obie Award has been kidnapped, and authorities are begging anyone with information about the pint-sized prize to aid in its recovery.

A hotline has been installed for that purpose at NJPA headquarters.

The trophy disappeared from its display area at *The Press of Atlantic City* sometime in January. In its place, *Press* staffers found a note, apparently left by the kidnapper(s). The note was made with letters cut from newspaper headlines and ads. It read, "The OB award was kidnapped."

A photo of him, hooded and bound like a hostage victim, arrived at NJPA's office late last month. Scrawled on its back in

non-repro blue ink was the cryptic line: "Details to follow."

"Nothing like this has ever happened before," said John O'Brien, executive director of NJPA. "I'm mystified why anyone would kidnap the Obie. They don't even know how to spell his name correctly! I'm known as O'B; he is Obie."

On Feb. 1, NJPA received the photo shown on Page One and this ransom note:

In exchange for Obie's safe return, we demand one million dollars in small bills only!

If this is not possible, we will settle for two trays of brownies (frosted), 24 cupcakes (assorted), one pound of dark chocolate with almonds, and three Boxes of Joe from Dunkin' Donuts.

All demands must be met by April 23rd at 5 p.m. or else!  
Signed, The Kidnappers

O'Brien pleaded for the safe return of the beloved trophy. "I hope someone releases it – or rescues it – before our annual event." Obie is scheduled to be awarded at the NJPA Spring Awards Banquet on Friday, April 12 at the Trenton Marriott. *The Press of Atlantic City* earned the award last spring after compiling the most points in NJPA's Retail Advertising Contest.

O'Brien said no thought has been given to any "Plan B" or stand-in for the awards banquet. "Right now we're all just trying to get Obie back safely," he said. "Our prayers are with him and with all those whose lives he has brightened over the years."

O'Brien asks any one with information to contact him at (609) 406-0600, ext. 13 or jjo-brien@njpa.org. All communications will be treated confidentially and with a straight face.



## New Jersey Newspaper Network

Amy Lear  
NJNN Director

## Good vibes!

It's a new year and with it has come a flurry of requests from ad agencies and advertisers who want to position themselves for more revenue in 2010.

Many of these customers rely on our NJNN team to provide quick, timely information on our members' rate changes, new product launches, special sections, size updates, the logistics of material delivery, and now, more than ever, details on digital campaign planning and web advertising packages.

We are thrilled to have fresh research from the recent Belden Interactive Digital Audience Measurement Survey. It is very positive for our members and will help you add punch to your proposals! (For more details, see the related article on Page 1.) Results of this study will be presented to advertisers and ad agencies at a meeting on the morning of Wednesday, Feb. 24. Details to follow next week.

Meanwhile, take a quick peek at a few of the insights the survey reveals. The chart below shows that New Jersey adults are hungry for news and information. Further measurement proves that website visitors are also reading printed newspapers. Note that only 19% of adults surveyed visit a

newspaper website *instead of* the print edition, yet three-fourths visit the site every day and nearly 50% do so to keep up with local news.

Many thanks to all NJPA members who supported this statewide study and to the team at Belden (especially "New Jersey's own" Ed Efchak) for the detailed and comprehensive attention they applied to this important NJPA initiative.

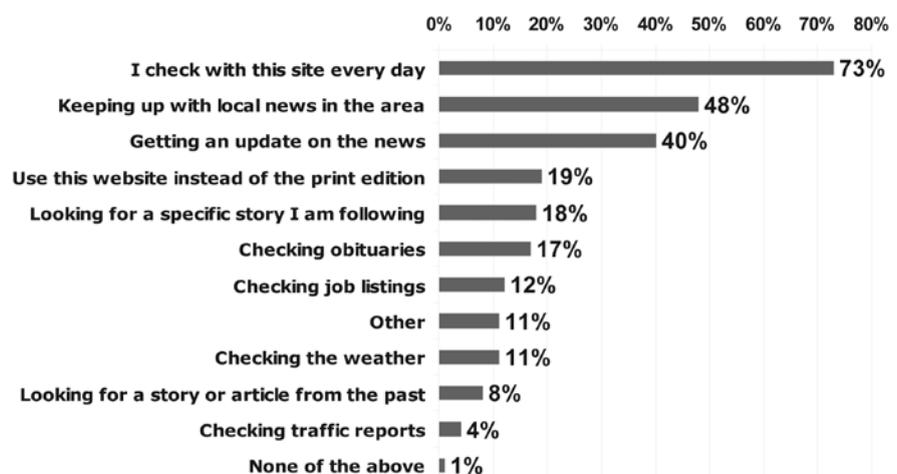
### Boost your sales

Looking for ways to boost sales and ad revenue in 2010? Take a second look at the NJPA statewide advertising networks. Our Statewide Classified Ad Network (SCAN) and small-space 2x2 display ad program offer cost-effective solutions for small-budget advertisers with a statewide or regional message. Remember, your newspaper can earn up to \$198 for each SCAN ad sale and up to \$625 per 2x2 ad sold. Call Diane Trent at 609-406-0600, ext. 24, for more information or check details on the Web at [www.njpa.org/njnn](http://www.njpa.org/njnn).

Think of NJNN as a resource to support your sales efforts, enhance your service, expand your product offerings and most of all, to grow your revenue. We're here to help you!

### General Drivers – Top Items

#### Habit, Localness, And "Need To Know" Are The Top Three Primary Drivers To New Jersey Newspaper Websites



Why did you visit Localsite.com today? (Check as many as apply)



Total Answering: 4,770

Belden Interactive, NJ Digital Audience Survey, Released January 2010

## Paton to lead Journal Register

*Continues from Page 3*

city editor, assistant managing editor and editor in chief before moving to the business side. He has published two daily newspapers and been vice president of Sun Media, now Canada's largest newspaper company, and chief executive of [www.canoe.com](http://www.canoe.com) as well as a board member of public and privately-held media companies.

Board Chair Joseph A. Ripp said, "John has a tremendous track record of transforming newspaper and media organizations to compete in today's digital world. ... He has been recognized as a visionary in the industry and we are confident that he will bring many new and exciting ideas and initiatives to reinvigorate Journal Register Company."

# Member websites score in research survey!

Continues from Page 1

that he pointed out in the research results. "It is a small niche but it represents a large revenue opportunity," Efchak said after the session. "How many other opportunities exist with similar, or even larger, potential?"

Among users of New Jersey newspaper websites, almost 90% used the Internet within the past week to find information about a product or service. The research shows that local newspapers and their websites are a dominant source of advertising information.

In addition to news and information, the research shows that people like to participate in newspaper website forums. They like reading user-generated comments and contributing their own. They like using on-site photo galleries.

There is some variety in what interests users of local newspaper websites, depending on age and gender, but that's expected, Efchak said. "It's no surprise that younger visitors are more interested in classifieds, and older folks in looking at obituaries."

"There is also a lot of cross-usage - looking at newspaper sites, at other local or regional news



**ENGAGED AUDIENCE:** NJPA members listen carefully as Ed Efchak, senior consultant with Belden Interactive, shares the good news about NJPA's recently completed research. He said that the people who use New Jersey newspaper websites have great demographics and visit their local papers' sites frequently. They also like reading their daily and weekly newspapers in print.

or information sites, and print readership," said Efchak. Some 70% of respondents said that they read or look at a local daily paper, 61% at a local weekly. And 56% read both a local daily and a weekly. In addition, 34% visit another local or regional news site every day.

Another interesting fact - to get to their local newspaper website nearly 50% of those surveyed click on a bookmark they have set up in their Internet browser. Fully 35% know and type in the site's URL.

Much more information, especially relating to buying intentions, is included in the PowerPoint presentation Efchak showed at last week's session. Newspapers that contributed to the cost of the survey received copies of the results by email. Those that opted to purchase additional research have also been

sent their individual results.

However, Efchak stressed that his presentation was an "informational discussion, not a marketing discussion."

Amy Lear announced that he will return to New Jersey for "an advertising specific session" on Feb. 24. Advertisers and ad agencies will be invited to hear the survey results. Details about the time and location were being finalized at press time, but information will be available soon in NJPA Notes, the association's weekly e-newsletter, and on its website at [www.njpa.org](http://www.njpa.org).

After the advertising presentation, NJPA will produce information that member newspapers can use for marketing discussions with their advertisers.

For questions about the survey, please contact Amy Lear at (609) 406-0600, ext. 15, or [aclear@njpa.org](mailto:aclear@njpa.org).

## About the survey

The Belden study was conducted via online intercept surveys at NJPA member websites - research-speak for a pop-up window that asked site visitors to take the survey. As an incentive to participate, visitors who completed the survey were entered in a sweepstakes that offered a \$1,000 grand prize. Participants took an average of about 15 minutes to self-administer, or complete, the survey. Then they were taken back to the newspaper site to continue their visit.

Eighteen newspaper websites helped sponsor the research project, which netted 4,770 completed surveys. These were the results presented on Jan. 29. Sixteen of the participating newspaper sites requested additional, in-depth research about their own sites. They received supplemental, proprietary reports about their websites specifically.

## Thank you!

### to the Online Advisory Committee

NJPA's Online Advisory Committee was responsible for developing the survey with the Belden research team and encouraging member newspapers to participate.

The chair of the committee is Madhavi Saifee of the *Princeton Packet*. Committee members are: Barbara Chodos of NJ.com; Tim Gerstmyer of *The Record*, *Herald News* and *NorthJersey.com*; Preston Gibson of Digital Press Consortium and the *Cape May County Herald Times*; Ted Mann of Gannett New Jersey, and Alisha Owens of *The Press of Atlantic City*.

Working with the committee from the NJPA staff are Amy Lear, director of ad placement services, and Brian Critchley, marketing/research manager.

The committee will continue exploring for more initiatives that will benefit our multi-media news members.

### Demographics

#### The New Jersey Newspaper Website Audience Attracts A Highly Desirable Visitors Mix...

Demographic	Percentage or Specified Data
Gender	54% Men
Median Age (adults)	48 Years
Median Income	\$89,600
Education (College Grad.+)	54%
Home ownership	71%
Employed	79%
Permanent residents	86%
Executive/Managerial	47%

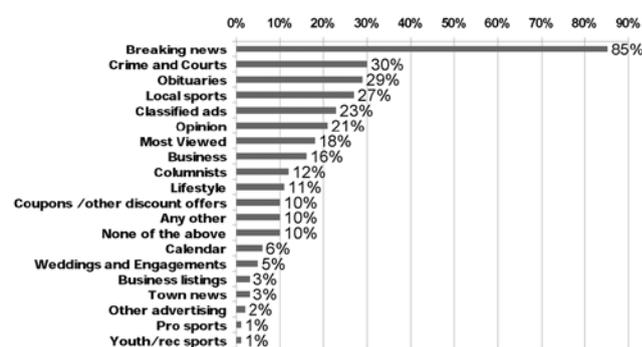


Sample Base of All Respondents : 4,767



### General Drivers - Top Items

#### Breaking News, Crime and Obituaries Lead Topical Interest



Which of the following sections and features at LocalSite.com do you visit or use regularly?

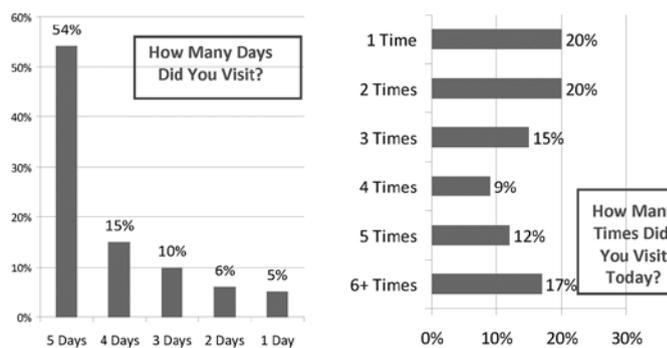


Total Answering: 4,770



### Frequency

#### Over The Last Five Weekdays, More Than Half of All Site Visitors Visited Every Day With 80% Returning To The Site More Than Once On The Last Weekday Visited



Total Answering: 4,770



### Ad Information

#### Coupons, Restaurants, Local Retail, and Jobs Are The Most Sought After Items of Advertising Among New Jersey Newspaper Website Visitors

Item or Category	Percentage
Real estate to buy or rent	32%
Jobs	48%
New or used autos and trucks	21%
Restaurants and movie theatres	58%
Local retail stores	48%
Travel and entertainment	38%
Professional services (health, financial, education)	21%
Special programs /offers for NJ residents	38%
Coupons or discount offers	60%
Contests, samples, or give-away programs	36%
None of the above	10%

Which of the following, if any, are you VERY INTERESTED in seeing or hearing advertised on local or regional Web sites. (Select as many as apply.)



Total Answering: 4,770



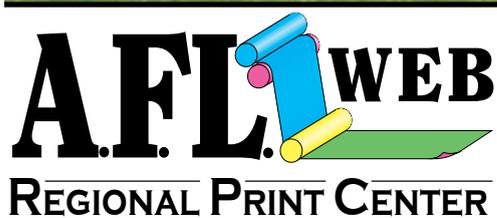
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### CONTACTS:

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Mark Henderson, *Executive Vice President* ([mhenderson@aflwebprinting.com](mailto:mhenderson@aflwebprinting.com))

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# A.F.L. Web Printing casts net for newspapers

By Chuck Moozakis Editor in Chief

AFL Web Printing this summer will cap off the second phase of a multimillion-dollar project to beef up its printing infrastructure as the Voorhees, N.J., commercial printer fortifies its newspaper production outsourcing services.

Now dubbing itself a Regional Print Center, AFL, under the direction of President and CEO Dennis G. Forchic, believes it now has the required horsepower it needs to aggressively court new newspaper clients.

That horsepower is based in part on 20 4-color towers from Manugraph DGM Inc. that are anchoring AFL's one-year-old Secaucus, N.J., plant. The first 12 went on-edition last year; the remaining eight will be commissioned this summer.

The 35-year-old family-owned firm already prints five daily newspapers from its two plants, including The Financial Times, Women's Wear Daily and Metro's New York and Philadelphia editions. And more papers are on tap, Forchic said. All told, AFL is now producing approximately 500,000 daily newspapers each night.

## • Branching out

"We are still first and foremost a commercial printer," Forchic said, citing the firm's workload of more than 400 commercial press runs per week, "but over the last decade we've been able to complement our capabilities by offering daily newspaper production."

Forchic said the time is ripe to reach out to newspapers, particularly as the newspaper industry tries to find ways to offset plummeting ad revenues.

"Publishers should become digital media content companies, and not manufacturers," he said. "But I also believe that the printed product remains the most effective way to draw the public back to the publisher's digital content."

"We have been working on this outsourcing model for years now, and we're ready to move forward."

AFL has spent millions of dollars laying the foundation to support its strategy. Some of that money came from DFW Capital Partners, a Teaneck, N.J.-based financial investment firm that focuses on companies offering significant growth potential.



Dennis G. Forchic, CEO of A.F.L. Web Printing, said the time is ripe to court newspaper clients.

Forchic said the 2008 infusion didn't change the family's role in AFL; all four original Forchic family members retain equity stakes and Forchic himself increased his investment in the company, thus remaining AFL's largest individual shareholder. "We now have a financial partner that understands and agrees with the notion of the regional print center," he said of DFW's participation.

"As that regional print center concept solidifies, we are now in a better position to continue to invest in our existing plants as well as to expand into other geographical locations, he said."

In the meantime, Forchic is concentrating on exploiting the production infrastructure housed at AFL's two facilities: the original Voorhees plant, with 115,000 square feet, and the 150,000 square-foot Secaucus plant, which opened for business last summer.

By this summer, the two facilities will house nine press lines spanning more than 160 singlewide printing units — the vast majority from MDGM — as well as associated postpress, mailing, distribution and prepress equipment.

In many ways, AFL in 2009 is the logical conclusion of a journey begun 14 years ago, when Forchic

said he first understood that providing printing and packaging services to newspapers would make sense.

"In the early 1990s (AFL was) in a 24,000-square-foot facility in Gloucester City (N.J.)," he said. "We were considering expanding our operations at a time when the Internet was threatening to make the world a paperless society."

## • Found inspiration

On a visit to the Interweb plant in suburban Toronto to look at equipment, Forchic said he saw The Globe and Mail on the press "and had an epiphany."

"The Internet was not going to put printers out of business. Instead, it offered an opportunity: A daily newspaper outsourcing its production to a family-owned commercial printer. We decided to move forward with the expansion."

In 2000, AFL picked up its first daily newspaper client, Metro, and over the past several years, "we have been moving, quietly, toward a goal" of offering outsourced printing services to more newspapers, Forchic said.

To do that, Forchic said he required reliable, sophisticated and versatile technology.

AFL focused on a select number of suppliers with which to forge partnerships, chief among them MDGM, Agfa, Muller Martini Mailroom Systems Inc. and U.K.-based MIS/ERP software developer Technique Inc.

Forchic said he knew he wanted to base production on singlewide presses, due in part to their faster make ready and flexibility.

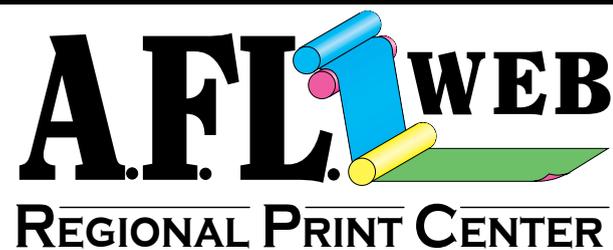
## • General migration

"We are a transactional printer," he said, citing how singlewide machines better support that business strategy. At the same time, the decrease in newspaper page counts and press runs has allowed printers such as AFL to compete in a production universe that was formerly dominated by doublewide presses.

"There is a general migration now to the types of presses we run — the singlewide, one-around world," Forchic said.

## A.F.L. Web Printing's Value Proposition

It is our goal to be the publisher's resource of choice. We are passionate about creating long-term partnerships which contribute to sustained profitability for both organizations. In order to achieve this we look beyond our clients' current needs while at the same time focusing on our most valuable asset: Our Employees. We recognize each employee as an individual and offer the potential for growth through structured development and career opportunities. The ultimate result must be the highest level of quality and customer satisfaction. This approach creates security, stability, and growth for our clients, employees and A.F.L. - today and in the future.



CONT  
Darrin Forchic, Client Relations Manager  
Mark Henderson, Executive Vice President

“We’re doing upwards of 500 press runs per week, with an average quantity of below 30,000 copies, so that’s a lot of make readies. The emergence of targeted niche publications, with shorter runs, fits well with our model.”

“I’m not averse to the (doublewide) world, and if we had the right account relationships we could consider it,” he said. “But we believe our model to be the conduit to the next phase of the industry.”

To that end, AFL equipped its Secaucus plant with MDGM’s 440 semi commercial singlewide press, configured as a single line. The 80 units, equipped with four 1240 folders, will give AFL the flexibility to mix and match towers to folders as needed.

The 45,000-copy-per-hour units, engineered with three ink formers and three oscillators, also feature automatic color-to-color register and closed-loop in feeds on any web, said Dave Moreland, MDGM’s vice president of sales. “Almost any tower can go to any folder, and it gives AFL maximum flexibility and productivity. It’s the same concept that’s proven itself well over the years in the Voorhees plant.”

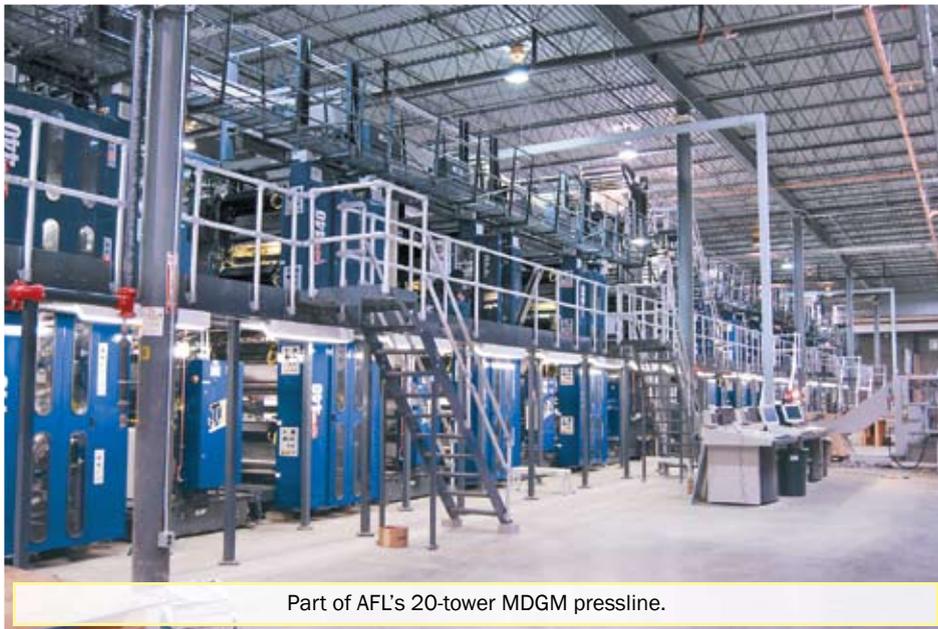
Prepress, meantime, is based on violet computer-to-plate systems from Agfa and plate handling equipment from Burgess Industries Inc., while postpress is dominated by inserters from Muller Martini Mailroom Systems Inc.

But the heart of AFL’s operation is Technique’s workflow and production management software. The applications are hosted on servers at AFL’s corporate office, allowing AFL to orchestrate all of its systems, from prepress to postpress, at both production sites through a single conduit.

“The software is the key,” Forchic said. “Tech-

nique worked for three years to create software to allow both commercial and daily (newspaper) production, in multiple sites, from one integrated system. It’s become the backbone of what we do.”

Forchic credits AFL’s 350-plus employees for making the concept work. “At the end of the day, our employees remain our most important asset. As CEO, I provide the company an opportunity to go in a certain direction, but we only get there because of the effort undertaken by our employees.”



Part of AFL’s 20-tower MDGM pressline.

Forchic acknowledges he’s not the only commercial printer pursuing newspapers. Transcontinental Inc. and Southwest Offset in Southern California already print such major dailies as The (Toronto) Globe and Mail, The New York Times, and the (Los Angeles) Daily News. And Transcontinental this June is expected to open its \$200 million plant in Fremont, Calif., to print the San Francisco Chronicle and other titles.

But Forchic said AFL has been able to carve a niche — based on singlewide presses, automation and decades of experience satisfying commercial customers — which it can exploit, even as newspapers attempt to diversify their own revenues by courting commercial accounts.

“I don’t believe a newspaper can justify investing in a new press,” Forchic said. “They simply can’t service the overall marketplace as well as a commercial printer.”

“We have a different inherent business model. We live and die by servicing our customers and making them stronger. Most newspapers never experienced this type of mentality from their production department.”

Basing AFL’s business on nimble and versatile singlewide presses, meantime, allows AFL to help publishers “look at both sides of the balance sheet by offering new revenue streams not available on larger format newspaper presses,” he said.

#### • Cutting won’t work

“If newspapers simply continue to focus on cost cutting, they will eventually cut themselves out of business. We need to change our paradigm.”

Forchic concedes the current economic landscape has further validated the concept of outsourcing, but he also understands the challenges all printers face as they attempt to redefine their own businesses.

“There will be fewer printers coming out of this downturn,” he said. “But we believe as this industry consolidates, our regional print center concept will help ensure our success.”

### The lowdown: AFL has more than 160 press units and nine inserting machines at its two New Jersey facilities.

#### Secaucus, N.J.

- 80 MDGM 440 units, configured as 20 towers\*
- 4 MDGM 1:2:2 1240 jaw folders, with upper formers\*
- Jardis Industries zero-speed splicers, Rima and Gammerler stackers
- CC1 4-color automatic register controls
- Perretta Graphics remote ink control and preset system
- Inline saddle stitching each folder
- Inline quarterfolding each folder MMMS SLS-3000 inserters

#### Voorhees, N.J.

- 34 Mercury (Goss International) units
- 2 JF35 combination folders with upper formers
- 37 Goss and MDGM 430 units Tensor Group Inc. and SSC combination folders
- 20 MDGM 430 units
- Inline saddle stitching
- GMI remote inking
- CC1 4-color automatic register control

Source: AFL Web

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## Our Man in Thailand:

# New media, health news and the environment

New Jersey's favorite globe-trotting educator has been at it again. Just back from Thailand is Jerry Aumente, professor emeritus in the School of Communication and Information at Rutgers University. Here is Part 2 of his report on how new media are being used to assist traditional journalists and the public. His full presentation, including examples of outstanding environmental reporting, may be found on NJPA's website: [www.njpa.org](http://www.njpa.org).

\*\*\*\*\*

By Jerome Aumente

Second of two parts

Here are excerpts from the presentation I gave entitled "Journalistic Coverage of Environmental Health Issues in the Age of the Internet and Newer Media."

\*\*\*\*\*

### ETHICAL CONCERNS IN THE NEWER DIGITAL WORLD

The environmental health journalist has dazzling delivery speeds in the newer digital world of the Internet, but the ethical concerns are that much greater. The natural check points in reporting, writing and presenting stories in newspapers or magazines allowed for more layers of careful review—with the reporter, the editor and the copy editor checking and double checking work for accuracy and clarity. With the Internet, these backstops may increasingly disappear. Newspapers are cutting back on copy editors or even disbanding newsrooms for economic reasons. "Mojos" or mobile reporters, operating at the scene, at home or in their autos may compose and send a text story instantly over the Internet along with photos and video.

It is important for online journalists to be rigorously trained and embrace ethical standards that value caution in what may instantly go out to a global audience. With environmental health reporting, incorrect or sensationally worded facts might trigger panic during a health crisis or in the aftermath of a devastating hurricane or tsunami when entire populations are stressed. Massive crowds may incorrectly flee from perceived dangers, make panicky decisions on evacuation, or riot over scarce water, food and medical supplies. In a matter of hours needless death and destruction may result from sensational,



**GOOD ENVIRONMENT:** Jerry Aumente, center in back row, joined faculty from Rutgers Environmental Science programs and representatives from the U.S. Center for Disease Control for a workshop in Thailand. Aumente taught journalism students at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University about using new media to research and report environmental and health issues.

inaccurate press reports.

Misinformation is always a problem, but is compounded with the ease of the Internet as a megaphone for anyone, regardless of training or standards, sending out incorrect information into the blogosphere. One advantage with the Internet is the ability to quickly send out corrections. The challenge is to see that there is enough peer and professional pressure to make corrections in a timely fashion.

In the current debate within the United States for a major overhaul of health insurance, misinformation has been a serious problem with deliberate distortions, often fueled by extremist ideology over the role of government vs. the private sector. Organizations such as the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania offer an antidote to poisonous misinformation through its service: [www.factcheck.org](http://www.factcheck.org). In a clear, concise format it sets forth competing claims, dissects and analyzes assertions, and sets the record straight. It also includes complete sources on which it based its conclusions so that you can connect to the hyperlinks for the full picture. We have here a model for the Internet self-correcting errors of reporting. The Wikipedia approach in which many people reviewing, commenting, refining and correcting an item on an

open website is another, but slower, approach.

Another ethical concern in this Internet era is the invasion of privacy that can occur when medical records and other personal data are too easily gathered in the aggregate with computer-based approaches. Environmental health and medical journalists can gather thousands, even millions, of reports and files, and sometimes the individual, his or her family and children may be vulnerable to privacy invasion. Policy must be decided at a news organization that addresses how to use CAR (Computer-Assisted Reporting) as a tool, not a weapon intruding on privacy.

Ethical codes and standards must be reviewed periodically at a news organization in order just to keep up with the changing conditions brought about by advances in technology. For instance, the ease with which anyone can snap a cell phone photo or record video and then instantly put it out on the Internet should put new limits on just how vivid or intrusive images of suffering and death should be used by news organizations (which increasingly encourage people to send in photos and video from the scene).

We all live downstream when it comes to news and information flowing toward us from the Internet and we are vulnerable to sources that muddy or poison this water. We need brand names we can trust when it comes to supplying news and information. This means knowing that the news comes from reporters and editors who honor professional standards, and are subject to rebuke and punishment for violating these standards. The sources of the information must be impartial, not from medical and health research communities beholden to pharmaceutical companies for research grants or "perks." The reporters and editors must be free of

any bias or monetary stake in the information. They should be able to spot "junk science" and explain why it is incorrect. Owners of the news media must stay out of news-making decisions, especially if they have competing financial interests or powerful friends they might wish to ingratiate.

The use of ombudsmen, or public editors, at respected publications such as *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* represent the people's interests – encouraging correspondence from readers, investigating the reporting and correcting, prominently and promptly, any errors. The same model could be used across the entire new media and Internet spectrum.

There is greater attention today to "media literacy"—the idea that everyone in our society should be literate in how the news and entertainment media function, and how informed users can identify good from bad information. The scrutiny of good and bad information is greatly helped by publications and websites that provide solid media criticism. In the U.S., you might look at Nieman Reports of Harvard University ([www.niemanreports.org](http://www.niemanreports.org)) and the related websites of the Nieman Foundation; Columbia Journalism Review ([www.cjr.org](http://www.cjr.org)) and related sites at Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism; American Journalism Review at the University of Maryland School of Journalism ([www.ajr.org](http://www.ajr.org)), and Quill Magazine of the Society of Professional Journalists, ([www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org)). The Poynter Institute ([www.poynter.org](http://www.poynter.org)), The Committee of Concerned Journalists and the media studies reports found at the Pew Center for the Press and the People are other good sources worth searching on the Internet.

Internationally, many press and media organizations provide useful and often compelling information on press performance and safety. Look for instance at the Reporters Without Borders for Press Freedom website ([www.rsf.org](http://www.rsf.org)) and its September 2009 report: "The Dangers for Journalists Who Expose Environmental Issues."

### IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH JOURNALISM THROUGH COOPERATION WITH THE SCIENCE AND HEALTH COMMUNITY

In this increasingly complex world of environmental health and medical journalism, it is the obligation of both traditional news media and the emerging newer media formats of the Internet to provide news and information that is timely, clear, accurate, carefully researched, critically analyzed, free of technical jargon, presented in compelling human terms and accessible to the general population. Emphasize "news you can use."

The news media must preserve their role  
— Continues on Page 14

## SAVE THESE DATES!

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Thursday, April 8

5 pm — Cocktail reception

6 pm — Banquet Dinner

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Friday, April 23

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7 pm — Banquet Dinner

Trenton Marriott at Lafayette Yard



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Hamilton, NJ 08691

**David Weinstein**  
Manager, Public &  
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## Obituary

### Steven Lovelady, editor

Steven Lovelady, 66, a former *Philadelphia Inquirer* managing editor whose sharp work helped earn Pulitzer Prizes, died of cancer on Jan. 15 in Key West, Fla. He died under hospice care. He and his wife, Ann Kolson, had driven from their home in New York City so he could spend his last days at his beloved vacation home in the Keys.

"His talent as an editor, as a journalist, and an artist, was transformative ... for many of us in terms of how we understood the craft of journalism," wrote former *Inquirer* editor Maxwell King.

Mr. Lovelady worked closely with Donald Barlett and James Steele, *The Inquirer's* legendary investigative team. They won later at *Time*, where Mr. Lovelady was also their editor.

"Steve was a great conceptual editor, capable of turning the complicated into something simple, usually with a bold word or phrase," said Steele. "With his irreverent sense of humor, he was born to be in the newsroom of a big newspaper."

"Steve Lovelady was a magician," said James Naughton, a former *Inquirer* executive editor. He said Mr. Lovelady's talent seemed so easy that *The Inquirer's* owners had little appreciation that he was a mastermind behind many of the 17 Pulitzers the paper won under editor Gene Roberts Jr.

Mr. Lovelady's signature response to weak writing was, "My eyes glazeth over," recalled Susan Q. Stranahan, a

former *Inquirer* writer who worked with him at Campaign Desk.

Mr. Lovelady grew up in Worland, Wyo., and delivered newspapers on his bicycle in 30-below-zero weather, as he recounted in a humorous piece. He graduated from the University of Missouri School of Journalism in 1965, and went to *The Wall Street Journal*. There he was responsible for honing the highly readable front page stories that were a hallmark of the newspaper. His extraordinary eye became legendary and, at 29, he was among the first people Roberts hired when he took over at *The Inquirer* in 1972.

**Brilliant editor**

"He really single-handedly transformed the way a lot of young reporters thought of stories," said William Marimow, editor of *The Inquirer*, who was among the reporters Mr. Lovelady influenced.

"As an editor, Steve was one of a kind," said Barlett. "He had no equal. He could reduce the most complex subject to a sentence, and he did his best editing by scribbling notes to us on the back of envelopes or napkins."

But Mr. Lovelady was loath to draw attention to himself. "He was brilliant, but he ... never sought the limelight or credit," said Arlene Notoro Morgan, a former *Inquirer* editor who is now associate dean at the Columbia School of Journalism. "Not many editors ... can match him."

Mr. Lovelady is survived by his wife, a former *Inquirer* writer; daughters Sara and Stephanie, and two grandchildren. A memorial service will be held in the spring.

— *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

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# Aumente on new media, health news and the environment

*Continues from Page 11*

of providing objective, unbiased reports that contribute to public understanding and wiser public policy. They must continue their role as watchdog, ferreting out wrongdoing, while also adhering to the best ethical standards and self-policing of themselves. With this said, there are many ways to bridge the gap with the scientific and environmental health communities in a spirit of cooperation with the news and information professions.

We saw earlier [in part 1 of this report, published last month in *InPrint* and available on the NJPA website: [njpa.org](http://njpa.org)], the fine articles that resulted from investigative reporters at *USA Today* cooperating with specialists from the universities in the environmental protection and public health sectors to expose dangerously toxic levels of air pollution that endangered school children.

Here are some thoughts on ways to improve contact and understanding between the environmental health journalists and the scientific and public health communities:

- Meetings and symposia that bring together journalists and environmental health experts in a harmonious, non-threatening atmosphere to explore specific concerns and identify mutual problems that must be solved.
- Solidify such contacts with follow-up programs and exchanges via the Internet and web conferencing. Strive for concrete results.

- Major investigative or enterprise reporting projects that are planned from the outset to include environmental health experts who not only provide background and guidance, but also cooperate in the preparation of articles, commentary or the design of multimedia presentations via the Internet.
- University curriculum development that encourages dual majors in journalism and communications studies with concentration in the health, medical, biological and environmental sciences. Internships and joint theses that value and encourage such crossovers.
- Opportunities for environmental health journalists to observe government, nongovernmental and research operations, and for environmental health specialists to spend time at news media organizations.
- Reach out to young people in the high schools and universities and show them the opportunities available for future professionals who have multimedia journalism skills and a solid grounding in the environmental health sciences. Develop special scholarship and summer study opportunities.
- Pay attention to the emerging cadres of "citizen journalists" and invite in selected candidates for the above initiatives. Open the gates to the newer communication patterns developing around us and innovate.
- Develop environmental health documentation projects for young people, as early as grammar and high school, to use the multimedia tools and the Internet to report on local and regional issues of environmental health. Bring in senior journalists, environmental scientists and college students as mentors.

In all this, show the public pol-

icy and political steps needed to implement sound environmental health actions through better media reporting.

Utilize the Internet and newer media formats to develop advanced forms of continuing education accessible to environmental health journalists, and programs for those who provide

news and information to the news media from the governmental, corporate and nongovernmental sector.

Society is at a major crossroad as it confronts newer media and Internet formats that affect every aspect of how news and information are delivered, and how people access it and incorporate

into their lives. Environmental health journalism should be one priority—with tremendous implications for how we will formulate public policy and also make individual decisions affecting ourselves, our loved ones and friends.

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## Check your coverage of sensitive issues

**By Jim Pumarlo**

How many editors have faced complaints about reporting bad news—or, put another way—making an uncomfortable news decision? Pressed by a reader for the rationale, you've replied, "That's our policy," or "It doesn't meet our guidelines." Yet, in the calm and privacy of your office, you reflect, "We could have done a better job."

The examples of tough issues are numerous, especially in community newspapers. Stories can range from following teacher negotiations or publishing salaries of public officials to reporting business layoffs or interviewing families of homicide victims.

Consider three such sensitive issues:

- A high school hockey team, picked by many to win the state title, opens its season without its starting goalie who is serving a suspension for a state high school league violation. The team still wins, thanks in part to a stellar performance by a backup goalie with no varsity experience. What do you report?
  - A city dump truck collides with a motorcyclist, killing the cyclist. A clearly distraught truck driver crouches at the scene, consoled by a passer-by. Your photographer happens to pass the scene minutes after the collision, capturing the full emotions in a photo. Do you publish the photo?
  - An elementary-school boy commits suicide, apparently the result of excessive ribbing by classmates. The aftermath of this suicide, more so than others we have witnessed in the community, lingers in the school. How do you handle the story?
- All of these incidents are being talked about in the community. They have an impact on people. They are sensitive issues. And they are news. They should be

reported if newspapers are to represent themselves as a living history of their home towns. Reporting these stories in a responsible fashion is a requisite for community newspapers to remain relevant, especially during these rapidly changing times.

It's natural, and healthy, for newsrooms to pause and consider whether readers are served by the reporting of certain news. Here is one checklist, and some accompanying rationale, that advocates the publication of challenging stories.

**Is it true?** Newspapers routinely report why athletes are "missing in action"—whether due to an injury, a family emergency or a college recruiting trip. Sitting on a bench for violating school or high school league rules is equally newsworthy.

**What is the impact of an event?** It's standard procedure at most schools to call in counselors in the wake of an untimely death of a classmate, whether the death is due to natural causes or other reasons. The death automatically becomes conversation in homes. Can newspapers ignore the story?

**Is the report fair?** Teacher salary negotiations often are emotional and acrimonious. At the same time, the salaries can represent 75% of a school district's budget. Newspapers perform a vital service by keeping a community abreast of contract talks, giving equal attention to all sides and issues.

**Is it a public or strictly private issue?** A major employer's closing has tremendous economic impact on a community. The news begs for explanation and interpretation.

**Will the story make a difference?** A newspaper's attention to a fatal accident, including a photo, can become a springboard for action to install traffic signals at a dangerous intersection.

**Will the truth quell rumors?**

A newspaper receives word from an elementary school student that a high school teacher lost all his fingers in a lab experiment—the "news" is spreading quickly. An investigation reveals that the teacher lost a finger tip. A responsible article sets the record straight.

**How would you justify your decision to readers?** Certain stories are expected to generate reader reaction, and editors should be prepared to answer questions. The circumstances might provide excellent fodder for a column to readers.

**How would you treat the story if you were the subject?** This question is not intended to prompt rejection of a story. Rather, it's a reminder to treat topics with sensitivity.

In the end, fairness and consistency should be guiding principles for any story, and they are especially important when dealing with sensitive subjects.

Another element—discussion—is common to all of these questions in deciding whether and what to publish. All decisions are stronger if the options are talked about with as many individuals as possible—people within and outside of the newsroom. Discussion doesn't mean consensus will be developed, but it assures that editors will get many perspectives before making a final call.

*Jim Pumarlo writes, speaks and provides training on Community Newsroom Success Strategies. He is author of "Votes and Quotes: A Guide to Outstanding Election Coverage" and "Bad News and Good Judgment: A Guide to Reporting on Sensitive Issues in a Small-Town Newspaper." He can be contacted at [www.pumarlo.com](http://www.pumarlo.com).*

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