

**Before the FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20580**

In the Matter of)	Project No.
<i>From Town Crier to Bloggers: How Will</i>)	P091200
<i>Journalism Survive the Internet Age?</i>)	

***Comments of National Newspaper Association
In Response to Commission's Inquiry into the Future of Journalism***

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National Newspaper Association, a 2,000 member organization of community newspapers established in 1885, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the issues raised by witnesses and parties to its December 2009 and March 2010 workshops on the future of journalism. These comments are offered to clarify the record on points raised by others and to add additional views of NNA. NNA has not yet taken a position on many of the questions raised by the Commission's current staff discussion draft, but may comment further following the June 15 workshop if further comments are permitted.

Summary of NNA's views

1. Journalism is not dead and community journalism thrives despite threats from the general economy and unwarranted perceptions by policymakers and others that newspapers are no longer viable.
2. Government involvement in newspapers has been misunderstood by some commenters; public policy should create a nurturing environment for enterprises offering journalism to the public, but the government need not subsidize the news.
3. The Commission could point the way to sounder public policy by helping stakeholders to understand the markets, advising Congress and other agencies on barriers that may hinder journalism-based businesses and highlighting sound public policy that aids journalists in doing their work.

NNA appreciates the Office of Public Policy's deep exploration of the issues surrounding journalism and shares the concerns of many about the threats to public knowledge and education that inevitably flow out of the disruption of the businesses of many journalism-oriented enterprises. NNA believes that by and large the free markets will produce solutions that government subsidy is unwise and unrealistic and nonprofit journalism is probably not sustainable on a large scale. But NNA does believe the Federal Trade Commission can play an important role in creating an atmosphere that is conducive to growing the businesses that fund journalism. That atmosphere may include recommendations for changes in copyright law, but NNA is at this juncture not prepared to state a position on helpful changes. NNA here addresses its attention to clarifying the record with respect to community journalism and public subsidy and suggests some actions by the Commission in its report on this matter.

I. Journalism is not dead, and community journalism thrives despite threats from the general economy and unwarranted perceptions by policymakers and others that newspapers are no longer viable.

A. Many Respected Metro Dailies Hit a Wall in 2008-09

In 2009, news reports announced the nearly 150-year old Rocky Mountain News, owned by the venerable news organization, EW Scripps Company, would fold. That same year, a historic Hearst Company title, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, was shuttered. Tribune Company-owned Baltimore Sun, once the host of more foreign news bureaus than any other single daily newspaper, announced major job cuts. Tribune itself landed in bankruptcy court. McClatchy Company, which had become owner of the renowned Knight-Ridder chain, began major debt restructuring and trimmed jobs. Journal-Register Company, once cobbled together from the remains of Ralph Ingersoll's newspaper company, went into bankruptcy and left some New England citizens wondering whether any of their

newspapers would survive. GateHouse Media, holder of numerous small daily newspaper titles that once were owned by publishing families, was delisted by the New York Stock Exchange in 2008 because its share price fell below \$1.

And, though recovery has begun for some of these companies, the bad news isn't over. Once-proud daily newspapers continue to see business losses. For instance, the noble Kansas City Star, once a leading employee-owned newspaper, this spring disclosed that leading grocery advertisers had jumped ship and would begin to use direct mail instead of newspapers.

<http://www.kcconfidential.com/?p=15462#more-15462>

The specter of still more job cuts, following downsizing in 2008 and 2009, remains the talk of local bloggers, as this project's record demonstrates.

Many prize-winning editors and reporters have found their careers cut short by the early retirements and buyouts that enabled some of these companies to work their way through bankruptcy. Some now find themselves in academia or think tanks trying to explain to the world how their newsrooms declined. Following the news industry's peculiar habit of trumpeting its own bad news, many new bloggers have filled the web with predictions of newspaper doom.

Little wonder that the public has begun to worry that journalism will die.

B. Community Newspapers Remain Safe Havens for Local News

In the midst of the detritus, a slowly leaking reality began to hit the journalism journals. While metro papers were jettisoning staff and cutting news holes, the community newspapers were chugging along through the recession without mortal wounds. Suffering from an unusually deep and prolonged recession that disrupted their advertisers, community dailies and weeklies have reported some financial loss. But industry-wide, the survival of this industry niche has surprised analysts who had rarely given the sector a glance in the past. Journalism

journals have reported on this rare good news, almost with an open-mouthed amazement:

- One small Minnesota town enjoys the competition of two newspapers.
http://www.minnpost.com/stories/2009/03/16/7391/while_major_metros_struggle_many_newspapers_still_thriving_in_smaller_towns
- Pelham Alabama got its first newspaper in a century.
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=111721627>
- New York state community newspapers report growth of titles and circulations
http://www.nynewspapers.com/team/news/10-04-16/Newspapers%e2%80%99_value_to_their_communities_continue_to_grow.aspx
- Newspapers survive with local ownership
http://www.sfnblog.com/launches_and_closures/2009/10/community_newspapers_expand_by_offering.php
- And NNA's own research, co-sponsored with the Reynolds Journalism Institute at University of Missouri, indicate that in smaller communities, 60% of adults rely on the community newspaper. That is more than four times greater than the next most popular resource, local radio/tv.
<http://www.nnaweb.org/?/nnaweb/nnanews02/353/>

C. Industry-wide data may be elusive.

The anecdotes can tease analysts into trying to quantify growth or shrinkage. But it is extremely difficult to capture industry-wide results for this sector. Media analysts try in vain to estimate advertising lineage, employment, circulations or other metrics. Indeed, analysts cannot even agree on how many newspapers exist in America. Hoover's analysts show 2,000 companies.

http://www.hoovers.com/newspapers-and-news-organizations/--ID_103--/free-ind-fr-profile-basic.xhtml

The industry titles are fragmented into various organizations and ownerships besides NNA's sector, including Suburban Newspapers of America, regional and state press associations, the weekly newspapers owned by the major dailies belonging to the Newspaper Association of America and other groups. Fortunately for the First Amendment, there are as many newspapers as there are enterprising editors and publishers and markets to support them.

NNA estimates a universe of 7,000 weekly newspapers; most industry estimates peg the total of daily newspapers at around 1,400 titles. Numbers may vary because definitions of a newspaper may vary. For example, ethnic or neighborhood newspapers, advocacy-oriented newspapers and newspapers owned by religious groups or foundations may or may not be counted by an individual analyst. In 2008, Wikipedia reported 1,422 daily and 6,253 weekly newspapers.¹ To further cloud the industry analysis, daily newspaper organizations typically count only daily newspapers as "real" newspapers and organizations of paid-circulation newspapers often count only paid newspapers as "real" newspapers and organizations publishing products that many would call shoppers sometimes consider their publications to be newspapers.

The dailies may be the most visible at the national level. But it is useful to remember that the news emanating from them about the "newspaper business" often is only about the daily newspaper sector of that business.

Even the Bureau of Labor Statistics can fall short of describing the newspaper universe, obviously counting only daily newspapers when it identifies ownerships and clusters:

Despite the local nature of most newspaper publishing, the newspaper industry is dominated by several large corporations that own most of the newspapers in the country. It also is becoming common for companies to buy several newspapers in

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_newspapers_in_the_United_States

a single region so that they can be produced more efficiently. This is known as "clustering." Under this arrangement, multiple newspapers share the same printing plant, and advertising sales agents can sell advertising space as a bundle in all of the papers. Career Guide to Industries, 2010-2011 Edition.²

The BLS is correct about clustering, which occurs at many levels of the industry, but it is wrong about the concentration of ownership. Just within NNA's nearly 2,000 titles, there may be 600-800 individual owners at any given time.

At present, no industry group, government agency or analyst consistently tracks a database of key statistics for all of these newspapers. But the fact that metrics for the sector are hard to find should not lead the Commission to conclude that all newspapers necessarily suffer from the ills of their largest brethren. Though data may be elusive, a proliferation of anecdotal reports verifies that community newspapers have avoided both the perils affecting metro papers: unsustainable corporate debt and Internet migration by readers and advertisers.

In fact, the most recent journalism jobs study published by the Grady School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of Georgia indicated that more than 5,157 of the 2008 journalism school graduates had sought jobs at weekly newspapers. Comparing those job seekers to the 8,797 graduates who applied at the daily newspapers with much larger newsrooms and larger salaries, it would seem that about 37 percent of that universe of graduates wants careers at community papers, despite the smaller communities and likely somewhat

² <http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs013.htm>

smaller compensations.³ (It is interesting that aspiring journalists seem undeterred by the industry's woes. Forbes Magazine recently reported that Columbia, Stanford and New York University applications increased 38, 20 and 6 percent, respectively, from the previous year. The Universities of Colorado, North Carolina and Maryland journalism programs had boosts of 11, 14 and 25 percent.)

<http://www.forbes.com/2009/04/06/journalism-media-jobs-business-media-jobs.html>.

But despite clearly identifiable survivors in the recent decline, some analysts believe journalism is in great peril and are recommending that the Commission endorse new business models to rescue it. One such proposal comes from the Annenberg School for Communication and Leadership at the University of Southern California, which looks to public subsidy as a possible solution.

II. Government involvement in newspapers has been misunderstood by some commenters; public policy should create a nurturing environment for enterprises offering journalism to the public, but government need not subsidize the news.

A. The history of postage subsidies is misunderstood.

Geoffrey Cowan, director of the Annenberg School, and noted journalist and editor David Westphal have closely examined the decline of metropolitan daily newsrooms, reciting the painful histories of the Post-Intelligencer, the Rocky

³ It is important to note that “weekly” and “community” newspaper are not equivalent terms. Although virtually all weekly newspapers are considered community newspapers, smaller daily newspapers typically identify themselves as community newspapers as well.

Mountain News, the closings of Washington news bureaus by major newspaper chains and the declining ad revenues of many daily newspapers whose lineage is reported by the NAA. They conclude that journalism is at risk and then argue that government should rescue it, advocating for recognition of a historic role by federal, state and local governments in supporting news media. Public Policy and Funding the News by Geoffrey Cowan and David Westphal, 2010.

NNA has no quibble with the Annenberg School's concerns, nor with the light shone upon public policies that have, at some points in history, intentionally constructed environments where news media could grow. It would be a mistake to assume governments historically favor viable news media, though. NNA could equally well identify a host of actions in the public arena that have inhibited news organizations, ranging from newsroom subpoenas and searches to estate taxes that force the sale of long-respected titles to group aggregators and from failed energy policies that hike the cost of newspaper delivery to the increasing use of easily-controlled (but often somewhat obscure to the general public) websites to replace press conferences by public officials.

The scope of this comment does not permit equaling the depth of the Annenberg School's long look at public policy by delving into the full array of public policies affecting news organizations. NNA wishes, however, to clarify the record for the Commission on two so-called "subsidies" in which the Association has been involved during its 125-year history.

B. Newspaper postal rate subsidies have long since receded, and their suggested relevance to the Commission's evaluation is misplaced

In fact, local newspapers did receive postal subsidies for many years—or rather, their readers did. In 1851, Congress created a free mailing class for so-called “within county” newspapers. Prior to that, newspapers had paid 1 cent postage for circulation up to 100 miles, and 1.5 cents for circulations beyond 100 miles—a rate set in 1845. Congress was witnessing the spreading frontier beyond the Mississippi and with it, the aggressive New York newspapers that were using the cheap postage to influence frontier politics. To encourage local publishing, Congress eliminated the postage for distribution within 30 miles of the publisher’s office. Over the next pre-Civil War years, the spread of New York media values through the cheap postage of long distance periodicals rates inflamed some members of Congress. Rep Abraham W. Venable, a North Carolina Democrat, inveighed:

“The poisoned sentiments of the cities, concentrated in their papers, with all the aggravations of such a moral and political cesspool, will invade the simple, pure conservative atmosphere of the country, and meeting with no antidote in a rural press, will contaminate and ultimately destroy the purity of sentiment and of purpose, which is the only true conservatism.”

He went on to denounce socialism, agrarianism, Fourierism and other evils, the nature of which would keep a host of TV shouting heads in business today.

Congressional Globe, Dec 18, 1850, p 24, from Report to the Congress:
Preferred Rate Study by the Postal Rate Commission, June 18 1986.

Venable's sectarian concerns may sound quaint, or a mark of eternal wisdom, given the nation's political climate today, but a student of the period would easily conclude that his purpose was not to enrich publishers, but to get the desired flavor of political information to readers in the spreading frontier. Thus the privilege was restricted to publications circulating within their counties to give the local press a distribution advantage over the New York papers. For an excellent history of postal policy, including the press and other senders' needs, see the various works of Richard B. Kielbowicz, University of Washington.

It is worth mentioning that until the spread of Rural Free Delivery, the postal patrons were required to call at the post office to receive their newspapers. As home delivery caught hold, and the ever-distressed Post Office Department, layered with the patronage expectations of Congress, became a leaden weight on the federal budget, Congress tried again and again to wean the public off the postal subsidies. But publishers would point out that if they had to pay for rising postage costs, they would have to raise subscription rates, and that would create problems for politicians trying to reach their constituencies. So the free postage remained intact until 1962 when Congress finally set a new postage rate for the within-county newspapers. Cong. Rec. Sept 27, 1962, p 20999.

Following economy-busting postal workers strikes in the late 1960s, Congress finally conceded its inability to bring delivery costs to heel. Through the Postal Reorganization Act (PRA) signed on Aug 12, 1970, it created the United States Postal Service, which was mandated to run as a hybrid half-government institution with monopolies and constitutional control over post roads, and half-business with mandates to set compensation comparable to that of the private sector and to create postage classifications and rates that were intended to require USPS to break even. The United States Postal Service, An American History, 1775-2006, available on the Web at <http://www.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub100.pdf>.

The new “cost coverage” requirement of the PRA was accompanied by a requirement for each mail class to bear a percentage of the new Postal Service’s overhead costs. The new rules presented a problem for the within-county publishers, whose small economies could ill absorb an abrupt change. For the new USPS to hike postage from near zero to full cost plus a “profit” margin for the institution would have put thousands of titles out of business. So Congress embarked upon a gentler pace of increase not only for within county newspapers but for other formerly subsidized classes, including nonprofit mail. Over the next 15 years, Congress established a system whereby the “preferred” mail classes would assume their direct and indirect costs over a stepped-increase schedule that eventually lasted 16 years. See. 91 P.L 375, Aug 12, 1970, and the

legislative history for 39 U.S.C 3626 for a walk through the background of this postage rate.

Today, at least in theory, the within county postage rate is required to support its full costs, and contribute to the Postal Service's overhead. The Periodicals postage rate for newspapers mailed outside the county, which is also used by news magazines, is also so required, and historically has been designed to do so. When the rates do not cover costs, it is because rapidly rising labor prices of the Postal Services 600,000-plus work force cause mail processing and delivery costs to outstrip the ability of local publishers to absorb the cost. Postal policy makers, including the Postal Regulatory Commission Chairman Ruth Goldway,⁴ worry about that problem, as do publishers. But Periodicals publishers have questioned whether there is a true subsidy or does the appearance of subsidy reflect instead a serious problem with labor costs, including the handling of potentially-automated mail by human beings. A description of this problem was laid out in detail during the PRC's most recent review of the Postal Service's finances in Annual Compliance Report, 2009. See Initial Comments of Time Warner Inc., at p. 11 et seq., in PRC Docket No. ACR2009-1, found at: <http://www.prc.gov/Docs/66/66590/TWintCmtsACR2009.doc>.

However, present circumstances aside, the subsidy *de jure* that once existed has little application to the FTC's present inquiry if the inquiry is primarily intended, as it appears, to focus on the weakening of large daily newsrooms. Though the

⁴ See GOLDWAY, March 20, 2010, Tr. At 108-114.

subsidy once existed as an intentional effort to direct federal support for information to local communities—whether intended for publishers or readers—its application to the concerns raised by the scholars at Annenberg is inapt. If the postage rate was ever used by the metropolitan daily newspapers whose diminished newsrooms are now the root of Westphal’s and Cowan’s worries, the use was incidental. Large daily newspapers in recent history have not delivered by mail within local markets. They are delivered by private carrier primarily. In 1986, whatever use they might have made of subsidized Periodicals mail came to an end when a marketing device used by metro papers briefly exploited the within-county rate. Congress responded by kicking virtually all of them out of the mailing subclass and redefining eligibility to include only publications under 10,000 circulation or circulating at least half their copies within the county. This change essentially barred the generally multi-county metropolitan newspapers from using the within-county postage rate. 99 P.L 509, Oct 21, 1986.

Today, the preferred rate remains, used by smaller newspapers and magazines. There is some indication of growing use by smaller daily newspapers. But these are not the publications under the microscope of either the Annenberg scholars or the Commission. In any event, there is no subsidy mandate from Congress, nor do publishers clamor for one.

B. Public Notices Remain in Newspapers

The second divergence between NNA’s views and those of the Annenberg scholars is in the area of public notice. The report says:

“Governments at all levels are beginning to switch their public notices to the Web, a move that at best means sharply reduced billings for publishers, and at worst means they could lose the business altogether.” Public Policy at 8.

The report cites NNA’s research showing that between 5 and 10 percent of newspaper revenues derive from these notices, and it goes on to note that public notice has primarily been run in small newspapers—again not the publications whose newsroom attrition has drawn their attention.

NNA wishes to state for the Commission’s record that while, indeed, public notice revenue is a source of income for community newspapers and that those notices are indeed the subject of recent public debate, its estimate of a 5-10 percent revenue share for this advertising category was taken from a member poll that did not reach the entire industry and in fact may have been subject to some self-selection in responses.

Whether the number is lower than 5 percent or greater than 10 percent however, two truths must be articulated for the Commission’s record:

- Public notices are not a newspaper subsidy
- They are not migrating out of newspapers

Public notice is an advertising category for newspapers. It is a category that, like much of a newspaper’s operation, embodies a mix of social mission and business plan. Newspapers have been the medium of choice since the founding

of the republic for public notice, having been historically the best way to provide a wide reach to the electorate as well as an independent public record that would be published, verified and archived by a body other than the public entity charged with giving notice of a public event or transaction.

Though the Internet has clearly provided an additional avenue for reaching the electorate, it has not yet provided a solution to the public notice's need for a reliable archive, a proof of publication that can establish an evidentiary record, nor a consistently available source for the millions of Americans who do not have Internet access. The newspaper notice remains the medium of choice because it remains the best advertising tool as well as the official record. The public looks for notices there out of habit, and also because the newsrooms, ideally, provide a greater context in their news columns for the legalistic language of many notices.

Admittedly, the revenues for many of these notices come from government—although often these public expenditures are reimbursed after the notice has satisfied its purpose, such as a sheriff's tax sale where a purchaser's fees refill the public coffers. But public revenue does not a subsidy make. Governments regularly contract with private businesses to provide services ranging from defense systems to buses to charter schools. Critics of the choices may consider all public expenditures with private contractors to be subsidies of the owners of those businesses, but a better analysis probably would indicate that the government received value for value spent. If there is a "subsidy" in public notice,

it is not for the purposes of supporting newsrooms, but is intended in the classic definition of subsidy: to purchase a public good to achieve the government's own ends.

Finally, though the authors are correct that much legislation in recent years debates the possibility of eliminating some public notices because governments do widely now operate Web sites, they are not correct that public notices have migrated en masse to state, local or national government Web sites. A check of the legislative calendars around the states will indicate that legislatures, once apprised of the history, background and purposes of public notices, have not accepted the invitation of municipalities to eliminate authentic public notice.

The one exception to the rule is the incident cited by the Annenberg authors regarding Justice Department forfeiture notices. Public Policy at 10. Indeed, the federal government has eliminated public notice⁵ of forfeited property and provides that information only on a Department of Justice Web site. That decision was made without consideration by Congress, but rather resulted in a change in federal court rules in a deliberation by the Administrative Office of the US Courts that did not publicly explore the purpose or history of public notices. NNA has objected to the decision. NNA urges Congress and the courts to recognize that an obscure federal Web site is inadequate to the task of public notice.

⁵ NNA understands that hypothetically a valid public notice can appear in venues other than newspapers, but NNA believes it must be published independent of the entity charged with publishing; verifiable as record evidence; accessible to the general public, and reliably archived. Internet notices have not yet been proven to meet those standards.

D. Robust public funding for news is unlikely, and in the view of many, unwise.

Congress created the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in 1967 during the administration of President Lyndon Johnson, with the intent of providing educational programming through public radio and television, not necessarily just to underwrite news-gathering. (See the findings of Congress in 47 U.S.C. 396 for the full statement of purpose.) But the Peabody-award winning National Public Radio newsroom grew out of that act, and has been a recognized asset to the nation, particularly in its coverage of foreign affairs. Though only about 1 to 2% of NPR funding comes from federally funded agencies like CPB⁶, virtually all of CPB's funds come from federal dollars, and local stations receive state and local support as well.

Though the totality of public funding may be minimal, it nonetheless provides leverage for the body politic to intervene in news judgments at times. In 2004, for example, then CPB Chairman Kenneth Tomlinson admitted he had engaged in a secret monitoring project of Bill Moyers's program "Now!" to search for liberal bias. "Public Broadcasting Monitor Had Worked at Center Founded by Conservatives" New York Times, June 21, 2005. The controversy stirred by Tomlinson's actions was not the first encounter by public broadcasting with the heavy hand of political interests. In 1981, pressure by the federal government

⁶ See <http://www.npr.org/about/privatesupport.html>.

was applied to pull the plug on PBS's "Death of a Princess," a story about the beheading of a Saudi princess as a punishment for adultery. Viewers in some markets sued, arguing that their First Amendment rights to see the program had been violated by the public TV stations not planning to air the show. But the US Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled that the programming discretion rested with the broadcasters. Muir v. Alabama Educational Television Commission, 688 F. 2d 1022 (5th Cir. 1981).

Proponents of public funding argue that legal constraints could be constructed in the funding legislation. But no Congress, of course, can bind a future Congress, and the Tomlinson matter shows how a creative political appointee can apply pressure through his position without flouting any law of censorship. Proponents have a heavy burden to overcome to demonstrate that journalism would be free and robust if dependent upon a political process for its lifeline. The merits of the proposition aside, a federal budget that projects a deficit of \$1.35 trillion for Fiscal year 2011 resolves the debate. S. Con. Res.60, Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2011.

III. The Commission could point the way to removing some barriers that may hinder journalism-based businesses, and highlight sound public policy that favors more public information.

NNA's board of directors represents a thriving, largely family-owned newspaper industry of community newspapers, or larger newspaper groups that operate their community papers as if they had owner-operators. NNA invites the

Commission to visit www.nna.org for a list of these owners and publishers, and to follow the links to these newspaper Web sites to find more background on these nearly 2,000 newspapers. To provide the record with some examples of newspapers that continue to solidly support local journalism, please see “Profiles of Community Newspapers,” resulting from interviews with community publishers. “Profiles” is appended to these comments.

NNA recognizes the good-faith suggestions of some in Congress, including Sen. Benjamin Cardin’s proposed nonprofit newspaper bill, S 673. Possibly its proponents have come to their beliefs because of disappointment in market failures. Possibly, also, the notion emanates from journalistic unease with operating inside a profit model. It is an industry truism that the newsroom and the advertising business that supports journalism salaries have not often lived at peace with one another, so it is understandable that some seeking to rebuild thriving metro newsrooms will seek ways to support their work without relying upon the caprice of the advertiser or feeling beholden to the necessity of profits. Indeed, there have been excellent nonprofit newspapers in the history of the business, of which the Christian Science Monitor was living proof until recent years when the print publication was discontinued. NNA’s membership includes some (intentionally) nonprofit newspapers, including the Greenbelt (MD) News-Review, owned by the long-time Greenbelt Cooperative, and many student-run university newspapers.

However, the nonprofit model is a tough one. It does not escape the necessity for capital to support a business that is essentially seasonal. Most newspapers lose money until mid-year, even in boom economies. Access to credit and capital are necessary to keep the bills paid during those times, a fact that many an aspiring journalist-owner discovered just before locking the doors. Capital is required to set up printing operations, as printing equipment and supplies are costly. Though increasing numbers of newspapers purchase printing services from vendors outside the company, the availability of services is a benefit from excess capacity in other businesses supported by private capital, and cannot be considered a perpetually reliable resource. Nonprofit fundraising can be arduous, and funding organizations are generally unwilling to support operations on an ongoing basis. So NNA believes the for-profit, advertising-supported newsroom will remain the bedrock of journalism—at least for community journalism—for the foreseeable future.

Notwithstanding NNA's belief that direct subsidies for journalism are unwise, there are hosts of public policies that support and enhance the likelihood that newsrooms will have the resources they need to cover community affairs, expose wrongdoing and keep cities and towns alive and well. Below is a short list of current NNA concerns that fall into a public policy arena. Although this inquiry has not opened exploration of any of these matters as a part of the Commission's record, NNA would welcome the Commission's interest in any of them, and stands ready to assist the Commission in understanding their relevance to the future of journalism.

1. Estate taxes can easily force a newspaper family to sell its company, even after multiple generations, to a company that generally takes on debt for the purchase. Many newspaper titles in the recent media decline were in family-owned corporations prior to that of debt-ridden purchasers of the past decade. To pay down debt, the purchasers must slice budgets and trim news operations. Tax policy must recognize that, like family farms, most of the value of a newspaper is either committed capital or intangible asset that cannot be subdivided without being lost.
2. Postal policy is key to most community newspapers. A current inquiry by the Postal Regulatory Commission on the future of Saturday mail delivery is underway. The PRC's findings will inform Congress on a decision to allow the Postal Service to shift to 5-day mail, a development that would eliminate delivery and risk the viability of the publication for many mail-dependent newspapers that must publish on Saturdays. If these smaller newspapers are forced to resort to private delivery, their success will be hampered by federal laws restricting the use of the mailbox. The day may be at hand where the rationale for the mailbox monopoly will reach this Commission.
3. Telemarketing was the lifeblood of the circulation department. Although the Do Not Call Registry is popular with the public, Congress and the Commission (as well as with most of our own editorial pages), and clearly addressed recognized abuses, it is undeniable that the loss of the newspaper circulation department's ability to reach directly to a potential subscriber by phone has cost the industry many readers. No other marketing mechanism has been able to replace the telephone. NNA joined other newspaper

organizations in requesting consideration of some reasonably-crafted exemption from the policy, which was denied. NNA recognizes that this request reaches policymakers little inclined to hear the need, but it believes newspapers' First Amendment activities should be factored into the policy and believes the Commission should consider creative ways to respect the public's desire for telephone peace but still permit some order solicitation by phone.

4. Access to information and protection for news gatherers are monetary concerns, not just journalistic quests. Smooth operation of access laws like the Freedom of Information Act is essential to news gatherers; freedom from subpoena protects journalists from invasion by discovery-blasts of interrogatories and depositions. The federal government has recently established the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to help journalists and citizens cut through the FOIA maze. The Free Flow of Information Act, to establish a first-ever federal shield law, remains under consideration in the Senate. Both policies deserve the Commission's nod of approval as essential parts of protecting journalism.
5. As to the Internet, NNA's newspapers largely rely upon local cable and telephone operators to provide a highway for the still-new community newspaper websites. Though NNA has not become heavily involved in the discussions on "net neutrality" at the FTC or the Federal Communications Commission, it generally believes that the owners of bandwidth—much of which was created with public support and expense in some way—should not be permitted to favor their own or their top customers' content to the detriment of content of smaller news organizations. If broadband operators were

to develop an unmistakable track record of such discrimination, NNA would become more involved.⁷ Likewise, though NNA member website are rarely involved in the direct collection of user-demographic data, NNA believes the Commission should help to establish a reasonable balance between privacy and the ability of publishers to use the Internet's new tools to help consumers find the information they want.

6. Small businesses should receive due consideration in the Commission's evaluation of mergers and acquisitions. The theories of antitrust enforcement are beyond the scope of this comment. But NNA observes that community journalism is at risk whenever a mega-corporation merger or expansion swallows up a host of small businesses that were once advertisers. Current antitrust theory that focuses heavily upon short-term consumer price as the metric for a successful merger can miss the nuances of other long-term cost and impacts to a community that may occur when small businesses are lost.

Summary

NNA's newspaper members are alive and if not completely well, at least struggling with bravery and determination through the economic downturn. Recovery of advertising markets should remedy much of what ails the community press so far. Internet development is underway, though not cutting into community newspaper markets as it has for larger papers. A general absence of excessive debt and a prevalence of risk-averse and locally-committed owners

⁷ NNA member newspapers are in early stages of incorporating video into websites. Thus their bandwidth use possibly has not yet reached a level where carriers are economically motivated to block or slow it.

have helped community newspapers to thrive when others are lost. NNA is concerned that the Commission properly understand the role of public policy in supporting journalism, and that neither postage rates nor public notices fit within a workable definition of subsidy. Publishers generally disfavor subsidies, but do support wise public policy that removes obstacles for small businesses and helps journalists to do their jobs. NNA hopes the Office of Public Policy and the Commission will favorably consider its views, and stands by to assist with further inquiries.

Respectfully submitted,

Tonda Rush
NNA Director of Public Policy
NNA Washington Office
Arlington VA 22205
On Behalf of the National Newspaper
Association Board of Directors

Represented by:

Cheryl Kaechele
NNA President
Publisher
Allegan (MI) News
Allegan MI 49010-0189

Robert Williams
NNA Government Relations
Chairman
Publisher
The Blackshear Times
Blackshear Georgia 31516-0410

Max Heath
NNA Postal Committee
Chairman
Postal Consultant
Landmark Community
Newspapers Inc.
Shelbyville KY 40066-0549



National Newspaper Association
Washington Office
PO Box 5737
Arlington, VA 22205
703.237-9802
Fax: 703.237-9808
Web Site: www.nna.org

Profiles of Community Newspapers

Local community journalism thrives.

More optimistic about than threatened by the Internet, publishers of community papers say the challenges most worrisome to their businesses stem from the general economies of the towns they serve.

Community newspaper publishers express frustration that the upheaval in the larger daily publication sector has cast unwarranted doubt upon their own futures. Interviews by NNA's public policy office with publishers of weekly and smaller daily newspapers indicate that as much as they wrestle with local markets challenged by loss of advertising from real estate, auto dealer and general retail contraction, they fear that a self-fulfilling prophecy could be created by those predicting the end of newspapers.

They want stakeholders concerned about the future of journalism to understand: community newspapers are still covering the news. Asked whether they believed their newspapers would be around for the next decade, the publishers are confident of their longevity. They expect to be the primary sources of information in their communities for years to come.

Most community newspapers have thriving websites, but see these additional portals as one more way to reach readers, rather than as a substitute for the printed newspaper. Indeed, without the financial backing of the print advertisers, the web sites would not be possible. The profiles here, provided as an attachment to comments of the National Newspaper Association in Project P091200, are those of the newspapers owned or managed by members of the NNA Board of Directors and NNA's sister organization, the National Newspaper Association Foundation. Where the newspapers may be part of a group, the profiles generally focus upon the flagship paper, and mention the geography of the others.

The profiles are intended to open a window into the community newspaper world to show its journalistic commitments, the breadth of ownership types (including a number of multi generational newspaper families), publishers' views of their service to the community and their predictions about the future and how the online horizons may play out for them. Circulations in these profiles are quoted as per-issue distributions.

Questions about NNA publications may be directed to NNA's Washington Office at (703) 237-9802. To learn more about NNA, visit <http://www.nnaweb.org>.

PROFILES OF COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

The Allegan County News

The Allegan County News is the flagship publication of Kaechele Publications, Inc., owned by the publisher, Cheryl Kaechele, president of NNA, and her husband Walter. The three weekly papers in the group cover Allegan, Plainwell and Saugatuck in Michigan with circulations ranging from 4,987 to 582 weekly.

Kaechele purchased her first paper, The Allegan County News, in 1982, following a career as a public school teacher. Kaechele's husband, Walter, is a Senior Correspondent for the newspaper, writing columns and covering sports.

Typical news columns cover municipal and county news and politics, high school sports, religion, business and community affairs. The ecology and preservation of the Great Lakes dunes is of special interest to readers.

Advertisers include hospitals, the tourist industry from South Haven to Grand Haven, public notices, real estate and small businesses.

"We are small so we are flexible," said Kaechele, concerning publication during the recession. When advertising revenue declined, her papers maintained a supportable advertising percentage by not publishing as many pages, which meant fewer employees were needed so the company did not fill vacancies. Current employees and the owners perform additional duties.

Kaechele believes The Allegan County News will remain viable because the news they print is not available to its readers elsewhere. When Cheryl and Walt retire, they hope another private owner will purchase it, as they prefer not to sell to a large chain owner. With most subscriptions delivered by the US Postal Service and with the changes which the USPS may make, she is anticipating working with local newsstand sellers to arrange for some subscribers to pick up their newspapers at local stores.

www.allegannews.com



The Bernardsville News

The Bernardsville News is one of 17 newspapers in the Recorder Community Newspapers group in north-central New Jersey.

The Bernardsville News was purchased by Cortlandt and Nancy Parker in 1957. The company is now run by their children, Elizabeth (Liz) K. Parker and Stephen W. Parker, and includes 17 newspapers in four counties in northern New Jersey.

Liz Parker, vice president of the NNA Board of Directors, is co-publisher and executive editor of the privately-owned group. Her brother, Steve, is co-publisher and business manager. Between them they have seven children, and while they would love to pass the newspapers on to a third generation, they fear they will be unable to afford to do so because of the anticipated heavy penalty of estate taxes.

The 17 small newspapers cover more than 50 communities in Somerset, Hunterdon, Morris and Essex counties in north and central New Jersey. Circulations for the 17 papers run from 25,000 to 1,200 subscribers.

New Jersey is a "home rule" state with 566 distinct municipalities and 622 local school districts, all empowered essentially to make their own laws, salary schedules and ordinances. The Recorder Community Newspapers cover these decisions.

The recession was tough on all of these papers, and necessitated furloughs, layoffs and pay cuts, but still these New Jersey papers did better than some, according to the Parkers. Many New Jersey newspapers saw even tougher cuts. An easing of the economy is underway. Real estate and automobile advertising are both increasing at this time.

Parker projects that these newspapers will be viable in the next decade because their focus is so local. If an event happens within the confines of the towns covered by their papers, the paper prints it. Their subscribers want to see their names in the printed product. Offers to local clubs and individuals to post their news exclusively online are declined. All papers published by Recorder Community Newspapers Inc. have their own websites and information from readers for the newspaper is routinely submitted through the website for the print product, even though the submitters make clear that they expect their online stories to show up in the printed paper.

<http://www.recordernewspapers.com>



The Blackshear Times

The Blackshear Times is one of five newspapers published by Robert M. Williams, Jr., a member of the NNA Board of Directors.

The five newspapers cover the counties of Pierce, Charlton, Bacon, Telfair and Monroe in Southeast and Middle Georgia, with circulations ranging from 5,500 to 2,500. The papers were bought and are privately owned by Williams, and his wife, Cheryl, who also works in the company.

The papers cover local government, civic activities, high school and recreational sports. Advertisers include local grocery stores, automobile dealers, hardware and other locally-owned businesses.

During the recent recession, revenue has been down 15% to 20% percent, but the newspapers continue to serve readers by maintaining tight cost control.

Williams believes community newspapers will remain viable for the next decade because the small markets served by community newspapers are not attractive to large media. Large media have never covered the news in these towns unless they are reporting on an emergency situation of interest to a wider audience, Williams says.

All the news from the printed version of the newspapers is posted on the newspaper website. The public site gives limited general news; the version available to subscribers to the print product provides access to all the details.

Interest in the web version of the papers is growing and jumped from 12,000 visits a year ago to 55,000 visits last month. The paper is using e-mail alerts to let readers know to go to the web site for breaking news. The Facebook fan page has 1,300 fans.

Williams is confident there will be a place for print in ten years. He believes demand will gradually diminish as demand for the same information in a different format grows. He predicts that a new means of delivery will develop to give readers the look of a newspaper on an electronic device. The device will allow the story to expand, providing more information on a topic with a touch, such as a picture becoming a video. (The Times already posts video ads.) Williams says non-daily community newspapers are currently using electronic delivery to become hourly information providers.

<http://www.theblacksheartimes.com>



The Citizen Tribune

The Citizen Tribune is the flagship publication of Lakeway Publishers, Inc. Published daily and Sunday in Morristown, Tennessee, it has a circulation of 20,987. The majority owner is the Fishman family with the senior member being R. Jack Fishman, former president of the NNA and current member of the NNA Foundation board. He is a member of the board of the Associated Press.

Lakeway Publishers publishes six papers in Tennessee, nine in Missouri and seven in Virginia. Most are published once a week. The company is privately owned, 50% by family with 200 additional stockholders, and was incorporated in 1966. Fishman achieved the unusual distinction of starting a successful new daily newspaper in the second half of the 20th Century when he founded the Tribune. The company now has 250 employees, three of whom are family members who publish the largest papers.

The papers cover news of the local community including municipal, city, and county government news and activities of the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and Kiwanis Club, and

non-profit news such as churches and United Way, high school and elementary school news, family and garden, obituaries and entertainment. Tennessee Valley Authority dams in Tennessee, the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers in Missouri, and Chesapeake Bay habitat in Virginia are of special interest to his readers.

Principal advertisers include hospitals, real estate companies and general merchandise, but the ad mix shifts with the economy.

Revenue has been down with the general economy, but the company continues to be profitable. The smaller community papers saw lesser declines.

Fishman's papers will remain viable for the next 10 years, he believes, because the Tribune hires the reporters who gather the information. He thinks that publishers who know they are in the communications business, and not just the newspaper business, will thrive if they are willing and able to deliver the news when the customer wants it and in the customer's desired format.

www.lakewaypublishersinc.com



The Crosby Journal

The Journal is published in Crosby, North Dakota, and covers the news in Divide County, with a circulation of 2,000. Steve Andrist, member of the NNA Board of Directors and son of a former NNA president, is publisher of the paper, which has been in the Andrist family since 1921. In 1995, Andrist purchased The Tioga Tribune which covers the news in Tioga and Ray with a circulation of 1,273.

Steve's dad, John, still volunteers occasionally at the newspaper. John Andrist is a past president of NNA.

The Journal covers general community news such as government, local issues and events important to the residents.

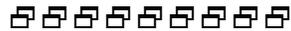
The principal sources of advertising include local retail and public notices generated by the oil boom presently occurring in North Dakota.

For 50 years the Great Plains had gradually declined in population. As the size of farms and farm equipment grew, the number of farmers fell. A few years ago the paper carried a story about the first new home being built in Divide County in 10 years. Now that oil development is booming, people are moving into the area. Consequently some new houses as well as multi-family dwellings are being built.

Because of the oil boom, the local economy is strengthening, and the state is in a good financial position.

Andrist is confident that the newspaper will remain healthy for another generation because it covers the news in the county seat in a very remote area. Residents have to travel a great distance to get other choices for purchases and services. He publishes in a self-contained community, and the oil boom is a very positive influence.

www.journaltrib.com



The Daily Leader

The Daily Leader, a privately-owned daily newspaper located in Brookhaven, Mississippi, is owned by Bill Jacobs, member of the NNA board of directors.

Jacobs is the second generation to own The Daily Leader. He also publishes a weekly paper, The Prentiss Headlight. Circulation of these papers is 6,402 and 2,400 respectively. The Daily Leader began publishing in 1883 while the Prentiss Headlight's first issue appeared in 1905. The Daily Leader covers the Mississippi counties of Lincoln, Lawrence, Copiah and Franklin, focusing on local news of the area including area government, schools and courts.

The Mississippi School of the Arts, a specialty public boarding school for Mississippi students who excel in the performing arts, is located in Brookhaven and is of special interest to high school parents across the state.

Advertisers include general retail stores both locally owned and national chain stores, automobile dealerships, healthcare, classified ads and public notices.

Even during the recession the paper made a small profit and Jacobs says "we made necessary cuts without any layoffs and still managed to show an operating profit for the year. While our profit was lower than past years, with effort and additional tweaking of our business model we hope to regain the financial strength of the past."

Jacobs thinks community newspapers will remain viable for at least the next thirty years, because they are the only credible place people can go to get the news and to feel confident that it is accurate.

"We still are and will continue to be the source for "refrigerator clippings" that a web site cannot provide," he said.

The Daily Leader had one of the earliest web sites in the state, but broadband access to the majority of its readers is slow coming in the rural areas of the newspaper's coverage area. Interest in the web site is increasing with a certain segment of its readers and some subscribers migrating to the web site and dropping their paid subscriptions as personal cost cutting measures. Jacobs says attrition presents a challenge to maintaining a viable traditional newspaper carrier force and the jobs the carrier force provides. Jacobs feels that the web site

will never financially replace the printed version of the paper but instead the newspaper in the future might have fewer print days supplemented with the web site offering on non-print days. "Currently we have around 45 employees to produce and print the newspaper and another 25 contract newspaper carriers who deliver the newspaper each day," Jacobs said. "Going to a full web model would eliminate the 25 contract carrier jobs immediately and likely 40% of the production jobs that involve producing and printing the print paper each day. We would be a smaller more efficient operation, but this would mean there would be people in our community who would have to find employment elsewhere. We currently are the 10th largest manufacturing employer in our county."

www.dailyleader.com



Dolan Media, Inc.

The Dolan Media Company was formed in May 1992 by Jim Dolan and Cherry Tree Investments. The executive vice president of its Business Information Division is Mark W.C. Stodder, a member of the NNA Board of Directors and a founder of the Public Notice Resource Center, Inc., which provides research on public notice trends. The Business Information Division has grown to become the nation's second largest publisher of law periodicals and the third largest publisher of local business journals. It operates web sites and conducts a broad range of events for targeted audiences in each of the 22 markets that it serves in the following cities: Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Baltimore, Oklahoma City, St. Paul, Portland, St. Louis, Ronkonkoma, Rochester, Colorado Springs, Boise, Metairie, Kansas City, Boston, New York, Phoenix, Detroit, Indianapolis, Jackson, Charlotte, Minneapolis, and Dallas.

The newspapers in these 22 markets have seen an increase in business during the recession. The newspapers in the Dolan Media Company focus on local business news as well as public notice for their regions. Their unique reach into the business and legal community allows them to provide an independent forum for public notice that is archivable, and assures that the public and the source of the notice are able to verify for due process that proper notice was published. With Dolan's broad reach across the country, the notices are made publicly available and accessible by all segments of society.

Stodder is confident that newspapers that carry public notice will continue to thrive during the next decade because the public is best served when notices are made available through an independent publisher. In the future, this information may be delivered electronically through a variety of devices. However, he foresees that the print and electronic versions of the independently-published notice will continue to be the best way to serve the public.

<http://www.dolanmedia.com>



The Fort Bragg Advocate-News

The Fort Bragg Advocate-News is operated by MediaNews Group, a private company chaired by W. Dean Singleton. The MediaNews Group network of 61 daily and more than 100 non-daily newspapers includes 11 states: California, Utah, Colorado, Texas, New Mexico, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Each newspaper maintains a website focused on local news content and Media News Group is currently the second largest media company in the United States in terms of daily circulation.

The Fort Bragg Advocate-News is located in Fort Bragg, California. The publisher is Sharon DiMauro, member of the NNA Board of Directors. The paper covers Fort Bragg, Mendocino and surrounding small towns in northern California with a circulation of 5,400. Sharon is the first person in her family to work at the paper.

The paper covers local news, such as city government and schools. The Advocate is located on the ocean, so one of their unique focuses is wave energy.

Principal advertisers are mom-and-pop stores. The recession has been difficult for this community because fishing and timber industries have cut back considerably, and the tourist trade is down because people cannot afford to travel. Consequently the paper has had to adjust by controlling costs.

DiMauro believes newspapers will continue to be viable for the foreseeable future because they are the only source for comprehensive news of the local area. The newspaper has a website that provides news coverage for free to the public. DiMauro believes her company may eventually offer a downloadable PDF version of their newspapers for a fee.

www.advocate-news.com



Fountain Hills Times

The Fountain Hills Times is published weekly in Fountain Hills, Arizona, with a circulation of 5,300. Publisher Alan Cruikshank, member of the NNA Foundation Board, started the paper in 1974, and his son Brent is an ad representative at the paper. Fountain Hills is an affluent suburb of Phoenix.

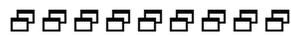
The paper covers local town government, fires, parks, seniors, schools, and law enforcement and news about who spoke where and about what, as well as articles about people in the community. Mountain preservation is of great interest to the readers in this community of 23,000.

Advertising from real estate has been down during the recession from a typical 14 pages of classified real estate ads slimmed down to a current six pages. Other advertising includes home improvement and retail, such as beauty shops and pizza shops.

Cruikshank says the newspaper is affected by a decline in the housing market. Following a significant housing boom in 2006, many houses are now vacant. As a result circulation has dropped by 1,000 since 2006.

Cruikshank thinks newspapers, particularly those that cater to the older population, will remain viable because the older population has the habit of reading the printed product. Web sites have sprung up in Fountain Hills to try to compete with the newspaper web site, and they have failed. His own website is successful. His 700 web subscribers get daily e-mail updates on news.

www.fhtimes.com



The Gazette-Democrat

The Gazette-Democrat, Anna, Illinois, is the flagship paper of Reppert Publications, Inc. Jerry Reppert, former president of NNA and current member of the NNA Foundation Board, is publisher.

Reppert Publications publishes 11 weekly papers with circulations ranging between 20,000 to 1,000. They cover 11 counties in Southern Illinois, more than any other family-operated paper in Illinois.

Reppert's father was owner and publisher of the Gazette-Democrat until he died, and his mother took over as publisher until Reppert graduated from college. His wife, Dianne, presently works at the paper as circulation manager.

The Gazette-Democrat centers its news coverage on the community schools, and focuses on high school sports and all other school-related activities. Church news coverage is also extensive with 15 to 20 churches represented by individual columnists. Pine Hills Road runs through a park in the county. When annual snake migrations happen in the park, the snakes cross the road by the dozens, so the road is closed. The Gazette-Democrat covers the movement of the snakes. Automobile and real estate ads have vanished with the upheaval in those markets. Banks, hospitals, and medical offices, including optical services, are all big advertisers. All 11 papers were impacted to some degree by the recession. Anna was affected by store closures. Reppert predicts this will be a long term downturn because these advertisers are not coming back. Circulation is down

Despite the challenges, Reppert is certain that newspapers will remain viable for the next 10 years because his papers are providing news that nobody else will or can provide, and because they are publishing the news using a format the customers want. The newspaper web site is currently providing live broadcasts of the high school football games. Reppert

Publications works hard to provide the news in new formats. He is confident that there is no technological change that his company will not embrace. This strategy of always being there first and doing it better is designed to assure that there will be no infringement on his community news franchise. His web ads are selling well, and Reppert is certain that he has captured the new web-delivered news territory in all of his publication areas.

www.annanews.com



Hood County News

The Hood County News is published twice a week in Granbury, Texas, and has a circulation of 10,900. The paper covers the communities of Granbury, Lipan, Tolar and Cresson in Hood County.

Jerry Tidwell, past president of NNA and current member of the NNA Foundation Board, is the publisher and the first generation owner of this paper. Tidwell's son, Derek, is the circulation manager.

The paper covers general news including local government bodies, schools and sports. The Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant was built in 1985 and is of continual interest to readers. The plant is about to double in size which will bring 5,000 construction workers to the area. Advertisers include real estate brokers even though the real estate industry is depressed at the moment. The paper carries automobile, and grocery and home improvement inserts. The recent recession has caused a 15% decline in volume, and there is no upward movement yet, Tidwell says.

Tidwell believes the print version of the newspaper will continue to be in demand in Hood County because his community is a retirement area and that age group prefers a printed version. The paper is available online to all subscribers to the print version. Income from web ads is nominal.

www.hcnews.com



The Jackson Herald

The Jackson Herald in Jefferson, Georgia, is the flagship newspaper of Mainstreet Newspapers, Inc. The editor is Mike Buffington, a Past President of NNA and current member of the NNA Board of Directors.

The Jackson Herald was established in 1875 and is the oldest, continually operated business in Jackson County. The Jackson Herald and five other newspapers in Georgia are published by Mainstreet Newspapers, Inc. They cover the news in the counties of Jackson, Banks, Barrow, Madison, and towns of Homer, Danielsville, and Brasleton.

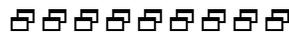
Ownership is private and the company is family -owned by the second Buffington generation. Buffington and his brother, Scott, run the papers and their mother comes in occasionally though she is mostly retired.

The circulations of the papers run from 9,000 to 3,000 and all are published weekly.

They focus their news coverage on local government, schools, sports and community events. Advertisers include general retail, automobile sales, medical organizations, and banks. Public notices in an era of high foreclosures have become more significant. Real estate advertising has declined dramatically in the past couple of years and banks are failing in this area of Georgia. The company's revenue has declined during the recession by approximately 20%. Mainstreet Newspapers, Inc. has had to cut expenses to cover this gap.

Buffington thinks newspapers will remain viable for at least the next 10 years and more. The company is working to provide the news in the format the public wants and is experimenting with various choices for distribution. Mainstreet Newspapers, Inc. will put PDFs of the entire paper on their website beginning in the next two months. The PDF edition will be available for free for two or three months and then for a nominal fee. Subscribers to the print edition will get a discount if they subscribe to both the print and the digital editions. Buffington expects many of his readers to migrate toward the digital edition in time.

www.mainstreetnews.com



Kendall County Record

The Kendall County Record in Yorkville, Illinois, is published by Jeff Farren, member of the NNA Board of Directors, and his wife Kathy. The Farrens publish three other weeklies with circulations from 14,000 to 8,000, serving the Illinois communities of Yorkville, Plano, Sandwich, and Oswego. The Farrens are the first generation owners of The Kendall County Record.

Their papers cover local news such as the school board, the city council, and population growth. Housing was booming, but has slowed as it has in other communities. Advertisers include banks, hospitals, home improvement and landscaping companies. Yorkville is located fifty miles from Chicago, and the paper is part of a statewide network that handles public notices for Illinois newspapers. With the rise in foreclosures, the public has been well-informed of the impact on housing, as the Record has published a 16 - 20 page weekly section filled with foreclosure notices.

The recession has brought circulation down somewhat, especially in areas nearest to Chicago. Advertising has decreased 10 to 15%, partly due to large retail chains moving into the area and overwhelming smaller businesses, forcing them to close.

Farren thinks newspapers will remain viable over the next ten years because readers have no other source for the information he is publishing about the local area. He thinks that residents,

who are interested in their communities, will continue to read the paper to get local government and civic news. The Kendall County Record has a web site, which is updated weekly on the day the print edition goes out. Traffic on the web site spikes on the day the print edition is distributed.

www.kendallcountyrecord.com



Landmark Community Newspapers, Inc. (LCNI)

From a small printing cooperative formed by rural Kentucky publishers, LCNI has grown a nationwide media company with publications from Florida to Iowa and from New Mexico to Maryland. Landmark Community Newspapers, LLC (LCNI) traces its history to 1966, when eight small-town publishers pooled resources to build a printing plant in Shelbyville, Kentucky, to take advantage of the growing trend toward offset technology.

Two years later, they incorporated to become Newspapers, Inc. and began buying other newspapers in Central Kentucky. Within five years, Newspapers, Inc. owned 18 newspapers and four printing plants. That drew the interest of Landmark Communications, Inc. Landmark bought Newspapers, Inc. in September 1973. The company kept its headquarters in Shelbyville next door to the first printing plant.

Today, under the leadership of LCNI President Michael Abernathy, the company publishes 56 paid newspapers in 13 states. Four are dailies; five are triweeklies; six, semiweeklies; and 41, weeklies. LCNI also publishes 41 free newspapers and shoppers, 29 special-interest publications, and operates 16 web offset commercial printing plants. Landmark Sports Group operates seven nationally circulated collegiate sports publications. The circulation ranges from 29,880 to 367.

Max Heath, honorary member of the NNA Board of directors and longtime NNA Postal Committee chairman, was vice president of LCNI until 2008 and now serves as its postal consultant. Heath says that community newspapers were generally hurt by the auto, real estate, and employment declines but the decline was later, and less severe than for metropolitan dailies.

He believes that newspapers will be viable for at least the next decade. In addition to their strong local news positions, smaller papers will continue to run preprinted inserts that are very important to local merchants. A combination of within-county Periodicals mail and Standard Mail high-density carrier route shoppers will continue to serve the needs of the newspapers' geographic markets.

A combination of print editions, web editions and the e-sub facsimile editions will emerge to serve the readers and will continue to keep newspapers viable. No one yet knows the magic combination of these three.

www.lcni.com



The Milton Times

The Milton Times was established in Milton, a close-in suburb of Boston, Massachusetts, in 1995 by publisher Pat Desmond, the newest member of the NNA Board of Directors, her two children and her mother after Desmond was laid off by another newspaper. None of the other family members still works at the paper.

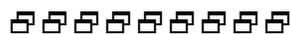
The Times is published weekly, with a circulation of 4,500, and covers local government as well as all events and news within the town. The news coverage is strictly focused on Milton and not on any other nearby town as they are determined to resist becoming a regional newspaper. President George H. W. Bush was born in Milton, and his occasional visits create news.

Principal advertisers include local and non-local businesses whose target consumers are the residents of Milton. Real estate ads are down considerably, but banks are advertising again, Desmond says. Locally-owned grocery stores and political candidates are advertisers.

The paper was rapidly growing before the recession, but subscriptions to the Milton Times have leveled off in the past two years. Subscription rates were raised about a year ago, but Desmond feels rates are now fixed for a while.

Desmond believes the newspaper will remain viable because people want local news, and that papers like hers will thrive and more will be started to meet this demand. She uses her website to deliver news for those out-of-county subscribers who complain that the US Postal Service is not delivering their papers in a timely manner. She experimented with a pay wall for news in 2002, but after a year had only 22 paid subscribers. Desmond thinks the passwords were shared among friends, which reduced the subscriber count.

www.miltontimes.net



Mobridge Tribune

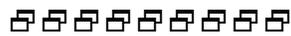
The Mobridge Tribune in South Dakota is owned by Larry Atkinson, member of the NNA Foundation Board of Directors, and his wife Roberta. His parents Gordon and Marilyn, work part time for the paper. The Tribune has a circulation of 2,841. The company also publishes two other papers with circulations of 2,359 and 1,478 and a shopper with a circulation of 5,905. The papers cover Corson, Potter, Campbell and Walworth counties.

The newspapers cover local government, features, society, sports and general news. The population in these counties of South Dakota includes many Native Americans and their interests are covered by the paper. Rodeos flourish in the area and are of special interest to the readership. Advertising includes automobile, medical, insurance, casinos and retail services.

During the recession, Radio Shack and one of the three car dealerships in Mobridge closed, and the two other car dealers cut their ads back. Two of the car dealers are recovering and business is improving for the papers. Atkinson says the Tribune suffered in the advertising decline.

Atkinson believes the printed newspaper will remain viable because people will continue to want to receive the paper in print. Community newspaper publishers who realize that they are news "providers" rather than just news "papers" will provide news and information in any format the readers want. And they will realize that electronic delivery makes it possible for weeklies to become dailies. Atkinson is adding videos and making his web site interactive and his web site is getting 48,000 visitors a month. He is beginning to sell ads on the web site, and is posting streaming video of the rodeos and high school sports. A full PDF version of the paper is available and has about 30 subscribers. The city council films its meetings, gives the film to the newspaper, and the paper posts the significant parts.

www.mobridgetribune.com



The Mountain Mail

The Mountain Mail, located in Salida, Colorado, is published Monday through Friday. Merle Baranczyk, member of the NNA board of directors, and his wife Mary bought The Mountain Mail in 1978. Nine years later they purchased three other papers. The circulation range for the four papers is 3,800 to 2,500. The company remains family owned.

The Mountain Mail and the three weekly newspapers provide only local news about city council meetings, hospitals, community events, obituaries, weddings and births.

Recreation is the major industry in the newspapers' region, including rafting, skiing, the arts, mountain and road biking, camping, hiking and fishing. A few years ago in Leadville the EPA cleaned up water flowing through old mines and carrying heavy metals into the Arkansas River. Water filtration plants were established and now the water is treated and clean water now flows into the river. The result is a blossoming fly-fishing industry along the Arkansas. Advertising is based on grocery inserts, real estate and automobile sales, non-profits, small retail, help wanted and other classified advertisements. The Internet has not captured the classified ads in these small towns.

Decline in advertising has not been as pronounced as in metro areas because markets served by The Mountain Mail never had department stores or other large companies advertising with them. Baranczyk's papers had to lay off only one individual, and were further able to shrink expenses by attrition and freezing compensation.

Baranczyk believes there is a strong future for newspapers. He sees the Internet as a secondary tool that can be used to promote the newspaper and the print edition. He thinks bloggers are good at giving opinions, but he believes his readers want professionally-edited news.

Baranczyk sees the new means of news delivery like moons rotating around the sun: moons can add interest, but the sun is necessary as the primary source. Baranczyk is considering setting up a pay wall for news on his web site. Posting his newspaper on the web will not increase revenue so he is not focusing his attention there.

www.themountainmail.com/



Nebraska Signal

The Nebraska Signal is published weekly in Geneva, Nebraska, and has a circulation of 2,500.

John Edgecombe, member of the NNA Board of Directors, is the publisher and his wife Jo Ann also works at the newspaper. The Nebraska Signal has been owned by the family since 1894. John is a fourth generation publisher. His great-grandfather was president of the Newspaper Editorial Association, a forerunner of NNA, in 1925.

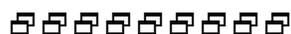
The Edgecombes owned two other papers in Nebraska. One paper has been passed on to their son Jim. Son Jim is the fifth generation Nebraska newspaper publisher of the Minden Courier. Son Mike is the publisher of the Hebron Journal-Register and is also a fifth generation newspaper publisher. The Hebron newspaper will be passed on to Mike in the near future. Jo Ann works at that publication one day a week and does much of the typesetting using the Internet from home.

The Nebraska Signal covers Geneva, Nebraska, and all of Fillmore County. The paper includes all local news such as schools, sports, and village government. It carries no state or federal news unless it affects residents of the county. Edgecombe describes his paper as very "old school" because they still run local items reporting the news of coffees and other social visits.

Advertisers include businesses in the local area, but no grocery ads. They receive some state advertisements through the Nebraska Press Association advertising network. Nebraska has not been hard hit by the recession and the unemployment rate is stable at 4.7%. There are few factories in Nebraska. Agriculture is the main employer and economic driver of the state.

Edgecombe believes that newspapers will remain viable because they are the only ones reporting on the school board, high school sports, and local governments. Snow birds also want the news, and are interested in subscribing online so they do not have a one week delay in receiving the printed version while they are living out of town for the winter. The Nebraska Signal offers a combination subscription rate, and is beginning a new campaign based on a "go green" by encouraging readers to subscribe to the web version.

www.TheNebraskaSignal.com



The News Register

The News Register is the flagship newspaper of the News-Register Publishing Company in McMinnville, Oregon.

Jon E. (Jeb) Bladine, member of the NNA Board of Directors, is President and Publisher of the News-Register Publishing Company located 38 miles outside of Portland. Bladine runs the News-Register, based in McMinnville, and delivered in 8 smaller communities in the surrounding Yamhill Valley.

The papers have been family owned since 1928 with four generations having worked there. The News Register is published twice a week with a circulation of 9,200, and it is carrier delivered. The paper carries traditional community news of government, schools and sports. In addition, the paper provides information for visitors coming to the Oregon wine country. Advertisers include small retail stores, real estate, banks, hospitals, legal notices, and preprinted inserts from department stores and home and garden stores.

While the paper has been fighting the recession and the owners are paying close attention to all sales, Bladine says it is surviving fairly well.

Bladine feels newspapers will remain viable because the Baby Boomers will continue to be a major group within the subscriber base and they want the print product. The price of the paper will increase as the result of the gradually decreasing pool of subscribers. He predicts that newspapers will be smaller in size, and there will be a struggle to work out the best format for delivering the news while making money doing so. He believes delivery of the news by phone will continue to grow and thinks specialty publications will become an even more important source of revenue, as newspaper publishers increase their niche publications as a way to help their newspapers thrive.

www.NewsRegister.com



Pilot Tribune and Enterprise

The Pilot Tribune and Enterprise is the flagship publication of the Enterprise Publishing Corporation.

Ken Rhoades, former president of the Board of Directors of NNA, and current member of the NNA Foundation Board is the Co- Publisher along with his son, Mark Rhoades.

Privately owned by the Rhoades family, the eleven newspapers published by the Enterprise Publishing Corporation and Rhoades Publishing serve the suburban communities surrounding Lincoln and Omaha in Nebraska, and Council Bluffs and Sioux City in Iowa. The circulation

range for these papers runs from 7,000 to 900 plus Total Market Coverage (shopper) products of 22,000 circulation.

Ken Rhoades is the fourth generation of his family to be active in the business. His son, Mark, his daughter, Penny, and her husband, Mike Overmann, are currently running various papers. The papers cover community news of the areas around the larger cities where they are located. They focus on schools, city council, county boards, current events, weddings and police activity. They include no national news. Agricultural news is of special interest to these readers.

Principal advertisers include small businesses, local banks, the farm industry, and chemical companies that sell to the farm industry plus service type businesses.

During the recession, the paper did not experience much of a drop in revenue, and currently the paper is a little ahead of last year, Rhoades says. They made up the difference by working harder and printing more special sections.

Rhoades sees the community newspapers remaining viable for the next decade because their family newspapers cover news no one else is addressing. All eleven papers have websites where the public can get the headlines. The web site refers readers to the printed edition.

www.enterprisepub.com



N'West Iowa REVIEW

The N'West Iowa REVIEW was founded by Peter W. Wagner, President of the NNA Foundation, and his wife, Connie, in 1972.

The company is family-owned and "everyone works on the paper," including Wagner's wife Connie; their son, Jeff, and his wife, Myrna. Jeff serves as president of the corporation and chief operations officer.

The newspaper covers news in Osceola, O'Brien, Lyon, Dickinson and Sioux Counties as well as state government news from an office in Des Moines, Iowa.

The newspaper is delivered on Saturdays to more than 6,000 homes and is just one of 13 publications produced out of the Sheldon office.

The N'West REVIEW covers local news and Iowa state news and provides everything that a daily newspaper would provide except they publish it all in their 80 page once-a-week Saturday edition.

Advertisers are the community's remaining immediate retail stores such as the local hardware, grocery and fashion outlets as well as financial services, automobile services, restaurants and agricultural firms.

The newspaper experienced a little decline for 2009. For 2010, Wagner says they are back at the 2008 level and are seeing continual improvement.

Wagner believes the print version of his publications will be viable well beyond the next decade. He says there will always be a need for credible and immediate history.

He has found that the readers of his publications are more comfortable holding the newspaper in their hands than seeking it online. The public has had an opportunity to get acquainted with the world wide web for the past 30 years, he says, and print is still favored. He believes this preference will continue, so Wagner invested in nine additional presses two years ago. Now, they are focused on delivering updates by e-mail to their subscribers. The Saturday delivery is critical to them. Postal Service plans to eliminate Saturday mail threaten the paper's very life. As a last resort, they plan to create a delivery system for themselves and make it available to their competitors.



Purcell Register

The Purcell Register published once a week in Purcell, Oklahoma, has a circulation of 4,529. John D. Montgomery, member of the NNA Board of Directors, is the publisher with his wife, Gracie

Montgomery bought his first paper in the 1970s, and the Montgomery family, including sons and daughters-in-law, now own a second paper that publishes once a week, and a third paper that publishes twice a month. The papers cover the communities of Purcell, Lexington, Washington, Wayne, Bibble, Goldsby, Midell, and Kingston, all in Oklahoma.

The Purcell Register covers city news, school board meetings, sports and school sports and academics. "If it walks or talks or breathes, we cover it," Montgomery says. Purcell is the quarter horse capital of the world, and the area is filled with ranches and horse farms. The paper carries a regular section called "Horseman's Corner."

Advertisers include real estate companies, groceries, hospitals, and sheriff sales. The paper fared well in 2009, but 2010 has been tougher, according to Montgomery.

Montgomery believes newspapers will remain viable for the next decade because they cover news that is not available on the web or from any other source. The current generation likes the print edition and the coming generations lean toward the digital.

Recently, when 25 to 30 tornadoes hit near Purcell, the electricity was out for the entire town for four hours. During that time John's sons delivered the news via the newspaper's Twitter and Facebook accounts. John D. was greeted with thanks as he traveled through town that evening, because subscribers got news on their phones via the newspaper that they could not

get anywhere else. John D. says the print editions and the on-line editions will promote each other.

www.purcellregister.com



The Randolph Leader

The Randolph Leader with a circulation of 7,200 is published weekly in Roanoke, Alabama. John Stevenson, immediate past president of the NNA board of directors, is the publisher. Stevenson's grandfather, Olin Hampton Stevenson, founded the paper in 1892.

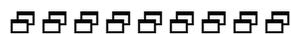
The Randolph Leader covers all aspects of community life in Roanoke, Alabama, and Roanoke County including the communities of Woodland, Wadley and Wedowee. Local government is of specific interest to this readership. Additionally, the last Alabama Power Company dam on a major river created a recreational lake in the county, and the development over the past few years has been a major news interest.

The local automobile dealerships were once major advertisers but they have all folded in the past few years, so residents have to go farther away to purchase cars. Several dealers that are outside the circulation area have become advertisers in the Randolph Leader. The Super Wal-Mart has forced many small local businesses to close so that advertising is no longer coming to the Randolph Leader. As is true across the nation, Wal-Mart rarely advertises in the local paper. While the lake development did provide extensive real estate ads, economic conditions have driven some real estate developers and sales agencies out of business and the slowdown in sales of lake property has caused others to cut back on their newspaper advertising.

Although circulation has increased slightly over the past couple of years, the paper is experiencing increased theft from racks in this down economy, with some thieves thought to be reselling the newspapers. The Randolph Leader suffered during the recent recession, but Stevenson is determined to keep his staff together as he waits for the economy to rebound

Stevenson projects the newspaper's viability will gradually improve with the economy, and believes the newspaper cannot rely on the old model. He sees the online directories as a source of revenue, and anticipates selling online subscriptions as well as combined online and print subscriptions.

www.therandolphleader.com



Swift County Monitor-News

Swift County Monitor-News, serving Benson, Minnesota, and surrounding small towns with a circulation of 2,700 is published by Reed Anfinson, treasurer of the NNA Board of Directors.

The newspaper was founded in 1886 and Anfinson's father and his partner, Jim Kenney, bought it in 1960. Anfinson bought the paper in 1990.

Quinco Press was founded by five newspaper publishers, including Anfinson's father, in 1968. It now prints 30 newspapers as well as other publications. There are currently 13 owners of the printing operation.

The Swift County Monitor-News provides information about local government, city council, school district, court, sports news and feature stories. Advertisers include local businesses and auctioneers of household and farm machinery.

Revenue was down during the recession but Anfinson says the paper was lean to start with and is produced by a very small staff, so it has survived. Costs are tightly controlled.

Anfinson thinks the newspaper will remain viable because it is THE source of news for the Benson community. Nobody else provides the news he is providing. The web is of marginal use to his readers, who are largely an older population. He says 30% of the residents do not use the web at all.

www.swiftcountymonitor.com



Times Leader

The Times Leader in Princeton, Kentucky, is owned by the Kentucky New Era Company. It is privately owned by the Wood family in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. The Wood family has been in the newspaper business for three generations. The Times Leader, led by NNA Board member and Publisher Chip Hutcheson, covers Princeton, Fredonia, Eddyville and Kuttawa, Kentucky, with a circulation of 5,000.

The paper provides comprehensive news of the community including hard news, features and sports. Principal sources of advertising include automobile, real estate, grocery, restaurants, and general retail services.

The Times Leader was not hit as hard by the recent recession as papers in some other areas seem to have been, Hutcheson says. The paper does not fluctuate with busts or booms in the economy. However, the paper did suffer from the ice storm of January 2009 and it took about nine months to begin recovery.

Publisher Hutcheson believes the newspaper will remain viable for at least the next decade and beyond. Four large daily papers are available in the circulation area. Those papers have tried to gather and publish local news, but they have not succeeded in getting a foothold in the communities because the local news they cover is not comprehensive. The Times Leader carries all the local news, and the readership is very loyal.

The newspaper was the first non-daily in Kentucky to launch a web site. The top stories and obituaries are posted, and readers who live out of state use it to keep up with the local news.

Hutcheson says that if they begin to offer a PDF version of the newspaper through the web site, they will charge for the PDF.

www.timesleader.net



Tullahoma News & Guardian

The Tullahoma News & Guardian in Tullahoma, Tennessee, published three times a week by Lakeway Publishers Inc., has a circulation of 10,000. Jeff Fishman, a member of NNA Board of Directors, is the publisher of this paper, and his father Jack is chairman of Lakeway Publishers. Jeff's brother, Mike, also works in the company, and they are the second generation to do so. Tullahoma News covers Coffee, Moore and Franklin Counties in Tennessee, and is interested in publishing news about people and events as well as local municipal news. Subjects such as government, school board and police are covered.

The Jack Daniels distillery and the Arnold Air Force Base are both located within their circulation area and generate a great deal of interest within the local community as well as from international audiences. There are also three lakes in the area, so news of outdoor activities and wildlife is of great interest to readers.

Advertisers include retail, automobile, real estate and typical classified ads such as yard sales and items for sale by owner.

Fishman says the paper did fairly well during the recent recession. Some adjustments were made, but generally they have been able to invest in equipment and talent during the past two years.

Fishman feels the paper will remain viable for the next decade. The Tullahoma News and Guardian is in the information business, and is focused on delivering that information in any format the community wants to receive it. The paper currently maintains two web sites. One provides an abbreviated version of the news and is available to the general public. The second is for subscribers and includes the PDF version of the newspaper. Subscribers can select the print or web versions or both.

www.tullahomanews.com



The Villager

The Villager is the flagship publication of Village Publishing Co Inc., Greenwood Village, Colorado.

The paper was established by Bob Sweeney, former president of NNA and current board member of the NNA Foundation and his wife, Gerri, and daughter Sandra in 1982. Since then, they have established or purchased five additional weekly newspapers. They serve the

west, south and southwest areas of the Denver metro area including the communities of Greenwood Village, Cherry Hills Village, Centennial, Littleton, Englewood and Glendale. The circulation ranges for these six papers run from 6,000 to 1,200.

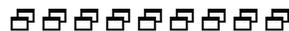
The news focuses on schools, social events, business, sports, and police activity as well as community organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce. The Villager covers affluent communities and has a full time society writer who covers charitable social events.

Current advertisers include real estate, automobile companies, retail stores, garden stores, and landscape services: the entire spectrum of businesses or individuals needing to promote their business or services.

During the current recession, advertising revenue is down about 30% because small retail stores are still struggling. The merchants know they need to advertise but are very careful with their expenditures, Sweeney says.

Sweeney feels that the purpose of his newspapers is to provide credible, reliable, timely news no matter what the delivery format might be. If the newspapers continue to do so, they will continue to serve their franchise well and will be valued by their readers well beyond the next decade. Sweeney believes readers want factual community news that is delivered in a timely manner no matter if it comes to them in print or electronically and his newspapers are in the best position to deliver news the readers in his communities want to receive; community news that is not covered by other medias.

www.thevillager.com



The Walkkill Valley Times

The Walkkill Valley Times is the flagship publication of the Times Community Newspapers of the Hudson in Newburgh, New York. The President and Publisher is Carl Aiello, member of the NNA Board of Directors.

Aiello founded The Walkkill Valley Times in 1983. The circulation is now 5,000. He founded the Mid-Hudson Times, circulation of 3,000, in 1989 and Southern Ulster Times, circulation 2,000 in 2003. All three newspapers are published weekly and they cover portions of Eastern Orange and Ulster counties.

They cover all facets of community news including schools, local sports, town boards, town councils. Currently they are covering the gang problems in Newburgh. They provide extensive coverage of Hudson River ecology, efforts at revitalization of the city of Newburgh and conservation of the Shawangunk Mountains.

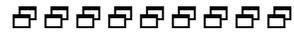
The newspapers have weathered the economic downturn and have seen recent signs of recovery.

Aiello is confident that his newspapers will remain viable for the next decade because the

news they provide is not available through any other source. Nobody else does as comprehensive a job of covering the local news in Eastern Orange and Ulster counties as these three papers.

While there is news content on the website, its primary purpose remains to drive people to the printed product.

<http://timesadmin.startlogic.com/wp/>



Washington Missourian

The Washington Missourian is published twice a week as the flagship publication of the family owned Missourian Publishing Company, located in Washington, Missouri. Publisher/Editor William Miller, Sr. is a member of the NNA Foundation Board of Directors.

The company owns two other non-daily papers and together these papers cover Washington, Union, Saint Clair, Pacific, Franklin County, Warren County and parts of St. Louis, St. Charles and Gasconade Counties.

Miller's father, James L. Miller, Sr., purchased the Washington Missourian in 1937. The family bought the competing paper in 1955 and increased publication to twice a week. Miller's three children (Bill Miller, Jr., Susan Miller Warden, and Jeanne Miller Wood) presently work at the papers and will take them over if and when he retires.

The paper focuses chiefly on local news, but the editors also subscribe to the Associated Press and include some state, federal and international news. Washington is located on the Missouri River and news of that river is of special interest to Miller's readers as is news of the food and wine trail. There are 20 wineries near Washington. Day tourism to the area is increasing.

Principal advertisers are automobile dealers, retailers, real estate firms, banks, hospitals and medical facilities. Inserts are provided by many major retailers located near the papers. Classified and display ads are down due to the recession.

Miller believes community newspapers will remain viable because they are the only source for comprehensive local news coverage. There will always be a market for the print product, but interest in digital is growing. Miller's papers all have web sites and eventually they will begin to charge readers for access to the on-line version. Paid circulation is steady at about 17,000.

www.emissourian.com



White Bear Press

Press Publications in White Bear Lake, Minnesota, is a family-owned group of weekly newspapers located in the northeast second-ring suburbs of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The family also owns three rural county seat Minnesota newspapers, as well as two newspapers in Wisconsin and a web-press printing facility.

Publisher Eugene Johnson, a member of the NNA Foundation Board of Directors, bought his first newspaper company in 1956 and now owns twelve weekly papers which are organized through four independent corporations. The White Bear Press is the flagship paper of the group (established in 1896).

The circulation range for the twelve papers is from 18,000 to 1,300. One of Johnson's sons operates three of these papers and another son is in the circulation department. The news in the White Bear Press is intensely local and people-focused with an emphasis on schools, government, sports, community events, community organizations and churches. Readers are very interested in the ecology of the four lakes in the circulation area. Aquatic plant life and water filtration systems, as well as sailing competitions, hiking and biking are of interest to the readers.

Advertisers are increasingly from the service industries, including doctors, dentists and insurance companies, as well as retail businesses such as gift shops. Real estate companies are strong advertisers, despite the recession.

Sales at some of the suburban papers declined during the recession. The newspaper adjusted by freezing compensation and cutting costs. The papers are now seeing a general rebound.

The rural newspapers have remained strong during the recession.

Johnson believes the newspapers will continue to be viable and he is encouraging his sons to be involved in the business. He believes there is no other way for readers to get the very local news in his communities than through community newspapers.

Websites are available for each paper with daily updates, community events calendar, public notices, classified and on-line display advertising. These websites are constantly improving and now in the fourth generation of development. The detailed lists such as winners of marathons and names of those graduating are posed on the website. News is posted on the website as soon as it is received. Johnson attempts to keep the news content on the website and the news content in the newspaper different.

www.presspubs.com.

