



Industry's woes skip smaller N.E. papers

by Katherine McNerney
Bulletin Staff

The financial problems plaguing the newspaper industry have left many people questioning the future of the print medium. In New England, some newspapers are not experiencing the devastating declines in circulation and advertising reported generally among larger newspapers on the national level, however. The local reach and creative efforts of those unaffected New England papers help to insulate them from problems draining resources of many larger newspa-

pers across the country. National numbers are grim. Third-quarter reports released by the Audit Bureau of Circulations in November showed steady decline at major daily newspapers across the nation. For the six months ending in September, weekday circulation was down 2.6 percent and Sunday circulation dropped 3.5 percent.



Ed Gunderson

The Boston Globe reported a 6.6 percent decline in daily circulation.

But smaller daily and weekly newspapers in New England are bucking national trends. Publishers there report steady daily circulation and growing weekly circulation.

Joshua Mamis, group publisher of four alternative weeklies in Connecticut and Massachusetts, said the communications industry is letting the story of crisis run its operations.

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NEPA Bulletin

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NEW ENGLAND

Promoting growth and excellence in New England newspapers



Photo courtesy of New Britain (Conn.) Rock Cats Justin Morneau, a future American League MVP, rounds the bases for the New Britain (Conn.) Rock Cats. **More photos, story on Page 5 about how New England newspapers cover minor-league baseball.**

Symposium about increasing readers, revenue typifies convention slate

by Bijoyeta Das
Bulletin Staff

A tough year is predicted for the newspaper industry in 2008. On top of budget constraints, newspapers need to gain readership, expand their products and increase revenue.

Challenges abound. Effective strategies to meet those challenges are the focus of many of the workshops at the New England Press Association annual convention Feb. 8 and 9 at the Boston Marriott Copley Place.

Among them are "The



Diane Hockenberry

Smaller-Market Newspaper Regional Marketing Symposium," which will offer many proven

_____ Convention to Page 14

Question of the Month

"How open to the public should court records be in divorce cases?"

(Please see related story, beginning on Page 7.)

Results of November/December Question of the Month, P. 19

Visit www.nepa.org to answer this month's question.

inside Press helps unseal divorce records, Page 7

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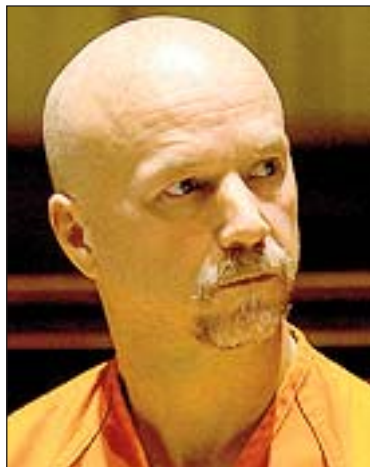
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Richard Dwyer

Man charged with murder of clerk at Maine's Sun Journal

Police in Lewiston, Maine, have charged 44-year-old Richard Dwyer with the murder of 38-year-old Donna Paradis, a subscription retention clerk for the Sun Journal of Lewiston who disappeared Oct. 23.

Paradis, a pregnant mother of two, was found in a shallow grave behind the Promenade Mall in Lewiston Nov. 12, according to The Associated Press.

Dwyer was a co-worker of Paradis at Affiliated Computer Services in Lewiston, where she was last seen. The business is located near where her body was found.

Her cause of death was strangulation, according to AP.

The Sun Journal reported that police had found cloth around her throat and wrists.

Dwyer has an extensive crim-

inal record, including convictions for robbing a bank, sexual assault, and escaping from prison, AP reported.

He was arrested while in Androscoggin County Jail Nov. 20. He had been held in custody since Nov. 7 in connection with the robbery of a Big Apple convenience store in Lewiston.

Correction

Jennifer Stubbs is a graduate student at Northeastern University's School of Journalism. Her status as a student there was incorrectly reported in the October and November-December Bulletins.

The Bulletin regrets the error.

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BRIEFS

Note to our readers

Welcome to the first online-only edition of the NEPA Bulletin.

Last month we told you that the November/December Bulletin was the last printed Bulletin of 2007 and that this month we would post a special December Extra issue on the New England Press Association Web site and e-mail it to all of you who are on our e-mail address list.

Here it is.

And it is bigger and better than the usual printed version in these respects:

We are able to bring you the Bulletin virtually in full color, back to front. There also are 10 pages more in this month's Bulletin than in our standard print editions.

Because of that, we're publishing photos not only in color, but bigger and more of them.

There are more stories too.

And for the first time in 18 months, full versions of all of our obituaries, Transitions items and classified advertisements are back in the Bulletin itself. We had been running digested versions in the printed Bulletin, with the full versions only on the NEPA Web site.

And for those who miss the printed

Bulletin, it will be back. Plans call for publishing a printed Bulletin with a full report on NEPA's annual convention, Feb. 8 and 9 in Boston.

The printed Bulletin will be published periodically after that too, on a schedule that will emerge from discussions by NEPA's Technology and Publications Committee and its board of directors. They will review the Bulletin and the NEPA Web site, and plan compatible redesigns for both. That review also involves a decision on what is the best mix and delivery system for news and information to members and other readers.

Meanwhile, you'll continue to see the Bulletin each month, as a PDF on our Web site and delivered to you by e-mail.

We would appreciate receiving your thoughts on all of this, and we also plan to survey members soon about the changes.

Please pass along your suggestions at info@nepa.org or at (617) 373-5610. You also can use those contacts to provide us your e-mail address to make sure that you receive the electronic version of the Bulletin each month while our new model is under development.

Dwyer and Paradis had met in early October about the sale of his car, the Sun Journal reported.

Somerville Journal slammed for posting video of nude run

The Somerville (Mass.)

Journal has been criticized for its decision to post video footage on its Web site of Tufts University students streaking naked through campus in Somerville Dec. 11.

Greg Reibman, editor in chief of the Somerville Journal, defended the decision to post

Briefs to Page 29

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NEWS VENTURES, NEWS DEALS

Courant sells Mass. alternative weekly

The Hartford (Conn.) Courant will sell its alternative weekly, the Valley Advocate of Easthampton, Mass., this month to Newspapers of New England, based in Concord, N.H.

The acquisition is expected to be completed by the end of December, according to the Courant. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

The Valley Advocate is one of four New Mass. Media publications. The others are the Hartford Advocate, the New Haven Advocate and the Fairfield County Weekly of Bridgeport, all in Connecticut. The sale of the Valley Advocate will allow the Hartford Courant to focus on its Connecticut publications, the Courant reported.

Josh Mamis, group publisher of New Mass. Media, said Valley Advocate employees will keep their jobs and the paper will continue to work with New Mass. Media's Connecticut weeklies on cross-market sales and content sharing, the Courant reported.

"This is a good acquisition for Newspapers of New England because the talented people at the Valley Advocate will help strengthen the company's footprint in their market," Steve Carver, president and publisher of the Courant, said, according to Editor & Publisher.

E&P quoted Aaron Julien, publisher of Newspapers of New England's Daily Hampshire Gazette of Northampton, Mass., as saying: "The information and advertising



Aaron Julien

in the Valley Advocate reaches a different audience than our other publications. We currently complement each other, and that is a strength we want to keep and build on."

Ottaway papers might be sold, including 16 in N.E.

Dow Jones & Co. of New York City, publisher of the New York City-based Wall Street Journal, plans to sell all or some of the 23 community newspapers in its Ottaway chain, which includes the Cape Cod Times of Barnstable, Mass., the Portsmouth (N.H.) Herald, The Standard-Times of New Bedford, Mass., and 13 weeklies or twice-weeklies in those states and Maine.

According to a Nov. 28 article in the Cape Cod Times, Howard Hoffman, spokesman for Dow Jones, said: "This is the beginning of the process. No timeline exists for when the appraisals will be complete."

In a Nov. 28 New York Post article, Dow Jones would not confirm whether all or some of the Ottaway newspapers would be sold.

Dow Jones has hired Dirks, Van Essen & Murray, a consulting company in Santa Fe, N.M., specializing in the acquisition of newspapers, to assist in selling the chain. Dirks, Van Essen was financial adviser to Dow Jones during its December 2006 sale of six other Ottaway newspapers, including The News-Times of Danbury and The Spectrum of Milford, both in Connecticut, for \$283 million.

A Nov. 28 article in The Boston Globe said Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of the New York City-based NewsCorp., one of the world's largest media conglomerates, confirmed in an Aug. 9 conference call with investors that NewsCorp. would be "selling the local newspapers fairly quickly" once the \$5-billion purchase of Dow Jones was completed.

Murdoch's purchase of Dow Jones will likely be completed this month. Dow Jones shareholders approved the sale of Dow Jones to NewsCorp. Dec. 13.

According to the Globe, a

Newspapers of New England publishes the Concord Monitor, the Valley News of Lebanon, the Monadnock Ledger-Transcript of Peterborough, the Insider of Concord, all in New

Hampshire, and The Recorder of Greenfield, the Daily Hampshire Gazette of Northampton, and the Amherst Bulletin, all in Massachusetts.

Ottaway's N.E. newspapers

New England newspapers in the Ottaway group that Dow Jones & Co. plans to sell include the following:

In Massachusetts:

The Standard-Times of New Bedford

Cape Cod Times of Barnstable

The Barnstable Patriot

The Inquirer and Mirror of Nantucket

Hathaway Publishing Corp. group:

The Advocate of Fairhaven

The Chronicle of Dartmouth

Fall River Spirit

Middleboro Gazette

The Spectator of Somerset

In New Hampshire:

Seacoast Media Group:

Portsmouth Herald

Dover Community News

The Exeter News-Letter

The Hampton Union

The Rockingham News of Plaistow

In Maine:

York County Coast Star of Kennebunk

The York Weekly



Rupert Murdoch

likely bidder on the Ottaway chain is GateHouse Media Inc., the Fairport, N.Y.-based news company that purchased more than 100 daily and community weekly newspapers in Eastern Massachusetts in two separate deals for a total of \$410 million last year. Those papers included the Metrowest Daily News of Framingham, the Daily News Transcript of Dedham, and the Daily News Tribune of Waltham, all in Massachusetts.

Ken Doctor, a media analyst for Outsell Inc., a research company for the information industry based in Burlingame, Calif., told the Globe that the Ottaway chain might be sold for between \$500 million and \$600 million, 10 times its cash flow. Doctor also said the chain probably would have fetched 12 times its cash flow a year ago.

James Ottaway, chairman of the chain for 27 years ending in 2003 and a director at Dow Jones until 2006, told the Globe: "I hope they can find a good newspaper publishing company that understands the business, and that they don't sell it to a purely financial owner."

Dow Jones has owned the Ottaway chain since 1970; Ottaway Community Newspapers employs 1,500 people.

'I hope they can find a good newspaper publishing company that understands the business, and that they don't sell it to a purely financial owner.'

— James Ottaway

Hartford alternative monthly mag folds

CT Slant of Hartford, Conn., a free monthly magazine designed to cover alternative

lifestyles and local entertainment, published its final issue in December.

The magazine, published by

____News Ventures to Page 19

Be relentless, resourceful in rewarding readers

As I lurch unsteadily into old-fogeyhood, I get constant reminders of how ignorant I am of modern culture.

For instance, everyone is aware that there is a creature called Britney Spears.

Apparently, she is a singer who occasionally gives birth in a careless manner.

Alas, I have never heard her sing. I have no idea whether her voice sounds like Barbra Streisand's or Burl Ives'.

Oh, the ignominy.

My musical experience started in the 1950s and ended in approximately 1975. I loved rock 'n' roll of the '50s and '60s, but I instantly swore off music the day I heard the song "Everybody Was Kung-Fu Fighting."

The decade of the '60s was my prime listening time, so I know about (and admire the music of) The Beatles, the Rolling Stones, The Doors, Janis Joplin, etc. My all-time favorite was a quartet called The Mamas and The Papas, which some sticklers would insist wasn't really a rock 'n' roll group, but rather some blend of rock and folk and pop (whatever that is).

For me, however, the sound was thrilling, evocative, silkily harmonious.

Mostly, the words were clear and meaningful to a callow, luckless (in love) kid.

The star of the group was Mama Cass Elliott, whose barrel-shaped body gave no hint of a voice of heavenly beauty. Her best work, for me, was the paradoxically titled "Glad to Be Unhappy," a quirky ode to unrequited love.

You know about unrequited love, right?

(If you do not, either you were never 18, or you never had a pimple.)

For most newspaper reporters and editors, journalism is a long string of unrequited loves, interrupted only infrequently by slivers of pure bliss.

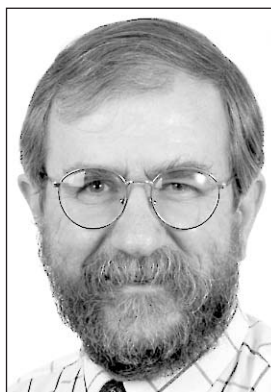
We get a story idea, or we hear a tip, or, in paying attention to our beat, we come across a juicy follow-up. Eagerly, we pursue it.

But it stalls. The key source is unavailable, or he or she will reveal little. So we write a story anyway, but it's the equivalent of taking your neighbor-friend to the prom because the person you really are infatuated with is going with someone else.

Many reporters are satisfied with that, reasoning, "It's the best we could do."

But the dedicated journalist, the true believer, hates that story. Being rejected by sources

Writing Tips



—Jim Stasiowski—

stings and scars, just as the rejection by that infatuee (I made up a word there) wounds the soul.

I fear we live in a newspaper era of surrender. As newspapers continue to lose readers, I detect in newsrooms a defeatist attitude, as if we are convinced we are losing, or have lost, our relevance. Because we rely so heavily on the ubiquitous spokesperson, our stories have a distant, abstract tone, like a song you hear, then instantly forget.

(I recently read this depressing sentence: "The spokesman for the mayor was unavailable for comment." I can accept that the mayor was unavailable, but

isn't the No. 1 job of a "spokesman" to be available for comment?)

Too many reporters shrug and settle. We need to develop, among both editors and reporters, real journalists who hate abstractions and evasions, who reach for the best stories, who see today's failure as the motivation to kick butt tomorrow.

I was talking to a reporter, Jack, about a story that was weak because it lacked an answer from the one essential source. Shrugging, Jack recited the litany: "I called him, but he didn't return my calls, so I e-mailed him, and I got nothing, so I just wrote the story with what I had."

I said, "Did you go to his office?"

Jack was dumbstruck, as if I had recommended he try to steal Angelina from Brad. (See? Occasionally I know what's going on in the real world.) Visiting a source's office for a single answer to a single question was outside the orbit of his compact journalism world.

He mumbled that such a visit would be impractical, a waste of his time, and even when I pointed out that his story, without the source's contribution, was a waste of our readers' time, he was unmoved.

He had done a story, he had filled newspaper space, he had fulfilled an obligation.

We need fewer space-fillers and obligation-fulfillers, and more battling, combative types. We need to be resourceful and relentless if we expect to be rewarded.

Unrequited love hurts, but totally investing in such an effort is our one shot at winning. Even if we win only occasionally, that is better than a complacent march toward mediocrity.

Think of it this way: Britney Spears is rich and well-known, but who knows her voice?

Mama Cass died young, but her voice lives on.

THE FINAL WORD:

Ahem, if it's not too much trouble, would you all please get an Associated Press Stylebook and look up the nouns beginning with the word "work"?

Work force is two words; all the others — workday, workout, workplace, workweek — are one word, no hyphen.

Jim Stasiowski, the writing coach for the Dolan Media Co., welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.

Study says readers of news Web sites cast more influence

A recent study found that readers of online newspapers are more likely to be "influencers," people who spread information and change and mold others' opinions.

The study was released this month by the Newspaper Association of America and the New York City-based Newspaper National Network, a marketing partnership between the Newspaper Association of America and the top 24 newspaper companies.

The study, based on 1,501 online interviews conducted in September and October, revealed that readers of newspaper Web sites are 52 percent more likely to be tagged as influencers than non-newspaper Web site readers. The study found that those who read newspaper sites influence 18 people each week, which is 38 percent more than those who do not read newspaper Web sites.

Those who read newspaper Web sites

tend to be "early adopters" of new products and technologies that they read about or see as advertisements on Web sites. The study also showed that ads on newspaper Web sites appear to be more credible than ads on other, special-interest Web sites, such as social networking sites or search engines.

"People don't trust their peers," Jason Klein, president and chief executive officer of the Newspaper National Network, said. "They may be interested

in what they have to say on social networks and peer-to-peer sites, but people tend to think a newspaper is more credible, whether they see it in print or online."



Jason Klein

Martin Sorrell, chief executive officer of the WPP Group of New York City, the world's largest buyer of media, said: "Social networks and the growth of social networking has made editorial publicity more important than it has ever been."

Coverage of minor-league baseball teams ranges from minor to major

by Tyler Duffy
Bulletin Staff

It is probably not news to anyone in New England that the Boston Red Sox won the 2007 World Series, their second in four seasons.

The Red Sox' ubiquitous presence in New England sports culture often dwarfs other sports entirely, let alone other professional baseball teams.

New England is actually home to a vibrant baseball community that does not involve "Manny being Manny."

There are seven minor league affiliates of Major League Baseball in New England as well as numerous teams in independent leagues, both professional and amateur.

Most New England dailies with a sports section carry news of the Red Sox, at least through a wire report. But for newspapers with a local pro baseball team besides the Sox, sports editors face a dilemma about where to focus coverage and where to concentrate resources.

Not surprisingly, the Red Sox generally get the upper hand in newspaper coverage.

"I think the Red Sox are the most popular item for fans up here," Don Coulter, sports editor for the Portland (Maine) Press Herald, told the NEPA Bulletin.

"The Red Sox are generally always on the front page in most circumstances," Ted Ryan, sports editor for The Burlington (Vt.) Free Press, told the NEPA Bulletin.

When it comes to local minor-league teams, however, large and small papers tend to differ on the focus of their coverage.

A larger circulation paper, such as the New Hampshire Union Leader of Manchester, employs a beat writer for both the Red Sox and the hometown New Hampshire Fisher Cats, the Eastern League Double-A affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays, with regular season coverage slightly favoring the Red Sox.

The Union Leader's coverage of the Fisher Cats orients itself toward the major leagues, emphasizing future major leaguers over the games themselves.

"We emphasize prospects over game outcomes in our coverage of the Fisher Cats," Vin Sylvia, deputy manag-

ing editor of Sunday and sports for the Union Leader, told the NEPA Bulletin. "The majority of people who go to minor-league baseball games leave not caring about the final score."

The Union Leader often runs features on high-profile visiting prospects from other teams. One last season was Akron Aeros infielder Asdrubal Cabrera, who played a prominent role for the Cleveland Indians in October.

"Fans up here already knew who Asdrubal Cabrera was," Sylvia said.

The pattern is similar for the Portland Press Herald and its coverage of the Portland Sea Dogs, the Red Sox' Eastern League Double-A affiliate.

The Press Herald has one baseball beat writer, Kevin Thomas, who covers both the Red Sox and the Sea Dogs.

"He covers home games for the Sea Dogs, and some road games," Coulter said. "Kevin will also cover Red Sox games and do Red Sox features on occasion during the regular season. Once the playoffs started, Kevin covered the Red Sox both home and road."

The Press Herald tends to cover the Sea Dogs with an eye toward the Red Sox.

Thomas' Weblog, Clearing the Bases, on the Press Herald's Web site had, as of Dec. 6, 21 posts about the Sea Dogs alone, as opposed to 102 posts on the Sea Dogs and the Red Sox, and 135 posts solely about the Red Sox.

The paper often features high-profile prospects who will go on to become future members of the Red Sox, such as former Sea Dogs Clay Buchholz and Jacoby Ellsbury.

"Most of all, we cover them with an eye toward prospects who are up and coming and doing well," Coulter said.

"There's tremendous interest in (the Sea Dogs), especially in relation to prospects in the Red Sox system," Coulter said. "The number of people who follow the Red Sox much more closely than the Sea Dogs is much greater."

Smaller newspapers, however, tend to place a greater emphasis on the local teams.

The Herald of New Britain, Conn., generally publishes both game stories and a notebook for the New Britain Rock Cats, the Eastern League Double-A affiliate of the Minnesota Twins.

"When the team is home, at least one story a day," Ken Lipshez, a sportswriter for the Herald, told the NEPA Bulletin.

In contrast to reporting at the larger papers, the reporting often focuses on the games themselves.

"The game certainly has to be reported," Lipshez



Photo, inset logo (courtesy of Pawtucket (R.I.) Red Sox Jacoby Ellsbury at bat for the PawSox at McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket, R.I., before his star turn this summer with the parent Boston Red Sox.

said. "When the game is played, that's news."

The Herald does run occasional stories about prospects, although they are "usually (run) separately" from game stories, Lipshez said.

The paper covers the Red Sox, but relies on wire stories over original reporting.

"We're a local newspaper," Lipshez said. "We don't have the resources" to send someone to Boston every day.

That type of coverage is similar for the Burlington (Vt.) Free Press in covering the hometown Vermont Lake Monsters, the New York-Penn League Single-A affiliate of the Washington Nationals.

The Free Press runs game stories for every Lake Monsters' game, although the paper lacks the resources to perform the original reporting.

"We carry all the game stories. We are fortunate in that the Lake Monsters have a very good public relations person, who supplies game stories both home and away," Ted Ryan, sports editor of the Free Press, said.

COMMENTARY

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On its 216th birthday, 1st Amendment debate still lively

As 2007 draws to a close, the meaning and application of a 216-year-old amendment to the U.S.

Constitution protecting our basic liberties are issues as contentious as ever.

From presidential politics to local classrooms to our television screens, as a nation we are arguing ever more over the fine points of the simple 45 words of the First Amendment, adopted Dec. 15, 1791, protecting freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly and petition.

Cases in point:

- In Tennessee, a federal court case raises questions on how far schools can go in providing religious groups – in this case, a group of Christian parents – access to school resources and students. The issue: When does such permission turn into proselytizing for a particular faith?

- In Washington, D.C., congressional action is pending on bills to provide some protection in federal courts for reporters who decline to reveal news sources, and provide for more public access to federal records. The issue: When does the public's right – and need – to know what its government is doing override a government's decision about secrecy?

- In Florida, state officials are revising standards and methods of discussing evolution in public schools. The issue, here and nationwide: Whether to include or ignore creationism and intelligent design.

- In Wisconsin, authorities declined to press charges against a teacher for posting an online comment sarcastically praising the Columbine High School killers. The issue: When, if ever, does simply offensive speech lose free-speech protection?

- In Missouri, state officials and a family group in Kansas that has organized as the Westboro Baptist Church are asking a federal judge to decide whether the state can ban the group's protests at soldiers' funerals. The issue: Can personal privacy override the right to speak freely in public without government interference?

The list goes on, from proposed bans on saggy pants and the "n-word" to government financing of prison ministries, from the legality of Christmas displays in the public square to the content of student speech, school plays and license plates.

If any one element of the First Amendment is likely to dominate public attention in 2008, it's the volatile first 16

First Amendment



Gene Policinski

words – the “establishment” and “free exercise” religion clauses. Beyond local and state battles, that freedom already is front and center in presidential politics.

On Dec. 6, GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney declared the Mormon church would not control his presidency. But then he went on to decry those “intent on establishing a new religion in America – the religion of secularism,” which critics decried as joining in a civic culture war between believers and nonbelievers. Rival Mike Huckabee, a Baptist minister, has run television ads describing himself as a “Christian leader” and saying that his “faith doesn't just influence me, it really defines me.”

And in an online interview this year, Sen. John McCain drew quick criticism from Jewish and Muslim groups when he said he agreed with the 55 percent of Americans who believe the Constitution established the country as a Christian nation. He added that he held that belief because the nation's founders were guided by Judeo-Christian values.

The 55 percent figure was one of the findings in the 2007 First Amendment Center State of the First Amendment national survey, which also reported that 28 percent of Americans believe freedom of religion was never meant to apply to religious groups that most people would consider fringe or extreme.

Add in non-election issues such as fear of radical Islam amid an ongoing terror threat, a renewed challenge to the words “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance, and a congressional inquiry into “prosperity ministries” – and a raft of headlines through next year would seem, well, preordained.

More than two centuries ago, Americans debated whether or not the First Amendment (and the rest of the Bill of Rights) really was necessary to determine personal freedoms in a new nation.

As we go into 2008, it would seem that at least that debate is settled. Now we have another new year to get the details right.

Gene Policinski is vice president and executive director of the First Amendment Center, 1101 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22209. Web: firstamendmentcenter.org. E-mail: gpolicinski@fac.org. His column is reprinted with permission of the First Amendment Center.

N.E. news outfits' efforts lift lids on secret divorce records

by Nikki Gloudeman
Bulletin Staff

News organizations in New England have been successful in efforts, some of them ongoing, to hold the judiciary accountable in its decisions to seal divorce records to keep them secret.

In all of the New England states, divorce records are presumptively open, but judges can seal records if they think that there is an overriding interest in the parties' right to privacy.

In at least two New England states, judges have offered prominent and wealthy people more discretion in having their records sealed.

Timothy J. Conlon, a family and divorce lawyer with the law firm TJC ESQ, based in Providence, R.I., said wealthy and prominent figures in Rhode Island are often able to have their records sealed, but for what he considered to be good reason.

"When people reveal their wealth, they often receive calls asking for investments or loans," Conlon said. "And prominent people like governors and ex-governors are already exposed to the public. If information in

their divorce records were completely open, the media would be all over them."

Robert Ambrogi, executive director of the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association, said Massachusetts judges most commonly seal records in corporate cases, when a person in a corporation successfully alleges that unsealing the records would expose company secrets.

Mike Donoghue, a reporter for The Burlington (Vt.) Free Press and executive director of the Vermont Press Association, said one of the most common circumstances under which a judge can seal divorce records in the otherwise "very open" state of Vermont is if a business is owned by a couple, at which point certain propriety information might be concealed by joint request.

In Connecticut, a system brought to light by The Hartford Courant and The Connecticut Law Tribune of Fairfield exposed a thin line between what might be deemed justifiable protection for the wealthy and prominent and a biased infringement on the public's right to access.

In 2002, Thomas Scheffey, a senior writer for the Law Tribune, covered the divorce of Jack Welch, then chief executive officer and chairman of General Electric. Scheffey talked to a divorce lawyer in the case who was representing Jack's wife, Jane. The lawyer told Scheffey he spoke with a clerk who mentioned a conference to offer Jack Welch three options for sealing his divorce records: Level 3, to keep the information open, except for certain sealed documents contained in the court file; Level 2, or "secret" sealing, to reveal only the names of the parties and the docket number; and Level 1, or "super-secret" sealing, to conceal all information, including the case number, the parties' names, the nature of the case, and all court documents. Level 1 cases were so secret that their very existence could not be confirmed by officials.

The lawyer told Scheffey he had had never heard of such a system, and Scheffey agreed that he hadn't either. When Scheffey talked to other lawyers to investigate the matter, he discovered that Philip E. Austin, then-president of the University of Con-

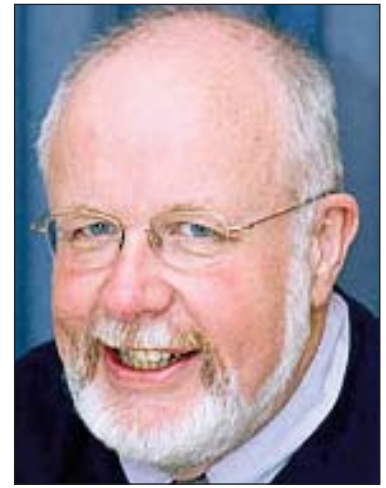
necticut in Storrs, Conn., had also had his divorce records sealed as super-secret, and that the three-level system was being offered for all civil and family cases.

Scheffey wrote about his discoveries in the Law Tribune in November 2002. In January and February 2003, the Courant wrote a series of investigative stories that exposed other super-secret civil cases, including a paternity suit for Clarence Clemons, a saxophonist for Bruce Springsteen, and the divorce records of Vin Baker, a former Boston Celtics basketball player.

Favoritism was explicitly discussed as a factor in the sealings. In February 2003, the Hartford Courant reported: "Judges have selectively sealed divorce, paternity and other cases involving fellow judges, celebrities and wealthy CEOs that, for the most part, would play out in full view of the public."

Connecticut Sen. John A. Kissel, an Enfield Republican, told the Connecticut Judiciary Committee during a meeting on the super-secret system that there was a "perception there's an insider game ... that there's a judicial system for the rich and powerful and then there's a judiciary system for the rest of us."

The Jack Welch divorce case proved to be a case study in the effect a public divorce can have on prominent people. Thanks in part to pressure from Jane Welch's lawyer, Jack Welch's divorce record was not ultimately sealed, and the financial information that came out in the divorce included revelations that General Electric had been paying for the couple's New York apartment, flowers, groceries, and sporting event tick-



Mike Donoghue

ets, among other amenities. Jack Welch, in re-sponse to the resulting public outcry, agreed to relinquish \$2.5 million a year in perks that had been part of his severance package from GE.

In July 2003, in response to the Courant and Law Tribune articles, the judiciary abolished the super-secret Level 1 designation.

In June of this year, Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers decided to open docket sheets and sealing orders for Level 2 cases. In the name of due process, Rogers sent notice to the parties explaining how they could object to the orders to make information public.

Each judicial district has discretion to decide which Level 2 docket sheets to unseal. To keep some privacy protection in place, the ruling only involves unsealing docket sheets, which include basic information such as the names of the parties, the judge to whom the case was assigned, and a listing of the pleadings and court orders.

In September, in the most high-profile decision to open a Level 2 file, Waterbury Superior Court Judge Salvatore Agati unsealed the docket sheet, motion to seal, and order to seal for the 1992 divorce case of former Connecticut Gov. John G. Rowland, who did not object to the decision. No other information besides the docket sheet, motion to seal, and order to seal were made public. The docket sheet included two motions for

'It was easy to hide files when they were on paper. When files became computerized, judges had to come up with a format to hide files in the computer — to do something on the sly.'

— Thomas Scheffey



LEGAL BRIEFS

Conn. board backs Courant in ordering release of city files

The city of Hartford, Conn., should not have withheld from The Hartford Courant documents related to possible corruption at City Hall, the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission ruled unanimously Nov. 28.

The commission ordered the city to turn over the documents to the Courant at no cost, and fined Carl Nasto, the city's deputy attorney, \$400 for refusing to release public documents "without reasonable grounds," the Courant reported.

Courant reporter Daniel Goren sought documents from the city after rumors circulated early this year of corruption in Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez's administration. The allegations included Perez's awarding one of his political backers, Abraham Giles, a no-bid, highly prof-

itable contract to operate a city-owned parking lot, and financing the cleaning of a private warehouse owned by Giles with \$10,000 of city money.

In March, Goren requested from the city all subpoenas and requests for information from any law enforcement agency. He also asked for all documents that the city had turned over to the chief state's attorney.

The city denied both requests, and the paper filed two complaints with the Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission in response. The commission held a hearing Oct. 16 on the Courant's accusations.

Nasto and city attorney John Rose argued at the hearing that the requested documents were exempt from disclosure because they had been provided to state criminal investigators. Nasto said he wanted to "protect the integrity of the investigation."

Paul Guggina, the Courant's lawyer, rebutted that argument

and referred to its reasoning as "not logical." Moreover, by withholding the documents without offering any explanation to the Courant, Nasto acted in bad faith, Guggina told the commission.

"It was unreasonable for Nasto to rely on the law-enforcement exemption when City Hall was clearly not a law enforcement agency," Guggina told the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. "All of (Nasto's) actions demonstrated that (he) was acting in bad faith."

The commission's decision might not end the 10-month dispute between the city and the Courant.

Rose said the city has no intention of accepting the commission's ruling.

"You bet your ass," Rose told the Courant after being asked whether the city would appeal.

The city also plans to withhold the documents until a court orders their disclosure,

Guggina told the Reporters Committee.

Goren and the Courant will continue to press for the immediate release of the documents, the Reporters Committee reported.

Maine high court asked to nix ruling to release school files

The Maine Supreme Judicial Court heard oral arguments Nov. 28 in its consideration of a case that might have serious implications for Maine's right-to-know law, the Portland Press Herald reported.

The high court is reviewing Justice Roland Cole's ruling in Cumberland County Superior Court in August that parts of a closed-door session held by the Portland School Committee should have been made public. The School Committee meeting occurred July 25 amid a management and budget crisis in the

school district.

The school has argued that the meeting focused on job performance, and was therefore within the confines of protected information under Maine's Freedom of Access Act.

But the Portland Press Herald and Maine Sunday Telegram challenged the legality of the closed-door session when the subject matter shifted from personnel issues to public budget matters, which are not exempt. The papers sued the school for the notes from the closed session.

Cole ordered that the committee release the budget-related notes taken during the meeting by the committee's lawyer and two of its members, although he allowed portions of the lawyer's notes to be redacted. He also ordered that the committee turn over a document written by Mary Jo O'Connor, then superintendent of the school district. O'Connor resigned in August in the wake of accusations that she was partly to blame for the school budget's \$1.7-million deficit.

In September, the Portland School Committee decided to appeal Cole's decision to Maine's highest court.

During an hour-long hearing, the justices listened to arguments from Melissa Hewey, the committee's lawyer, and Michael Kaplan, who represented the Press Herald.

Hewey expressed concerns that the law's language is too vague, and contended that budget matters discussed in the context of personnel issues should not be deemed public. Hewey called for more guidance on what is and is not protected, the Press Herald reported.

Justice Donald Alexander questioned whether accepting Hewey's argument would enable school boards and town councils to keep discussions of budgetary

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can tip
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LEGAL BRIEFS

matters out of the public realm by characterizing them as related to job performance.

Kaplan argued that regardless of context, talks about budgets must always be held in public. He accused the committee of trying to grapple with the school's budget crisis without public scrutiny.

Chief Justice Leigh Saufley and Justice Robert Clifford challenged Kaplan's broad interpretation of Maine's right-to-know law. It might be appropriate for some matters related to finances to be discussed during a closed session, they argued.

According to the Press Herald, Clifford appeared to be particularly concerned that if the lower court's decision were upheld, public officials who handle finances could be stripped of privacy protections.

Kaplan responded by noting that the public's interest in budget matters should outweigh any potential embarrassment to public officials.

It is not known when the court will issue a ruling, the Press Herald reported.

Reprimand urged for Boston judge who won Herald libel case

Massachusetts Superior Court Judge Ernest B. Murphy should face public reprimand for letters he sent to Patrick J. Purcell, publisher of the Boston Herald, a report released Nov. 21 by Peter W. Kilborn, the retired judge who presided over a hearing in October on Murphy's case, recommended.

Kilborn found that Murphy engaged in conduct that was "prejudicial to the administration of justice and unbecoming of a judicial officer" and took advantage of the "prestige" of his title for personal benefit, the report stated.



Judge Murphy

But Kilborn determined that the conduct, while imprudent, was not willful because Murphy thought that his letters to Purcell would remain confidential. The two men had met privately in the past on two occasions.

The Massachusetts Commission on Judicial Conduct charged Murphy with ethics violations in July for letters he wrote, including one on Superior Court stationery, to Purcell after Murphy won a \$2.1-million libel suit against the Herald in 2005. Murphy sued the Herald for a series of unflattering stories it ran about him that accused him of, among other things, being soft on crime and unsympathetic to the plight of a 14-year-old rape victim.

In the letters, Murphy demanded that Purcell meet with him privately and bring a check for Murphy in the amount of \$3.26 million.

"You will give me that check and I shall put it in my pocket," Murphy wrote in the letter. "It would be a big mistake, Pat, to show this letter to anyone other than the gentleman whose authorized signature will be affixed to the check in question. In fact, a BIG mistake."

Purcell released a statement Nov. 21 praising Kilborn's decision.

"We are pleased with the hearing officer's report and will await the further proceedings

before the Commission on Judicial Conduct and ultimately the (Massachusetts) Supreme Judicial Court."

In the 27-page report, Kilborn wrote that he had found the letters to be threatening in tone, but noted the significant stress that Murphy had been experiencing at the time the letters were written because of the Herald's stories and their aftermath.

During the hearing, Murphy said he wrote the letters after years of emotional trauma experienced by him and his family because of the Herald stories. Murphy described the hate mail and threats he had received, and told the hearing officer that both of his daughters had required therapy.

Murphy has been on medical leave since Aug. 1 for -- according to Murphy's lawyer, Michael Mone -- post-traumatic stress disorder that developed as a result of the Herald stories. Murphy is receiving his \$129,624 annual salary in full while on leave.

Mone argued that the letters were a reflection of Murphy's "colorful" personality, The Associated Press reported.

Kilborn rejected that argument.

"That does not appear to me a mitigating factor," Kilborn wrote in his report. "Rather, the style may be part of what got the judge into trouble."

Kilborn ultimately determined, however, that Murphy's actions did not warrant the stiffer penalties applicable in the case, such as a \$5,000 fine or a six-month suspension.

The Commission on Judicial Conduct will consider Kilborn's recommendation and then submit a final report to the Supreme Judicial Court. The Massachusetts' highest court then will determine what penalties, if any, Murphy will face. That process is expected to take

several months, the Herald reported.

Mistrial in libel suit vs. Boston Phoenix

Judge Richard G. Stearns of U.S. District Court in Boston has declared a mistrial in a libel suit that Marc Mandel, a former Maryland prosecutor, filed against The Boston Phoenix in response to a January 2003 article called "Children at Risk" which detailed the child custody battle between Mandel and his estranged wife.

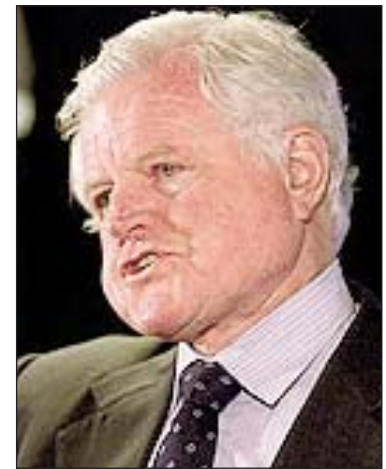
The mistrial was a result of a deadlocked jury. Judge Stearns scheduled a new trial to begin Jan. 28.

The Phoenix issued a statement in response to the mistrial: "The article, 'Children at Risk,' is a lengthy piece raising important issues relating to family courts and their treatment of the sensitive topic of child abuse allegations. While we are disappointed that the jury was not able to reach a unanimous verdict on this emotionally charged issue, we look forward to the opportunity to further defend the case before a new jury."

In 2004, a Massachusetts court awarded Mandel almost \$1 million after finding that the Phoenix had falsely accused him of sexually abusing his daughter. The Phoenix appealed the jury's decision and it was overturned in 2006 when an appeals court ruled that the lower court incorrectly decided that Mandel was not a public figure. The U.S. Supreme Court has established stricter standards for proving that public figures have been libeled than the standards for those who aren't public figures.

Cape Cod woman sues Enquirer for libel over Kennedy 'love child' report

The National Enquirer is



Sen. Kennedy

under fire for two stories it published about an alleged romantic entanglement between U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, a Massachusetts Democrat, and Caroline Bilodeau-Allen of East Sandwich, Mass., The Boston Globe reported.

The stories also allude to Kennedy's "love child" with the woman.

Bilodeau-Allen filed a lawsuit against the Enquirer Nov. 27 in U.S. District Court in Boston. Her 22-year-old son Christopher is also a plaintiff. The suit claims that they have had their reputations "ruined" by the stories, and are now on antidepressants and being treated by psychologists.

The stories, which ran Jan. 30 and Feb. 6, 2006, describe an affair between Kennedy and Bilodeau-Allen that began in 1983. The following year, Bilodeau-Allen became pregnant, the Enquirer reported.

"From the opening paragraph of the (first) article forward, the article suggests, both directly and through innuendo, that Mrs. Bilodeau-Allen gave birth to Senator Kennedy's 'love child,' that the child was unwanted and that she was 'paid off' to 'cover up' the scandal.' Each and every one of the factual statements is false and each is defamatory," the plaintiff's

INDUSTRY NEWS

Providence Journal, union contract talks headed to resolution

The Providence Newspaper Guild and management of The Providence (R.I.) Journal are on their way to signing a new three-year labor contract, conflict-free, Ian Donniss, news editor of The Providence Phoenix, reported Dec. 5.

Negotiations began in October and the current contract expires in December.

"At this time, we are cautiously optimistic that we will have an agreement in place," Tim Schick, the Guild's administrator, said.



Tim Schick

A voice-mail message left for the human resources department at the Journal was not returned.

This year's contract talks are in sharp contrast to those that led to the current contract. That difficult labor dispute lasted almost four years and ended in December 2003, when the Guild accused managers of trying to break up the union, Donniss reported.

The Guild represents about 400 reporters, photographers and other workers at the Journal.

"When we reached the deal in 2003, we shook hands and they said they wanted to change the relationship. I said that will take time ... and I have to give them credit. They have been very inclusive with us. There have been issues that, before 2003, we would have been in court, which have been settled with phone calls," John Hill, the Guild's president, said.

Price increases for papers in Westfield, Longmeadow, Mass. and Enfield, Conn.

The Westfield (Mass.) Evening News, Longmeadow (Mass.) News, and Enfield (Conn.) Press, all owned by Westfield News Publishing Inc., have gone up in price because of rising production costs.

The annual subscription price for the weekly Longmeadow News, circulation 1,602, increased Nov. 22 to \$30 from \$20, and the single-copy price increased to 50 cents from 40 cents.

The annual subscription price for the Monday-Saturday Westfield Evening News, circulation 5,090, increased Dec. 3 to \$142 from \$125, and the single-copy price increased to 50 cents from 45 cents.

The annual subscription price for the weekly Enfield Press has increased to \$30 from \$20.

Carol Mazza, publisher of Westfield News Publishing, said the price increased as a result of the rising cost of ink and paper.

Westfield News Publishing also owns Pennysaver, a shopper that serves communities in Western Connecticut.

Elm City, Register sell their building in Milford, Conn.

An offer has been accepted for a building that has housed the Elm City Newspapers chain and the New Haven Register's offices in Milford, Conn., David Melillo, the listing agent, told the Bulletin.

Melillo said he could not disclose the name of the potential buyer nor the amount of the offer because the sale had not been finalized.

About 20 full-time employ-

ees have been working in the building, including the staff of Elm City's eight weeklies: Milford Weekly, Hamden Chronicle, Stratford Bard, The Post of North Haven, Shelton Weekly, The Bulletin of Orange and Woodbridge, West Haven News, and Wallingford Voice. The New Haven Register's Milford staff also has been working in the building.

Robert Gregory, Milford's economic development director, told the Connecticut Post that despite the loss of jobs in the city, he was "more concerned that one of the papers covering Milford may not have a physical presence here anymore."

Melillo said the papers' Milford operations are relocating to headquarters in New Haven.

The 12,000-square-foot building is located on 1.37 acres on New Haven Avenue in Milford, in "an area of great commercial viability," Gregory told the Connecticut Post. It was listed by H. Pearce Commercial Real Estate Inc., of North Haven, Conn. for \$800,000. The property is assessed at \$664,110.

Melillo told the Bulletin that the offer came in the day after it was listed.

The Milford Citizen was located in the building from 1975 until Journal Register Co., the Yardley, Pa.-based parent of Elm City and the Register, bought and closed the Citizen in 1997. A former printing operation housed in the building might have used lead type, although Gregory denied that there was any environmental contamination, according to the Connecticut Post.

Courant editor sues paper in dispute over spouse's insurance

Barbara T. Roessner, co-managing editor of The Hartford



Barbara Roessner

(Conn.) Courant, has sued the Courant, its parent company and an insurance company over a failure to provide payment from the life insurance policy of her late husband.

Roessner is seeking \$243,000, the amount of the insurance policy, plus interest.

Roessner's husband, Craig Baggott, a former politics editor for the Courant, died unexpectedly during a 2004 leave of absence. He had accompanied Roessner to California, where she had a journalism fellowship.

Baggott had signed a form waiving health, dental, and vision benefits, but did not mark the form to waive his supplemental life insurance policy.

Chicago-based Tribune Co., parent of the Courant, altered the form to include a waiver of life insurance benefits, based on a recorded conversation where Baggott allegedly said "go ahead and cancel those benefits," according to the lawsuit.

The conversation provided the basis for the denial of the claim by Prudential Life Insurance Co. of America, based in Newark, N.J.

"He never signed a document that he intended to cancel those benefits," Andrew Houlding, Roessner's lawyer, said.

Stephen D. Carver, publisher of the Courant, declined to comment to the Courant.



John McCain

Union Leader backs McCain in GOP presidential primary

The New Hampshire Union Leader of Manchester has endorsed U.S. Sen. John McCain of Arizona for president in the Republican primary Jan. 8 in New Hampshire.

In a Dec. 2 front-page editorial, Joseph W. McQuaid, the Union Leader's publisher, said the paper thought that McCain was "the best man to lead America."

The editorial praised McCain's ability to work across the political divide to solve problems, the courage he displayed as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, and his efforts to cut pork-barrel spending.

McQuaid wrote that the Union Leader did not agree with McCain on all the issues, and particularly disagreed with his ideas on campaign finance reform.

McCain has been vocal in his opposition to the amount of money that goes into political campaigns, and co-sponsored legislation in 2002 to ban unlimited contributions to political parties.

Presidential hopefuls covet the Union Leader's endorsement because it is the only statewide paper in New Hampshire, which traditionally holds the first primary in the country.

INDUSTRY NEWS

The paper has usually endorsed conservative candidates for president, and last endorsed Republican Steve Forbes in the 2000 primary.

McCain told Bob Schieffer, host of CBS' "Face the Nation," the day the editorial ran that he was "very appreciative of the Union Leader endorsement."



Boston Herald American cover celebrating paper's survival

Purcell toasts 25th anniversary of Herald's survival

Patrick J. Purcell, publisher of the Boston Herald, sent a message to readers Dec. 3 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Herald's "rebirth," announced in 1982 with the front-page headline: "YOU BET WE'RE ALIVE!"

Twenty-five years ago, media mogul Rupert Murdoch purchased the Herald from the Hearst Corp., now of New York City, ensuring that Boston would remain among a handful of U.S. cities with competing newspapers.

Then called the Herald American, the paper was suffering from declining circulation and advertising dollars lost to its rival, The Boston Globe. Murdoch entered into negotiations after Hearst had announced that because of financial problems, the paper would be sold or shut down by Dec. 3, 1982. After 30

consecutive hours of bargaining, the sale was finalized when Murdoch sought and won last-minute union concessions to keep the paper operating. Five hours earlier, Hearst had stopped publication and sent the newspaper staff home.

"The Herald survived, and we would like to believe that this community is a better place today because it has," Purcell wrote to readers.

Purcell said drastic changes in the industry during the past quarter-century have not affected the paper's core mission of serving the community by winning readers' loyalty and trust.

"I thank you and pledge to you our commitment to remain as alive, as vital and as involved in the life of this community as we have been in the past 25 years," Purcell wrote.

Lower 2007 \$\$ for newspapers forecast to be lower too in '08

Some forecasts for newspaper revenue are predicting a continuing downtrend this year and next compared with prior years.

Paul Ginocchio, an analyst for Deutsche Bank, based in Frankfurt, Germany, is predicting that revenues for private newspaper companies will continue to decline in 2008 from 2007.

Ginocchio forecasts a 5 percent decline in revenue for private newspaper companies in 2007 compared with 2006, followed by a 1.5 percent decline in 2008. He thinks that forthcoming figures for public newspaper companies will be similar.

His projections come after polling 15 executives from large and small newspaper companies about their visions for next year.

A contributing factor in the decline is a decrease in advertising revenue for newspapers.

Jim Conaghan, a business analyst for the Newspaper Association of America, projects a 1.2 percent decline in advertising revenue for 2008, after an estimated 7 percent decline in 2007 compared with 2006 figures.

Although Conaghan predicts a 22 percent increase in online revenue for newspapers, he does not think that that will be enough to offset the loss of revenue from classified advertising in print.

The decline in advertising revenue is linked to a relative decline in advertising spending, particularly on the local level.

A report released Dec. 11 by TNS Media Intelligence of New York City revealed that total ad spending in the United States remained flat for 2007, up 0.2 percent to \$108.2 billion in the first nine months of the year compared to the same period in 2006. Third-quarter ad spending rose 1.3 percent compared with the same period last year.

Robert Coen, senior vice president and director of forecasting at Universal McCann, based in New York City, lowered his projection for U.S. growth in overall advertising spending to 0.7 percent for 2007, a substantial decrease from his initial estimate, made 12 months ago, of 4.8 percent growth compared with 2006.

Coen released the information in a report at the annual UBS Media and Communications Conference Dec. 3.

He expects spending on national advertising to increase by 3.1 percent, although he thinks that local advertising spending will decline by 3.5 percent in 2007, compared with 2006.

"The role of traditional advertising shrunk considerably for local retailers and the smaller entrepreneurs operating in a single local market," Coen wrote in

the report.

Coen projected 3.7 percent growth in advertising spending for 2008 compared with 2007, although he warned that that would be a result of specific events in 2008, such as the presidential election and the Olympics.

"We expect U.S. advertising to experience improved growth in 2008 mainly because of the unique events that will fuel extra spending in 2008," Coen told Ad Age.

Thomas headlining women and media conference in March

Helen Thomas, dean of White House correspondents, and Caryl Rivers, a correspondent for The Boston Globe, are among the speakers at the 5th annual Women, Action and the Media Conference March 28 through March 30 in Cambridge, Mass.

Thomas and Haifa Zangana are the keynote speakers.

Thomas is a columnist for Hearst Newspapers, based in New York City. Thomas previously was a correspondent and White House bureau chief for United Press International.

Zangana is a weekly columnist for al-Quds newspaper, based in Palestinian Territory, and is an occasional commentator for Red Pepper magazine and the Guardian newspaper, both based in London. Zangana was a former prisoner of Saddam Hussein's Iraqi regime.

Rivers, a journalism professor at Boston University, will teach the course "Here We Go Again: Bad Stories about Women that Never Die" with Dr. Rosalind C. Barnett. Barnett, who is not a regular Globe correspondent, has co-authored two Globe articles about gender issues with Rivers, in 2006 and 2007.



Caryl Rivers

The conference will feature more than 100 speakers and 40 sessions on topics including coverage of Hillary Clinton, gender bias in news coverage, and the youth's role in media.

Jaclyn Friedman, program director for the Center of New Words, which is putting on the conference, said about 500 people are expected to attend.

The Center for New Words is a nonprofit organization in Cambridge dedicated to women's voices in print.

The conference will take place at the Strata Center at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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Requester periodicals catch postal rate break

by Katherine McInerney
Bulletin Staff

The rate structure the U.S. Postal Service put into effect July 15 was reported at the time to mean increased distribution costs for newspapers across the country.

Max Heath, chairman of the Postal Committee for the National Newspaper Association and vice president of Landmark Community Newspapers Inc. of Shelbyville, Ky., described the new rates, in a story in the August Bulletin, as the “most drastic change in the history of periodical mail.”



Max Heath

The new rates for outside-county periodical mail hit hard among small publishers who send weekly publications via second class mail outside their home counties.

Heath explained in the August story: “It basically shifts cost from high-volume mailers to low-volume mailers. They think it’s fair; we don’t.”

But a more recent and unrelated change to the U.S. Postal Service’s rate structure is helping to alleviate the financial pinch that many small New England newspapers are feeling as a result of rising distribution costs. The change is a provision of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act that was approved in December 2006 and took effect Aug. 30. It allows requester periodical publications to claim all requested copies under in-county mail rates, which are about 10 cents less a copy than outside-county rates.

Heath said the new standards for the requester category, formerly known as controlled circulation, can save eligible publications between 20 and 40 percent in mailing costs. Those who stand to benefit the most are free newspapers sent via standard mail, Heath said. The new rates for requester periodicals could save them 65 percent of distribution costs, Heath said.

Eligible publications include those with requested circulations under 10,000 copies, or those whose requested number of in-county copies is more than 50 percent of their total number of requested copies, Heath said. Requester publications also must also have at least 24 pages with less than 75 percent advertising, and they cannot be owned and operated by a business that uses the publication “strictly as an auxiliary to and advance-

ment of its own business interests,” Heath said.

Publications must apply for requester periodical status with the U.S. Postal Service and pay an entry fee of \$500 to qualify for the recomputed in-county rates. Those that did not apply for the status in August when the change took effect are eligible to file for a refund of postage fees that have been overpaid since then, Heath said.

Ryan Duques, publisher of Shore Publishing, based in Madison, Conn., told the Bulletin in August that the July postal rate changes translated into an increase of 23 to 27 percent in weekly postage payments. Shore Publishing publishes seven community weeklies in Connecticut, with a total distribution of more than 85,000. Duques said in an e-mail to the Bulletin that, since the most recent changes in postal rates for requester periodical publications, Shore Publishing has saved 10 cents on each copy that had previously been mailed under outside-county mail. On average, Shoreline pays 13 cents a copy in postage; the average includes both requested and non-requested copies, Duques wrote. The new rate structure translates into an estimated savings of 30 to 40 percent in weekly postage costs for Shore Publishing, Duques said.

“I am extremely pleased that the (Postal Service) has recognized the importance of requester periodical mail and has decided to not penalize this category of periodical any longer,” Duques wrote.

Some newspapers in New England are not even aware of the new rate structures in place.

Donna Culbertson, circulation director of Courier Publications of Rockland, Maine, expressed frustration with the U.S. Postal Service because of its unreliable service and confusing rate structures. Culbertson first heard of the new in-county rates for requester periodicals when she was contacted by the Bulletin.



Donna Culbertson

“It’s news to me,” she said.

Courier Publications publishes seven weekly newspapers in Maine, including the Capital Weekly of Augusta, the Bar Harbor Times, The Republican Journal and The Waldo Independent, both of Belfast, The Camden Herald, the Lincoln County Weekly of Damariscotta, and the Courier-



‘I am extremely pleased that the (Postal Service) has recognized the importance of requester periodical mail and has decided to not penalize this category of periodical any longer.’

– Ryan Duques

Gazette of Rockland.

As for previous changes in the U.S. Postal Service’s rate structure, Culbertson said the Maine papers have suffered from rising costs and lots of delays. It takes two and a half weeks for papers to reach Florida and people are still receiving three or four papers at one time, she said. Past experiences with the U.S. Postal Service makes Culbertson wary of any additional changes to periodical postage rates.

“No matter what they try and do for periodicals, it ends up costing more and more money, and the service is still horrible. That’s what bothers me most,” she said.

Heath said the key to benefitting from rate changes is finding ways to get requesters and maintaining an updated mailing list. The Postal Service requires that requests are made in writing and are less than three years old.

“There are significant costs to keep requesters up,” Heath said. “Telemarketing was a very valuable tool that could have been used,” but do-not-call rules force requester periodicals to find new strategies.

Heath suggests that newspapers visit the Customer Support Ruling (CSR) PS-054 at the Postal Explorer Web site at <http://pe.usps.gov> for more detailed information on determining requester status qualifications.

3 N.E. papers get positive response to publishing state employees' pay

by Jennifer Stubbs
Bulletin Staff

The salaries and pensions of state employees, although public records, are getting more attention and scrutiny recently in at least three states, thanks to newspapers there publishing them.

Within the past five months, three major New England daily newspapers decided to publish those records in print and online, and reader response has been remarkable, they say.

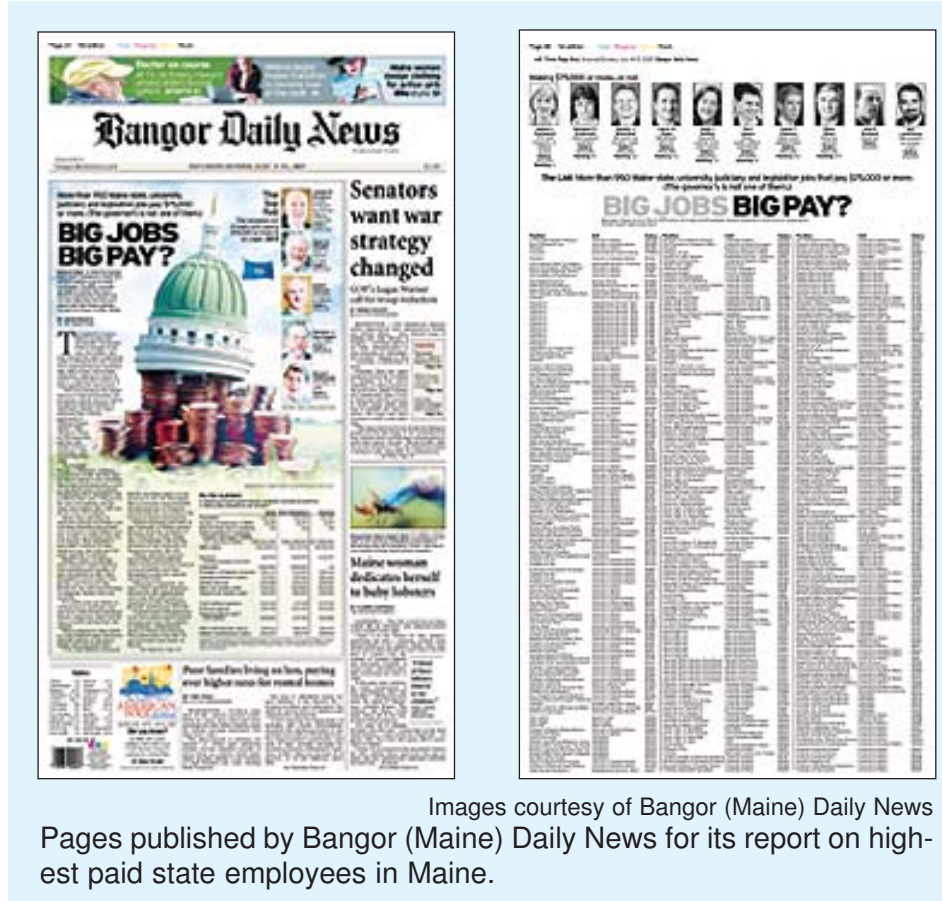
The Boston Herald, The Providence (R.I.) Journal, and the Bangor (Maine) Daily News all sought salary records from their state governments and featured them on their Web sites and in print. The format and number of employees featured varied by newspaper, with the Boston Herald posting annual pension amounts and annual salaries for nearly all Massachusetts' state employees, including teachers, in two online databases.

The scope was narrower for the other two papers. The Bangor Daily News published in its weekend edition salaries of state employees earning more than \$75,000, and the Providence Journal listed online the highest 100 salaries of state employees and the 10 highest earners in each department, with highlights published in its print edition. Both lists are still available on the Web sites of each newspaper, at bangornews.com and projo.com.

This is the first year the Herald and the Journal have published such records, but the Daily News published a similar list in 1992. For both the Daily News and the Journal, state budget shortfalls in Maine and Rhode Island, respectively, led editors to request the financial records to pass along to their readers.

The salaries of state employees "became a contentious issue due to a large budget issue this summer," Paul Edward Parker, a reporter for the Journal, said. The Journal had been getting salary reports for a few years for "in-house purposes," so it was just a matter of updating those records before they could be published, Parker said.

Joe Sciacca, deputy managing editor



Images courtesy of Bangor (Maine) Daily News
Pages published by Bangor (Maine) Daily News for its report on highest paid state employees in Maine.

of the Herald, said the Herald got the idea to publish Massachusetts salary and pension records online from a South Carolina newspaper, The State of Columbia.

The home states of the Herald, Daily News and Journal all have public records laws, so legal backing for their requests was not an issue.

At the Bangor paper, reporters didn't have to resort to a formal freedom-of-information request, Mike Dowd, managing editor, said. The paper simply asked for the records and the "majority of departments" responded, which Dowd called "surprisingly easy."

The Journal and Daily News were expecting and preparing for a heated response from their state governments, but none came.

"We were bracing for it, for outrage from the state employees and such, but it never came," Parker said. He said there was "not much reaction" from Rhode Island state government. Dowd said there was "little response" from Maine state government or its employees.

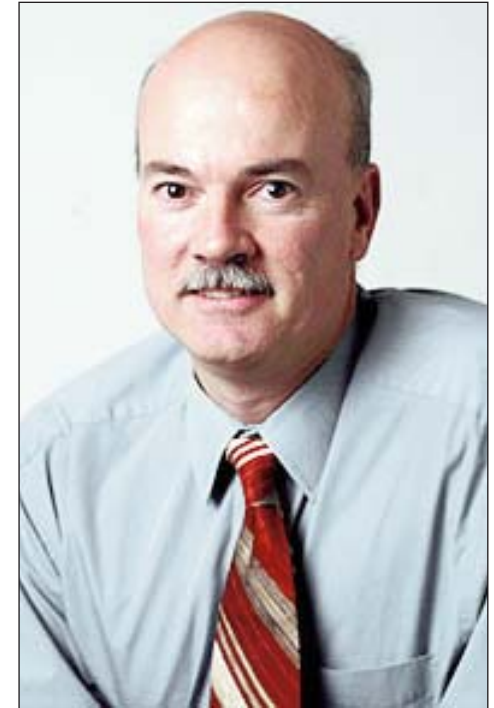
Joe Dwinell, the Herald's senior executive city editor, runs the paper's City Desk Wired Weblog on boston-herald.com, and readers have posted several responses, both positive and negative.

One response, from a user named David, said: "Excellent work! I have been waiting for this." Another, from a user named Joe Worker, who identified himself as a state employee, said: "I am kind of disappointed that the names were published. The friction and hatred this has caused in the workplace between employees is downright appalling."

All three papers had overwhelmingly positive responses from readers. Readers saw the reports as information they needed to know to make informed decisions, but without a way to obtain it, they turned to their local newspapers, and were rewarded.

Parker said Journal readers "applauded our efforts" and saw the records as "providing a public service."

Daily News readers were also "over-



Mike Dowd

whelmingly supportive," sending several "e-mails, letters to the editor, even a few calls."

Kevin Convey, editor in chief of the Boston Herald, declined to comment on his paper's online databases, saying only that "they are public records and their contents speak for themselves."

If Dwinell's blog is any indication, readers are requesting additions and more research on municipal salaries and previous years' salaries. An Oct. 17 entry, titled "Reader petition: Keep digging for data," assures readers that the amount of information available "will never run dry, but it does require your interest."

Measuring an increase in readers or in advertising sales based on one printed publication would be difficult, but the positive response has indicated to those papers that the payroll figures was information their readers found to be useful.

Five days after publication of salary information in the Bangor Daily News, Maine Gov. John Baldacci called for a study of state employee salaries compared to other similar states and to determine whether there might be ways to save money or provide tax relief, and, if so,

Convention symposium points toward future

_____ **Convention** from Page 1
 techniques to combat unsettling market forces. The all-day workshop, to be conducted by the Newspaper Association of America (NAA), is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 8.

Lindsey Leisher, marketing coordinator of the NAA, said that “the symposium will deal with ways to increase the three Rs: readership, revenue and rewards.”

The focus will be on the business side of newspapers. The seven sessions scheduled for the day provide an opportunity to get acquainted with a host of audience-building, revenue-driving tools, and with ideas for readership, classified advertising, circulation, print and digital producers.

Participants will also be given a multitude of take-home products and materials, including the latest

“Solutions — Big Ideas for Smaller-Market Newspapers” CD. It includes hundreds of samples and descriptions of proven strategies, success stories and product ideas that can be put to work at newspapers immediately.

“The interactive nature of the sessions will give the participants the invaluable opportunity to network and share ideas among their colleagues,” Leisher said.

The first session, called “Innovation in Action” and scheduled from 9 to 10 a.m., will be conducted by Diane Hockenberry, director of audience development for NAA.

The session will focus on “action-oriented innovation” to deal with declines in the newspaper industry. Hockenberry will talk about ways to improve products, marketing tactics, research, and management policies.

The session will also highlight approaches employed by news-media companies to increase audience share in a variety of market sectors. Those attending can learn how to successfully thwart “disruptive market forces” with “out-of-the-box thinking” in distribution, citizen journalism, design, storytelling, and news management.



Jack Brady

In the second session, “Political Advertising, Election 2008,” scheduled from 10 to 10:30 a.m., Jack Brady,

_____ **Trade Show** to Page 15

QUICK GUIDE TO NEPA PROGRAMS & EVENTS

FRI 2/8/08							
	CONTENT	PHOTOGRAPHY	TECHNOLOGY	MANAGEMENT	LEGAL	SALES	DESIGN
8 to 9 a.m.	WELCOME BUZZ BREAKFAST: BACK BAY CONFERENCE & EXHIBIT HALL						
9 a.m. ↕ 10:30 a.m.	Effective Writing Techniques Photography for Reporters	Photography for Reporters	Computer Assisted Reporting	Small Newspaper Workshop: NAA All-Day Workshop: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	TRADE SHOW	Territory and Account Management Contemporary Newspaper Ad Design	Contemporary Newspaper Ad Design
10:30 to 10:45 a.m.	COFFEE BREAK						
10:45 a.m. ↕ 12 p.m.	Power Reporting Photography for Reporters <i>cont'd</i>	Photography for Reporters <i>cont'd</i>	Computer Assisted Reporting <i>cont'd</i>	9-10 Innovation in Action 10-10:30 Election 2008—Advertising 10:45-Noon Netting a Better Bottom Line	TRADE SHOW	Territory and Account Management <i>cont'd</i> Contemporary Newspaper Ad Design <i>cont'd</i>	Contemporary Newspaper Ad Design <i>cont'd</i>
12:15 to 2 p.m.	NEWS INDUSTRY LUNCHEON: “STATE OF THE BUSINESS” REPORT AND OUTLOOK						
2:15 p.m. ↕ 3:30 p.m.	Reynolds Center — Investigative Business Journalism in Your Community	Hit Me With Your Best Shot	Multi-Media: How to Get Started; Where to Go Next	2:45-3:30 Successful Strategies for Building Core Subscriber Circulation 3:45-4:30 Recruitment and Retention — Finding and Keeping Good People	Fighting for Access	Overcoming Obstacles: Selling to Agencies Better Design for Print and Web Classifieds	Better Design for Print and Web Classifieds
3:30 to 3:45 p.m.	AFTERNOON BREAK						
3:45 p.m. ↕ 5 p.m.	Reynolds Center — Investigative Business Journalism <i>cont'd</i> Headline Writing	Hit Me With Your Best Shot <i>cont'd</i>	Multi-Media: How to Get Started; Where to Go Next <i>cont'd</i>	4:30-5 Big Ideas for Smaller-Market Newspaper	Fighting for Access <i>cont'd</i>	Better Design for Print and Web Classifieds <i>cont'd</i> Clinic with John Peterson Effective Media Kits	Better Design for Print and Web Classifieds <i>cont'd</i>
6 to 7:30 p.m.	HALL OF FAME RECEPTION / COLLEGE JOURNALISM SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS RECEPTION						

SAT 2/9/08							
	CONTENT	SPORTS	TECHNOLOGY	MANAGEMENT	LEGAL	SALES	DESIGN
8 to 9 a.m.	ANNUAL MEETING — NEPA MEMBERSHIP						
9 a.m. ↕ 10:30 a.m.	Rebooting Your Newsroom: Adding Blogs, Podcasts, Citizens and the Web	Writing the Perfect Sports Story	Strategies for Web Innovation	TRADE SHOW	Media Law Hotline Q & A: Editorial	Great Sales Idea Exchange Media Span/CityXpress Aggregated Classifieds	Design is Advance
10:30 to 10:45 a.m.	COFFEE BREAK						
10:45 a.m. ↕ 12 p.m.	Rebooting Your Newsroom <i>cont'd</i> Compelling Storytelling Techniques for Print and Online	BEST PRACTICES ROUNDTABLE: Sports	Strategies for Web Innovation <i>cont'd</i>	Branding Your Newspaper — The Dos and Don'ts Media Law Hotline Q & A: Advertising and Business	Media Law Hotline Q & A: Advertising and Business	Branding Your Newspaper — The Dos and Don'ts Media Law Hotline Q & A: Advertising and Business	Design is Advance <i>cont'd</i>
12:15 to 2 p.m.	NEWSMAKER LUNCHEON WITH U.S. SENATOR PATRICK LEAHY, CHAIRMAN, SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE						
2:15 p.m. ↕ 3:30 p.m.	Copyediting BEST PRACTICES ROUNDTABLE: Editors + Reporters	TRADE SHOW	TRADE SHOW	TRADE SHOW	Your Newspaper Online: The Era of Blogs, Podcasts and Other Stuff on the Web	Gathering Co-op Dollars BEST PRACTICES ROUNDTABLE: Advertising Managers	Design is Advance <i>cont'd</i>
6 p.m. / 7 p.m.	COCKTAIL RECEPTION / NEPA ANNUAL BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST AWARDS BANQUET, BALLROOM						

Trade Show location to be consolidated at 2008 convention

Trade Show from Page 14

director of advertising and marketing for NAA, will talk about “the power and importance” of political advertising in newspapers.

“Three-fourths of the voters read the newspapers on polling day; this shows the influence of political advertising,” Brady said.

Brady said the session will show how a newspaper can use political advertising to influence not only undecided voters but make an impact on issues campaigners, consultants and candidates. Brady will also demonstrate how to develop a strategy, plan and timetable to ensure that newspapers receive a “fair share of the political ad dollars” in the upcoming elections.

“Interactive Multimedia Marketing, Netting a Better Bottom Line,” 10:45 a.m. to noon, will be presented by Mike Blinder, founder and chairman of The Blinder Group of Tampa, Fla.

“The focus will be on ideas and success stories on packaging print and online output to boost profits,” Blinder said.

Blinder will provide examples of how newspapers have achieved substantial increases in their online revenue through more efficient packaging of their products. The session will also reveal ways to “attack” competition from radio, cable television and the Yellow Pages through better “leveraging of Web assets.”

Ready-to-use training material and sales collaterals will be distributed to those attending.

Jim Conaghan, vice president of market-business analysis and research for NAA, is the featured lunch speaker.

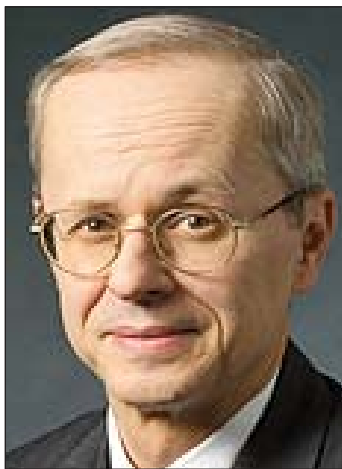
He will present the “State of the Business Report and Outlook,” an in-depth economic report. The spotlight will be on trends and indicators on what



John Murray

2008 has in store on the business front for advertisers and newspapers. The report will also include economic forecasts for various regions, including New England.

John Murray, vice president of circulation marketing for NAA, will conduct a session on “Circulation – Successful Strategies for



Jim Conaghan

Building Core Subscriber Circulation” from 2:15 to 3:30 p.m. Murray will present up-to-date data and research findings on key areas of circulation. He will also demonstrate established techniques to retain and increase circulation and “convert single-copy buyers into regular subscribers.”

The session “Recruitment and Retention -- Finding and Keeping Good People,” from 3:45 to 4:30 p.m., will be presented by Jeanne Fox-Alston, vice president of talent management and diversity for NAA.

The workshop will focus on how to find talented staff members.

“To recruit top talent requires a well-thought-out action plan,” Fox-Alston said.

She will talk about valuable tips for identifying future hires.

“The goal is to learn strategies for developing and holding onto your best hires,” she said.

Leisher, NAA’s marketing coordinator, will coordinate the session called “Big Ideas” from 4:30 to 5 p.m.

“This interactive session will be a sharing and learning exercise that will provide an opportunity to the participants to contribute ideas and find solutions to marketing issues such as advertising, circulation and promotion efforts,” Leisher said.

Details about the daylong symposium and other information about the convention are also available online at the NEPA Web site, www.nepa.org. The NEPA 2008 Quick Guide to the convention also can be downloaded from the site.



Jeanne Fox-Alston

Convention registration information

- **Registration forms available at www.nepa.org.**
- **Registration forms also can be sent by mail to NEPA, 360 Huntington Ave., Suite 428 CP, Boston MA 02115.**
- **10 percent late fee for registering after Jan. 10.**

Postcards and e-mails providing the Web addresses or online links to registration forms, the program schedule and the Quick Guide for the convention were sent to NEPA’s more than 600 newspaper members in the first week of December. This is the second year that NEPA is offering online registration.

Completed registration forms can be submitted online or sent along with payment to NEPA, 360 Huntington Ave., Suite 428 CP, Boston, MA 02115. Forms received after Jan. 7 will be charged a 10 percent late fee.

More than 6,500 entries have been received for NEPA’s Better Newspaper Contest. The entries will be judged in 225 categories.

Ongoing during the two days of the convention will be the annual Trade Show, which will be held at the Back Bay conference and exhibit hall at the Boston Marriot Copley Place.

David Kindy, president of Mark Johnston Associates Inc. of Plymouth, Mass., and Naples, Fla., and authorized agent for the NEPA Trade Show, said that “this year’s trade show will be different. The layout will be more consolidated.”

All meeting rooms and the Trade Show will be located on the same floor.

“Participants will have the opportunity to visit the stalls, talk to the vendors, and check the display of awards finalist, and also refresh themselves with coffee and snacks,” Kindy said.

The Trade Show provides an opportunity to witness displays of leading companies in the newspaper industry. There will be demonstrations by exhibitors throughout the convention. The Trade Show exhibits will include specialists in prepress software, prepress hardware, syndicated features, photography, printing presses and parts, new media, electronic commerce, advertising services marketing services, business services and promotion services.

Kindy said almost half of the 30 booths available have been booked. Some vendors that participated at the 2007 convention have already signed up for the 2008 convention. They include WoodWing USA of Detroit; The Warren Group/Banker & Tradesman of Boston; Fronteras Publishing Inc. of Kansas City, Mo.; Insurance Specialties Services Inc. of Jamison, Pa.; Goss International Inc., which has offices in Durham and Dover, N.H., and elsewhere; MultiAd of Peoria, Ill.; Metro Creative Graphics Inc. of New York City; MediaSpan of Ann Arbor, Mich.; and Mitsubishi Imaging Inc. of Rye, N.Y. The 2008 Trade Show will also host first-timers such as Trumbull Printing of Trumbull, Conn., and AFL Web Printing of Voorhees and Secaucus, N.J.



Dave Kindy

Something Wonderful is going to happen...

ARETIL. WEB
PRINTING



AWARDS and HONORS



Matt Ouellette

2 N.E. men among Presstime top 20 young news talents

Presstime, a magazine published monthly by the Newspaper Association of America, has named two New England newspapermen among the industry's top young talent in its 15th "20 under 40" list.

Matt Ouellette, information technology director of research and development for Eagle-Tribune Publishing Co. of North Andover, Mass., and Paul Provost, advertising director for the Norwich (Conn.) Bulletin, were the only two New Englanders among the 20.

Provost was noted for increasing revenue by more than 7 percent and helping to increase retail ad revenue. Ouellette redesigned Web sites for Eagle-Tribune Publishing's newspapers.



Paul Provost

The award is designed to recognize those who have proved themselves to be "change agents within their companies and the industry, providing much-needed leadership and vision." It is awarded to people in the industry under the age of 40 who represent the enthusiasm, talent, hard work and innovation that's needed to carry the newspaper industry into the future.

Globe's Whiteside chosen for Baseball Hall of Fame

The late Larry Whiteside, who had been a baseball writer and columnist with The Boston Globe, will be inducted to the "writer's wing" of the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., in July.

Elected by the Baseball Writers Association of America, Whiteside became the 59th sports journalist to enter the Hall of Fame. He received 203 of 415 votes cast, enough to enter the Hall of Fame less than a year after his death June 15 because of complications from Parkinson's disease.

Whiteside is only the third African-American writer to be inducted.

Bud Selig, Major League Baseball's commissioner, said in a statement that Whiteside "was one of the finest reporters and one of the finest people I ever encountered. He promoted baseball with his fine, fair and objective reporting for many years."

Whiteside got his start in journalism with the Kansas City Kansan in 1959. He worked there until 1963, when he moved to the Milwaukee Journal and covered the Brewers. In 1973, Whiteside moved to the Globe. In 1980, he became the first African-American to vote on nominees for the Hall of Fame, a privilege that requires

10 years' experience in covering baseball.



Alexandra Fenwick

Conn. reporter wins Front Page Award

Alexandra Fenwick, staff writer at The Advocate of Stamford, Conn., was honored Nov. 29 by the Newswomen's Club of New York with its 2007 Front Page Award.

Fenwick received the honor for her three-part series on the Norwalk-Nagarote Sister City Project, a nonprofit organization established in 1986 in Norwalk, Conn., to promote socioeconomic development in the poverty-stricken community of Nagarote, Nicaragua.

Fenwick spent a week in Nagarote with Advocate photographer Kathleen O'Rourke. The two lived with residents and focused on the Sister City Project's campaigns to offer scholarships to university students and reduce crime in Nagarote. Fenwick reported the story in relation to issues about controversial U.S. foreign policy of the 1980s in Latin America.

"It was professionally and personally rewarding," Fenwick told The Advocate about her time spent in Nagarote. "It opened my eyes to the scope of poverty in the world, but at the same time it showed the positive impact people have."

The Newswomen's Club of New York was established in 1922 and started honoring the achievements of women journalists in 1938.

Reporters from The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and the New Yorker also received 2007 Front Page Awards.



Anmarie Timmins

Timmins receives 1st Murray Award

The first Donald M. Murray Award for outstanding journalism has been awarded to Anmarie Timmins, a Concord (N.H.) Monitor reporter.

The award, given by the New Hampshire Writers' Project of Manchester, is named after Murray, the late Pulitzer Prize winner who helped to create the Writers' Project. Timmins was judged on a collection of work spanning two years. She covers the police, fire, courts, and correction beats, and has reported on stories involving the Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches, state prison, and a Concord rape case involving a magazine

salesman.

Timmins was chosen from a field of 16 nominees. The contest judges complimented her for "demonstrating enterprise, depth reporting, and an eye for the quirky corner ..."

"Her compelling collection of stories displays tenacious reporting, unflinching prose and a commitment to portraying subjects with dignity," said judges Chip Scanlan and Roy Peter Clark of the Poynter Institute of St. Petersburg, Fla., the Monitor reported.



Alicia Anstead

Anstead presented Hartman award

Alicia Anstead, arts reporter for the Bangor (Maine) Daily News, was awarded the Mary Ann Hartman Award Nov. 6 in Orono, Maine, for her achievements and contributions to the state of Maine.

Anstead is on a 10-month arts and culture fellowship at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass. Anstead was

_____ Awards Briefs to Page 20

News items on this page and Pages 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29 and 30 were written from published reports and press releases by Tyler Duff, Molly Feit, Nikki Gloudeman, Kate Mayhew, Christopher McCarthy, Katherine McInerney, Jesse Nankin and Jennifer Stubbs. Duff, Feit, Gloudeman, Mayhew, McInerney, Nankin and Stubbs are graduate students at Northeastern University's School of Journalism. McCarthy is an undergraduate student there. All are members of the Bulletin staff.

NEWS VENTURES, NEWS DEALS



Cover of CT Slant

gy to the Hartford Advocate's Web site. Hight said the Web site's new features and bloggers will be similar to those of CT Slant.

The Hartford Advocate and Courant collaborated on CT Slant after the newspapers' previous five-year collaboration on the magazine Preview CT, a Hartford-based publication with the same arts and entertainment focus as CT Slant, showed promise.

Preview CT, with a distribution of 30,000, was available free in arts venues throughout Hartford. CT Slant, with a distribution of 80,000, was inserted as a supplement once a month into some copies of the Courant, as well as individually dropped at bookstores, art galleries, restaurants and museums throughout Hartford.

R.I. homeless paper goes to broadsheet

Street Sights, a free monthly publication for and about the homeless in Providence, R.I., was launched this month as a broadsheet newspaper.

The paper is financed through donations and has a volunteer staff, led by 23-year-old Elizabeth Ochs, a student at Brown University in Providence. Ochs' title at Street Sights is coordinating editor, although in mainstream publishing she would be the executive editor.

The title is meant to reflect the collaborative spirit of Street Sights, The Providence Journal reported.

"It's sort of a platform for communication and self-expression," Ochs said of Street Sights.

Homeless people are invited to submit their work to the paper for publication.

About 1,000 copies of Street Sights are distributed by volunteers at various points such as homeless shelters and soup kitchens in Rhode Island.

In its eight broadsheet pages, Street Sights features photos, stories, and two pages of poems and cartoons. The back page, called End notes, lists coming events and telephone numbers for more than 30 programs serving the homeless.

Ochs hopes that Street Sights will be a resource for homeless people and raise awareness about homelessness.

"I take the concept and reality of homelessness very seriously," she told the Providence Journal. "I have never been able to walk past a homeless person or someone begging on the streets and take it for granted."

Improper Bostonian updates look, content

The Improper Bostonian, a magazine guide to Boston's social and entertainment scene that publishes every other week, launched a new look Nov. 19.

The magazine now has a slightly smaller size and runs shorter stories.

"We wanted to make it faster paced, since it's primarily a commuter product," Joe Heroun, the New York City-based art director commissioned to redesign The Improper Bostonian, said in a Boston Herald article Nov. 15.

Heroun has also changed the magazine's cover photography by using a new, more retro lighting style.

Wendy Semonian Eppich, the Improper Bostonian's publisher, told the Herald: "It's a little more movie-ish."

The new Improper Bostonian's restaurant review photography will emphasize atmosphere over food. The magazine's mainstay party photos also have been redesigned; some are even made to look like Polaroids.

The updated Improper Bostonian no longer features "The Word," a section offering tips on

new restaurants and stores, as well as the occasional bit of gossip.

Instead, the magazine now features expanded lifestyle coverage, with tidbits on a variety of topics, ranging from cocktails and wine to neighborhoods and real estate; those tidbits now run under the heading "Imperatives."

Megan Lisagor, acting manager for The Improper Bostonian, told the Herald: "We're giving the reader a lot more information, with fun, unexpected quick hits and a cleaner, more modern, hip look."

Heroun said the level of sophistication in Boston readers and advertisers has increased since he previously redesigned the magazine a decade ago.

"The nightlife, the restaurants here, the retail has all elevated in the last 10 to 15 years, so it's a reflection of that. We're keeping pace with that audience," Heroun told the Herald.

Question of the Month

Non-traditional scribes backed for shield protection

By a 3-2 margin, respondents to the November-December Question of the Month favored including non-traditional journalists under the protection of a federal shield law.

About 60 percent said the legislation before Congress to provide journalists with qualified protection from testifying about confidential sources should include non-traditional journalists. About 40 percent of the 109 who responded

said they should be excluded.

The December Extra Question of the Month is on Page 1 of the Bulletin and on the home page of the New England Press Association's Web site at www.nepa.org. Please follow the instructions posted on the Web site to record your response. The January issue of the Bulletin will report the results of the December Extra Question of the Month.

N.H. photog debuts film on son with cerebral palsy

Dan Habib, a photojournalist for the Concord (N.H.) Monitor, debuted his film "Including Samuel" Dec. 4 at a screening for the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

"Including Samuel" is a 55-minute documentary depicting the life of Habib's 8-year-old son, Samuel, who has cerebral palsy, which impairs muscle coordination and movement.

Habib compiled the film for three years, taking more than 12,000 photographs and shoot-

ing 60 hours of video on a friend's camera.

It is Habib's first attempt at filmmaking.

The film focuses on how Samuel and his family have dealt with the process of "inclusion," the attempt to integrate disabled children into regular classrooms.

"The film taught me a lot," Habib told The Boston Globe. "It taught me what it takes to make inclusion work, such as a lot of support in the classroom. On a professional level, it taught me how to make a film."

ADVERTISING

Avoid overarching placement of logo

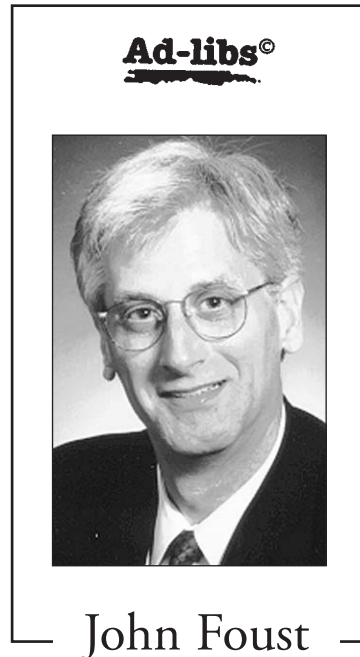
Logos have a lot in common with name tags. Both serve to identify – and there are right and wrong ways to position them.

The next time you go to a business meeting, take a look at the way people wear their name tags. As long as they are not the hang-around-the-neck variety, don't be surprised if the majority of attendees wear them on the left side. I used to do the same thing. No matter what kind of tag was handed out – one with a clip, a pin, or adhesive – I put it over my heart, on the left side of my jacket. Since I'm right-handed, it was easy to pick it up and slap in on – all in one motion.

Then I was told that the proper position is on the other said, because that creates a better sight line for reading names when shaking hands. Once you try the right-side placement, you'll be sold on the difference it makes.

Name placement is important in advertising, too. There are four elements in a print ad: headline, illustration, body copy, and logo. Positioning of those elements can make a big difference in the impact an ad will have on the page. If something is out of place, the entire message can be thrown out of kilter.

Unfortunately, some advertisers have fallen into the trap



of putting their logos at the

top, which in essence, turns their names into headlines. Would you be compelled to read an ad that features "Ford" or "Pizza Hut" or "AT&T" as the headline? Probably not.

It's best to put the headline at the top of the layout (or at least in the top half) and the logo at the bottom. Years of conditioning have taught us to look for the name of the messenger at the end of a message. When you write an e-mail or a letter, you put your name at the bottom. When you send a greeting card, you sign your name under the text inside the card.

The function of a headline is to signal to readers what the ad is about – to let them know what valuable piece of information they can gain from taking the time to read the rest of the ad. Therefore, the headline should have the most prominent placement in a layout.

Some advertisers might think: "OK, I'll put my logo at the bottom. But I want it to be bigger than anything else in the ad." That kind of logic is self-defeating. Like a name tag, a logo should identify, not dominate. A logo should be large enough to provide quick identification, but not so large that it overshadows the ad's message.

There's an old saying that the three biggest factors in real estate are "location, location, and location." The truth in that comment goes far beyond the houses and stores in your hometown. The same can be said of the logos in the ads of your hometown paper.

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E-mail John Foust for information about his training videos for ad departments: jfoust@mind-spring.com



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Awards Briefs from Page 18

described recently as a "strong, determined, and fearless woman who is never satisfied with being good enough and always polishes her stories until they shine," according to the Maine Campus, the student publication of the University of Maine in Orono.

Two non-journalists were the other award recipients this year.

Ex-Journal reporter given \$25,000 literature fellowship

Edward "Ted" Delaney, a former Providence (R.I.) Journal reporter, has been awarded a \$25,000 literature fellowship by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Delaney, one of 42 writers to receive this year's award, told Providence Business News that he was "pleased and honored to receive this fellowship."

The fellowship was awarded to Delaney so that he can complete work on a group of short stories he has written during the past few years.

Delaney also has worked as a reporter for the Denver Post and Chicago Tribune.

Some major, some minor coverage for N.E. minor-league baseball teams

Some major from Page 5

"We will cover opening day. We will cover occasional other games. But, because they are so good at it and with our staff not that large, I can't afford to have somebody out for that each and every night."

The Free Press edits the game stories provided by the Lake Monsters to fit its space allotment and to conform to the paper's style. No author is credited. Any quotations are attributed to "a news release."

The Free Press also publishes the Lake Monsters' statistics.

"We carry box scores of all the games," Ryan said. "We also run the statistics once a week, usually in the Sunday paper."

The Free Press publishes player features on occasion, although they are generally light-hearted in nature rather than serious pieces on highly rated prospects.

"We had player snapshots that we ran throughout the season. We had a little mug shot of a player and then we would ask them a bunch of questions at the beginning of the season. Just kind of whimsical-type questions. We included biographical information and then their responses to some of the questions," Ryan said.

The Free Press carries about equal coverage of the major and minor leagues.

"The Red Sox and Yankees are very heavily followed in this area, so we follow them quite a bit," Ryan said. "It's about the same amount of coverage. It just depends on where you play it."

The Free Press normally uses Associated Press accounts for Red Sox coverage, although the paper obtains accounts from its corporate sister, Gannett News Service.

Although a local paper, The Times of Pawtucket, R.I., differs from other small papers in how it covers its hometown

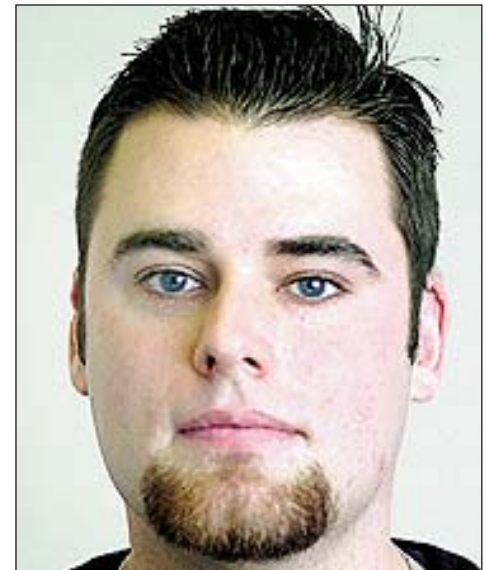
minor-league club, the Pawtucket Red Sox, commonly known as "the PawSox," the Red Sox' International League Triple-A affiliate.

Like the Herald of New Britain and the Burlington Free Press, the Times devotes its resources primarily toward the coverage of the local team. Unlike those papers, however, its coverage focuses on prospects over game results.

The Times has two sportswriters and one sports editor who handle PawSox coverage, producing game stories, features, columns, and notebooks.

"Every home game (the PawSox) play, we staff it," Brendan McGair, a sportswriter for the Times, told the NEPA Bulletin. "We don't have a very big staff. We can't get up to Boston very much, maybe once, twice a year."

But because the PawSox are the last stop before a prominent Red Sox prospect hits the major leagues, the Times generally focuses on the prospects



Brendan McGair

rather than the game itself.

"Basically, we focus on Red Sox prospects. Whatever happens in Boston has a trickle-down effect on what happens in Pawtucket, so that is what we try to focus on," McGair said.

Courant columnist advocates paper's sale to locals

In a Nov. 25 column titled "Newspapers Should Not be Owned by Media Conglomerates," Susan Campbell, a columnist for The Hartford (Conn.) Courant, called for the Courant's parent company, Chicago-based Tribune Co., to sell the Courant.

Campbell blamed large newspaper conglomerates' ignorance of local news for declining readership of newspapers.

"Over time, readers noticed that their town meetings weren't being covered, or that their school board votes or election results weren't making it into the paper anymore, and many readers fell away, relying instead on the newfangled Internet or local television stations," Campbell wrote.

She called for a local group to purchase the Courant.

"I hold out hope that local ownership is a big part of the answer to the malaise that affects American newspapers. I



Susan Campbell

am thankful that I work for a corporation that gave me a good dental plan, but I am willing to trade my teeth for a local owner who gets it," Campbell wrote.

Campbell received backing from colleagues and readers alike. Campbell said she received about 80 e-mails and 20 telephone calls from readers, and a similar number from within the newspaper industry.

"The reaction has been positive, especially from long-time readers of The Courant," Campbell told the NEPA Bulletin in an e-mail. "I do find it heartening that in these troubled times. I work for a newspa-

per where the editors will still print a column like that."

New Web site gives local news markets global news tie-ins

A Web site has been launched with the goal of bringing global news to journalists in small and mid-size markets and aiming to show how the latest international developments affect their readers.

Editor's World, based in Los Angeles, is a nonpartisan membership organization of U.S. journalists that recently launched its Web site, www.editorsworld.org. The Web site was designed for journalists, particularly in smaller markets, and

offers global insight and information condensed in one location.

"Currently, there is no service to support all but the largest news organizations in weaving global events into American stories on a daily basis, which is increasingly important with the expanding global market," Nancy Hicks Maynard, founder and director of Editor's World and a 40-year veteran of the news industry, said in a statement.

The Web site offers news summaries, updates, briefings, interviews with experts, glossaries, book listings, and data and video feeds to journalists who, its founders hope, will create a community to discuss global news in local context.

Maynard said users will be able to "decipher the world's most important developments while providing insights as to how these stories impact 'Main Street USA'."

Jerelyn Eddings, editor of Editor's World, said in a statement that the site would show journalists "how to connect world issues with the day-to-day priorities of their personal and professional lives."

The Web site is free of charge for a one-month trial period, after which certain sections, including briefings, Weblogs, forums, and best practices and training, will be available for \$100 a year for those in the news media and \$25 a year for students.

State pay revealed from Page 13

how.

Baldacci told the Daily News that "we ought to put a group together to look at how Maine stacks up against other states." Baldacci told the Daily News that its list of state employee salaries was "an eye-opener."

To other newspapers considering gathering

the same types of records, those who have done so would recommend it.

Dowd called the publishing of such records "the definition of public service;" his recommendation to other papers is to "be aggressive."

Parker echoed Dowd, advising other papers to "do it. Don't think, just do. Everyone's entitled to this information."

WORLD of the WEB

Vt. libel suit might test blogs' liability for content

A recent libel suit has sparked debate in Vermont over whether owners and moderators of Weblogs should be responsible for the content posted by others, the Brattleboro (Vt.) Reformer reported Dec. 1.

Effie Mayhew, a volunteer for Rescue Inc., an emergency medical service and ambulance provider for 14 communities in Vermont and New Hampshire, filed a lawsuit Nov. 16 against David Dunn, Rescue Inc.'s former executive director, for publicly accusing her of having an adulterous affair on company property. Dunn resigned soon after posting the comment and just before a scheduled no-confidence vote requested by Rescue Inc. employees and vol-

unteers, who were unhappy with his management style, the Reformer reported.

The suit, filed in Windham County Superior Court in Newfane, Vt., alleges that Dunn's posting is unsubstantiated, has caused Mayhew emotional distress, and cost her a job with a different company.

Mayhew has also sued Chris Grotke and Lise LePage, owners of iBrattleboro.com, the online news and commentary Weblog on which Dunn posted his accusations.

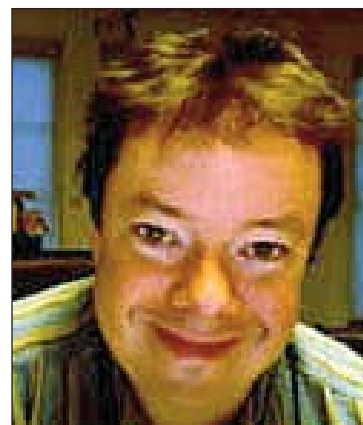
According to the Reformer, some Vermont bloggers, including those who read and contribute to iBrattleboro, think that the suit is without merit, but fear repercussions if it is suc-

cessful.

"It has a potentially chilling effect, which is why it's so important this case is thrown out — to send a message to attorneys that these sorts of cases don't have any merit and are just a form of harassment," John Odum, founder and administrator of the Web forum Green Mountain Daily, told the Reformer.

Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, enacted in 1996, says: "No provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider."

Thus, Grotke and LePage's



John Odum

backers argue, because the iBrattleboro owners did not write the potentially libelous content, they cannot be held responsible for its impact.

But some think that that interpretation of the federal law is far too broad.

"Because of the misinterpretation of the Communications Decency Act, you can publish things on the Web that you can't publish in a newspaper," Peter Katsaros, who has written about Section 230 in the Chicago Daily Bulletin, told the Reformer.

The appellate courts that have sided with bloggers "keep getting it wrong," Katsaros said. "They have opened a big door for defamation on the Internet."

According to the Media Law Resource Center's Web site, of the roughly 119 lawsuits or criminal complaints filed against bloggers, only five have resulted in verdicts against the blogger. In those five cases, the bloggers had written the content in question.

One of the reasons for the federal law was to encourage the owners of sites that host blogs to moderate comments, David Heller, a staff lawyer at the Media Law Resource Center, told the Reformer.

"If you didn't do anything under the old law, you'd have a better defense. There was a paradox where if you tried to moderate but did it imperfectly, peo-

ple would try to hold Web sites responsible. The legislative fix was to flat out eliminate the liability for third-party comments on sites," Heller said.

Occasionally, Grotke and LePage will monitor the site by removing postings.

They caution contributors: "Submissions that appear to be primarily for the purpose of defamation, libel, or maligning and impugning others may be deleted."

But Dunn's comment was not taken down. Whether Mayhew requested that it be removed before she filed the suit is not clear, the Reformer reported. She, along with the other principals in the case, would not comment to the Reformer, it reported.

"Our policy is pretty clear that if anyone has any problem with anything put up there, they can contact us and we'll take it down," Grotke told the Reformer. "In general, people have to stand by what they write. We can't be the police for everybody in town. All we do is provide the platform for this communication."

Philip Baruth, an English professor at the University of Vermont who writes a blog for Vermont Daily Briefing, agreed. Placing the burden on the administrator might be unfair, he told the Reformer.

It asks them "to police everybody who posts libelous content when it's not their content. It's not something they've authored," Baruth said.

But, he said, if an administrator of a Web site is contacted about a particular posting, there is a better case that it is his or her responsibility to do something.

Odum, however, sees no gray tones on the issue of liability.

"Institutionally, culturally and morally it is the person who actually stated the libelous state-

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WORLD of the WEB

ment who should be bearing the punishment — not the people who were really providing a service,” Odum told the Reformer. “Talk about destroying a village in order to save it.”

Journal relying on high school sports to enlist Web traffic

To increase Web traffic, The Providence (R.I.) Journal is using front-page sports section advertisements in print to push its readers to visit hsgame-time.com, a national high school sports site run by the paper’s Dallas-based parent company, Belo.

The Providence Phoenix quoted sources as saying that preliminary results show a significant increase in traffic to the Journal’s Web site,

The Phoenix also reported that Audience-Fax, a new Audit Bureau of Circulations metric that measures combined readership of a newspaper’s print and online versions, ranked the Journal 19th in the nation for the six-month ABC reporting period ending in September, higher than any other New England paper. According to Editor & Publisher, the Journal reached 59.1 percent of its market.

The Journal reports that 74 percent of its daily circulation and 65 percent of its Sunday circulation comes from home deliveries, one of the highest home-delivery rates in the United States.

Union Leader begins publishing online its letters to editor

The New Hampshire Union Leader of Manchester began publishing letters to the editor on its Web site, UnionLeader.com, Nov. 27.

Joseph McQuaid, the Union



Joseph McQuaid

Leader’s publisher, announced the new policy Nov. 19, saying that the Union Leader is “getting more and more letters,” and even though the paper runs every letter it receives, the unpublished mail is piling up.

To help ease congestion, the paper will post many of the politically-related letters, which are increasing in number in the run-up to the 2008 presidential election, to UnionLeader.com.

McQuaid said in his column: “While we continue to run every letter we get, they are backing up like my kitchen sink at Thanksgiving.”

McQuaid said space will be created at UnionLeader.com, the paper’s Web site, specifically for political letters and letters endorsing presidential candidates. The letters will become a permanent part of the Web site.

McQuaid said all letters submitted to the editor would still be published, as long as they were not commercial or libelous.

Maine, Vermont wrestling with how to store e-documents

Archivists in Maine and Vermont are on a quest to find an efficient way to preserve the scores of electronic documents produced during the course of government operations, The Associated Press reported Nov. 25.

Their efforts are part of a nationwide movement to establish safeguards against electronic records being deleted or lost in the abyss of cyberspace.

Many of the state records will be valuable to researchers, policy makers and the public well into the future. Maine Archivist David Cheever noted that, moreover, the records play a role in government accountability.

“The last thing you want is for the public to lose faith in government because of the inability to preserve the record that validates and substantiates the process by which actions are taken and decisions made,” Cheever told AP.

But archiving electronic data will not prove to be easy. The electronic age presents myriad issues not relevant in the days of typewriters and cardboard box storage.

In Maine, for example, there are about 13,000 e-mail accounts in state government. Without a formal system in place to capture, store and maintain the vast number of e-mails sent every day, important communications can slip through the cracks.

Also at issue is how long a document should be kept.

“There are two schools of thought, (and) one is delete everything after a time period,” Sanford told AP.

Vermont’s legislature, for example, began deleting records every 90 days after its server became overloaded with e-mail messages sent during the debate in 2000 over whether to allow civil unions.

Public agencies could also choose to keep everything, Sanford said. But that creates a mountain of data that presents a challenge, at best, to search.

“What you really in the end want is a comprehensive record management plan,” Sanford told AP. “Two to five percent in

the public records is archival. The rest has a lifespan from nanoseconds to 70 years.”

Maine’s Cheever divides those documents important enough to be preserved into two categories. Legislative records, deeds, governor’s papers, maps and treaties, for example, are saved forever, Cheever said. But e-mails are unlikely to warrant such treatment.

Then there are the records that only have shelf lives of anywhere from three to 50 years. Those might include communications and documents that relate to state purchases or records from corrections and state mental hospitals.

A system is needed that will not only provide storage for both types of state records, but will also make them easily accessible

Maine is in the process of screening bids from 14 companies that are offering ways to preserve Maine’s electronic data. Ideally, the system that will eventually be put into place would also have the ability to sort through e-mails by using keywords to find information on a particular issue.

That will not be an inexpensive feat. Cheever thinks that the cost of such a system could run into the millions of dollars.

“It’s not a question of whether we can afford it, but a question of whether we can afford not to,” Cheever told AP.

New rules sought for search-engine access to papers’ Web sites

A group of publishers is seeking greater control over how search engines index and display Web sites, including news and newspaper sites, and has proposed new restrictions on how sites can be searched, The Associated Press reported.

Currently, search engines



Danny Sullivan

such as Google and Yahoo voluntarily adhere to rules outlined on a Web site in a text file called “robots.txt.” Those rules were developed in 1994. They are looked at by a search engine’s indexing software, called a crawler, and allow a Web site to block the indexing of individual Web pages, directories or the entire site.

Danny Sullivan, editor in chief of the industry Web site Search Engine Land, said robots.txt “certainly is long overdue for some improvements.”

A consortium of publishers is seeking to have more commands added to the current rules, AP reported. Two of the proposed restrictions would limit how long search engines can retain copies of indexes or limit the links a crawler could access on a given Web page.

The proposals are partly in response to news publishers’ complaints that search engines have expanded to display news and headline summaries, taken from news organizations without permission, AP said.

The proposed restrictions are known as Automated Content Access Protocol, a joint initiative by the World Association of Newspapers, the International Publishers Association and the European Publishers Council. Members of ACAP include AP, the Newspaper Association of

OBITUARIES

Lawrence J. Smith



Lawrence
Smith

Lawrence J. "Larry" Smith, 82, of Laconia, N.H., died Nov. 29 at Lakes Region General Hospital in Laconia.

Smith was initially a reporter for the Laconia Citizen, and had several jobs at the paper, including coordinating regional news correspondents, overseeing production, and managing editor, a position he held for more than four decades until his retirement in 1991.

Smith leaves his wife, Nancy; a stepson; a stepgrandson; a sister.

Jeff McLaughlin

Jeff McLaughlin, 65, of Brewster, Mass., died Dec. 5 in his home of either a heart attack or a stroke, according to doctors.

McLaughlin had many jobs at The Boston Globe during his 29 years of employment, including Northern New England and political reporter, arts columnist, and city editor. He also was a reporter and editor for the Valley News of Lebanon, N.H.

McLaughlin leaves a daughter, Megan; a grandson; a brother; a sister.

Raymond Griffin Jr.

Raymond J. Griffin Jr., 81, of Raleigh, N.C., died Oct. 22 of pneumonia.

Formerly of Lynn, Mass., he also lived in New Bedford, Mass., where he became, in 1977, the first marketing manager for The Standard-Times of New Bedford.

Griffin leaves two sons, Roy and Raymond; five daughters, Teresa, Catherine, Margaret,

Bridgid, and Alexandra; 11 grandchildren.

Gerard LeFrancois

Gerard Albert LeFrancois, 81, of Attleboro, Mass., died Dec. 3 at Caritas Norwood Hospital in Norwood, Mass.

LeFrancois was retail advertising director for The Times of Pawtucket, R.I., and advertising manager for the Daily News Transcript of Dedham, Mass.

LeFrancois leaves his wife, Theresa; two sons, Allan and John; two granddaughters; a brother; a sister.

Robert B. Gillespie

Robert B. Gillespie, 61, of Bourne, Mass., died Dec. 1 in his home.

Gillespie was an advertising executive and co-op representative for The Enterprise of Brockton, Mass., for more than 34 years.

Gillespie leaves his wife, Gloria; his mother, Jennie; a daughter, Megan; a brother.

Glenn H. Herrmann

Glenn H. Herrmann, 65, of Marlborough, Conn., died Nov. 27 in his home.

Herrmann was a production supervisor for the Glastonbury (Conn.) Citizen.

Herrmann leaves his wife, Linda; two daughters, Jennifer and Tracy.

Ellen R. Wilder

Ellen Rebecca "Becky" Wilder, 86, of Milford, Conn., died Nov. 28 in her home.

Wilder was a classified advertising manager for the former Milford (Conn.) Citizen.

Wilder leaves two daughters, Catherine and Chrystine; four grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; two sisters.

Mary W. Hendricks

Mary W. Hendricks, 98, of Lanesborough, Mass., died Nov. 13 at Berkshire Medical Hospital in Pittsfield, Mass. after an illness.

She first worked for The Berkshire Eagle of Pittsfield, Mass., as an assistant and, later, as editor of the social page.

Hendricks leaves two sons, Evan and Brian, and six grandchildren.

Kathleen Phillips

Kathleen Slattery Phillips, 55, of Concord, N.H., died Nov. 21 at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N.H., of a brain aneurysm.



Kathleen
Slattery Phillips

She was a reporter for the New Hampshire Union Leader and the New Hampshire Sunday News, both of Manchester.

Phillips leaves her husband, Corey; her mother, Jeanette; a stepdaughter, Elizabeth; a stepson, Carter; a brother.

Robert F. Baldwin

Robert F. Baldwin, 73, of Newcastle, Maine, died Nov. 25 in his home.

Baldwin was a reporter for The Providence (R.I.) Journal and The Providence Visitor, as well as The Greensboro (N.C.) Record. Baldwin's freelance writing also appeared in Down East Magazine of Camden, Maine, Yankee Magazine of Dublin, N.H., and the former Country Journal.

Baldwin leaves his wife, Annabelle; three daughters, Sarah, Holly and Elizabeth; three grandchildren; a sister; a brother.

Barbara Richmond

Barbara Luettgens Richmond, 87, of Ellington, Conn., and South Windsor, Conn., died of emphysema Nov. 21 in her home.

Richmond was a reporter for several newspapers, including the former Manchester (Conn.) Herald, and the Rockville (Conn.) Journal, which became the Journal Inquirer of Manchester, the paper from which Richmond retired. Richmond was also a stringer for the former Hartford (Conn.) Times.

Richmond leaves a daughter, Barbara, and a grandson.

Robert A. Granato

Robert A. Granato, 76, of Pawtucket, Conn., died Dec. 9 at The Westerly (R.I.) Hospital.



Robert Granato

Granato was a features writer for The Providence (R.I.) Journal.

He also had articles published in professional educational journals and in Yankee Magazine of Dublin, N.H., and elsewhere. He wrote four novels and numerous poems.

He leaves a wife, Carol; three sons, Jeffrey, Gregory and Christopher; 10 grandchildren.

Ellen Elholm

Ellen "Betty" Elholm, 73, of East Madison, Maine, and Sun Lakes, Ariz., died of cancer Nov. 24 in Chandler, Ariz.

Elholm was a reporter and photographer for the Morning Sentinel of Waterville, Maine.

Elholm leaves her husband, John; four sons, Michael, Paul, George and Sean; four daughters, Kathleen, Jane, Mary and Ellen; four stepchildren, Susan,

Carol, Karen and John; 21 grandchildren; four brothers; three sisters.

Cathleen Johnston

Cathleen "Cathy" Johnston, 72, of Ayer, Mass., died Nov. 14 at Nashoba Valley Medical Center in Ayer.

She was a freelance reporter for The Sun of Lowell, Mass., for 42 years, and was a correspondent for The Boston Globe and The Public Spirit of Ayer.

Johnston leaves her husband, Peter; four sons, Kevin, Thomas, Timothy and Keith; two daughters, Karen and Colleen; 12 grandchildren; a brother.



Cathleen
Johnston

Robert L. Nicolas

Robert L. Nicolas, 87, of Brewster, Mass., died Dec. 1 in his home.

Nicolas worked as a compositor for the now-defunct Boston Post until its closing in 1956. He went on to work as a compositor for The Boston Globe until his retirement in 1983. He was a member of the International Typographical Union.

Nicolas leaves his wife, Maude; his son, Ken; two grandchildren; a great-grandchild; two sisters.

Narcissa Campion

Narcissa "Nardi" Reeder Campion, 90, of Lebanon, N.H., died Nov. 29 at the Harvest Hill retirement com-



Robert Nicolas

OBITUARIES

Deaths from Page 24

munity in Lebanon.

Campion was a freelance writer who contributed to The Boston Globe and was a columnist for the Valley News of Lebanon.

Campion leaves four sons, Tad, Thomas, Toby and Russell; a daughter, Narcissa; eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren.

Catherine Mulkern

Catherine Louise (Foley) Mulkern, 82, of Portsmouth, N.H., and Marietta, Ga., died Dec. 5 at the home of her daughter, Bernadette, where she lived in Georgia.

She was an accounts payable bookkeeper at the Portland (Maine) Press Herald after World War II.

Mulkern leaves six children, Catherine, Joseph, Cecilia, Bernadette, Theresa and Michael; eight granddaughters; a stepgrandson.

Manuel E. Andrade

Manuel E. Andrade, 84, of East Providence, R.I., died Dec. 8 at Orchard View Manor in Riverside, R.I., where he lived.

Andrade was a mailer and driver at The Providence (R.I.) Journal.

Andrade leaves two daughters, Judith and Joyce; four grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; two sisters; two brothers.

Patrick E. Knight

Patrick E. Knight, 85, of Dorchester, Mass., died Dec. 10 of stomach cancer in his home.

Knight was one of the first black route drivers for The Boston Globe, for which he delivered newspapers for almost 25 years.

Knight leaves his wife, Mary; a daughter, Patricia; a son, Charles; two grandsons; a granddaughter; three sisters.

Lynn G. Quirk

Lynn G. (L'Etoile) Quirk, 51, of Providence, R.I. died Nov. 26 at Rhode Island Hospital in Providence.

Quirk worked in the packaging department at The Providence Journal for 15 years.

Quirk leaves her husband, Robert; two daughters, Amy and Lisa; her parents, Gerald L'Etoile and Constance Morin; a grandson; a brother; a sister; a stepsister.

Bradley Frost

Bradley Frost, 66, of Newbury, Mass., died Nov. 28 at Anna Jaques Hospital in Newburyport, Mass.

Frost worked in the circulation department at the Boston Herald.

Frost leaves his father, Gilbert; his mother, Gertrude; his wife, Michele; two daughters, Kristie and Kimberly; two sons, Scott and Shawn; five grandchildren; two sisters.

Dee Dole

Dee Dole of Marblehead, Mass., died Dec. 5 in Marblehead.

Dole wrote a column called Pleasant Mountain-Moose Pond for The Bridgton (Maine) News.

Dole leaves a daughter, Margaret; a son, Andrew; a grandson.

Charles Thompson

Charles E. Thompson, 83, of Litchfield, Maine, died Dec. 8 at The Hawthorne House in Freeport, Maine.

Thompson was a courier in the advertising department of the Kennebec Journal of Augusta, Maine.

He leaves two sons, Ralph and Charles; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren.

Raymond J. Lestage

Raymond J. Lestage, 59, of Portland, Maine, died Dec. 10 at Maine Medical Center in Portland after a battle with cancer.

Lestage was retired from the Portland Press Herald, where he was a janitor.

He leaves his wife, Judith; a son, Danny; a sister.



R. Lestage

Frank Melchior Krol

Frank Melchior Krol, 94, of Pittsfield, Mass., died Dec. 2 at Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield.

Krol was the Pittsfield correspondent for the Dziennik Dla Wszystkich, or the Polish Everybody's Daily of Buffalo, N.Y., from the early 1940s to the mid-1950s.

Krol leaves three sons, Franklin, John and Melchior; three daughters, Rosalie, Clementine and Dianne; several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Jerry D. Johnson Sr.

Jerry D. Johnson Sr., 75, of Bridgeport, Conn., died Dec. 1 at Bridgeport Hospital.

Johnson, was employed for many years in the mailroom of the Norwalk (Conn.) Hour.

Johnson leaves his wife, Molly; a son, Wayne; two daughters, Jeryl and Gail; six grandchildren; a brother; a sister.

Romeo 'Gary' Trask

Romeo "Gary" Trask, 65, of Unity, Maine, died Nov. 18 at Inland Hospital in Waterville, Maine, after a long illness.

Trask was a paper carrier for the Morning Sentinel of Waterville for 13 years.

He leaves his parents, Raymond and Mary; a daughter, Julie; three stepchildren, Raymond, Michelle and Carol; two brothers.

Adalbert Lachance

Adalbert Borromee Lachance, 89, of Bristol, Conn., died Nov. 30 at Bristol Hospital.

Lachance was a carrier for the Bristol Press for 10 years.

He leaves his wife, Jeanne D'Arc; four sons, Herman, Ubald, Hughes and Claude; six daughters, Roseanne, Nicole, Carole, Johanne, Therese and Yvonne; 16 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; two sisters.

Cheryl A. Michaud

Cheryl A. (D'Amore) Michaud, 48, of North Providence, R.I., died Nov. 19 at Our Lady of Fatima Hospital in Providence, R.I.

Michaud was a paper carrier for The Providence (R.I.) Journal.

She leaves her husband, Michael; three children, Michael Jr., Matthew and Amanda; her parents, Mario and Claire; a brother.

Ruth A. Kostusiak

Ruth A. Kostusiak, 65, of West Springfield, Mass., died

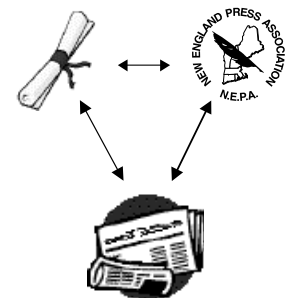
Dec. 11 in her home.

Kostusiak worked for the company that publishes what is now The Republican of Springfield.

Kostusiak leaves her husband, Michael; two sons, Michael and Stephen; five grandchildren; a sister; two brothers.

The obituaries were written from published reports by Tyler Duffy, Nikki Gloudeman, Chris McCarthy, Jesse Nankin, Jennifer Stubbs and Charles Wentz. Duffy, Gloudeman, Nankin and Stubbs are graduate students at Northeastern University's School of Journalism. McCarthy and Wentz are undergraduate students there. All are on the Bulletin staff.

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LEGAL BRIEFS

Legal Briefs from Page 9

lawyer, David Rich, states in the lawsuit.

But Rich would not confirm or deny whether Bilodeau-Allen knew Kennedy or whether the pair had a relationship, the Boston Herald reported.

The Herald said spokespersons for Kennedy deny the “love child” allegations.

The second Enquirer story described an incident during which Bilodeau-Allen’s apartment was broken into and all evidence of her relationship with Kennedy removed.

Bilodeau-Allen argues that that, too, never happened.

In an e-mail to the Globe, Michael Antonello, acting general counsel for the Enquirer’s parent company, American Media, insisted on the veracity of the tabloid’s reporting. He wrote that Bilodeau-Allen and Christopher had opportunities to rebut the claims before publication.

“The articles were premised upon well-placed sources that were in a position to know the truth of the information they conveyed to the national Enquirer,” Antonello wrote. “We intend to vigorously defend the lawsuit, and we have every confidence that we will prevail at trial.”

Along with American Media, the suit also names Enquirer reporters Alan Butterfield and Richard Moriarty.

5 N.E. states among dozen seeking more disclosure on toxins

Twelve states, including five from New England, sued the federal Environmental Protection Agency Nov. 28 in protest of a new rule that might lessen disclosure of information about toxic chemicals, The Associated Press reported.

Thousands of companies can now limit the information they disclose to the public about the toxic chemicals they store, use, and release into the environment, Andrew Cuomo, New York’s attorney general and the lead attorney general in the civil lawsuit, told AP.

The multistate lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in New York City, seeks greater accountability and disclosure from companies that handle toxic chemicals, and calls for the EPA to revise its reporting guidelines.

“The EPA’s new regulations rob New Yorkers — and people across the country — of their right to know about toxic dangers in their own backyards,” Cuomo told AP. “Along with 11 other states throughout the nation, we will restore the public’s right to information about chemical hazards, despite the Bush administration’s best attempt to hide it.”

Arizona, California, Connec-

ticut, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Vermont joined New York in the lawsuit.

The new rule is a modification to the Toxics Release Inventory law enacted by President Ronald Reagan after a catastrophic toxic chemical gas leak in India in 1984 that killed nearly 3,000 people. The law required companies to submit comprehensive reports whenever they store or emit 500 pounds or more of specific toxins.

Now the threshold for providing the lengthy report is 5,000 pounds or more. Companies storing or releasing toxins in the 500- to 4,999-pound range are required to file only an abbreviated form, Katherine Kennedy, New York’s special deputy attorney general for environmental protection, told AP.

“Polluters can release 10 times more toxins like lead and mercury without telling anyone,” Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal told AP.

Ex-reporter to testify soon in Vermont case that set precedent

Hank Buermeyer, a former reporter for the Journal Opinion of Bradford, Vt., who was compelled by the Vermont Supreme Court to testify in a civil lawsuit in September, said the case will likely go to trial early next year.

Buermeyer attended a Tops-ham (Vt.) Selectboard meeting in 2002 at which board members William Appleton and Bruce Thompson said they chose Bryan Hart over James H. Spooner as the town’s road foreman because Hart was younger.



Hank Buermeyer

Spooner subsequently sued for age-discrimination and subpoenaed Buermeyer to testify in court. The Vermont Supreme Court upheld the subpoena in a decision that ended a 33-year-old legal precedent in Vermont that offered qualified protection to reporters against being subpoenaed to testify.

Spooner’s lawyer, Edwin Hobson, a Burlington, Vt., lawyer, has told Buermeyer that the case will definitely go to trial. Hobson said it will likely take place in the first quarter of 2008 at Vermont Superior Court in Chelsea.

Bill Wargo, a lawyer for the Vermont Department of Health and a professor at Champlain College in Burlington, said he was going to set aside a day to discuss the case for his spring 2008 course on Legal Issues in Communication.

Buermeyer has agreed to speak at Wargo’s class, as has Mike Donoghue, a sports reporter for The Burlington Free Press and executive director of the Vermont Press Association.

At St. Michael’s College in Colchester, Vt., Professor Traci Griffith talked to her students about the ruling during a November lesson on the theories of ethics for her Media Law and

Ethics class.

“The case was used to examine ethical conundrums reporters must deal with,” Griffith said.



Traci Griffith

Talk held to resolve press-rights dispute at Quinnipiac, its paper

The editor of The Chronicle, the student newspaper of Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Conn., met with school officials Nov. 28 to settle disputes over online publishing and news outlets’ access to school administrators, according to the Student Press Law Center.

Last month the NEPA Bulletin reported that university administrators told Jason Braff, editor of the Chronicle, that he might lose his post if he did not stop criticizing the university publicly.

But Braff told the Student Press Law Center that he is no longer worried about losing his job after talks with school officials, which have left him optimistic for future policy changes.

The dispute is partly over a university policy that bars the paper from publishing stories online ahead of the printed edition’s distribution. The Chronicle reported that the university’s president, John Lahey, said the policy was meant to give administrators adequate time to respond to stories that might attract the attention of news-media sources outside the school.

The Student Press Law Center reported that Lahey told a student government meeting Oct. 11 that “he wanted dia-



Andrew Cuomo



Richard Blumenthal



Bill Wargo



Jason Braff

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LEGAL BRIEFS

logue on important issues to be contained within the campus, rather than have stories picked up by outside media via The Chronicle.”

But the policy itself drew nationwide media attention, including in an article Oct. 30 in the Waterbury (Conn.) Republican-American about Connecticut free-speech issues, in which Braff criticized the policy as “ridiculous,” and in a New York Times piece Dec. 2.

Braff also met with school officials to discuss the university’s policy prohibiting administrators from speaking with all reporters, including student journalists, without prior permission from the school.

The Chronicle ran a story Dec. 5 polling the opinions of other university student newspapers in Connecticut. The editors in chief for papers at Sacred Heart University, Fairfield University, The University of Hartford, and Wesleyan University expressed disapproval of both policies.

“Right now we are just kind of sitting back and waiting for things to play out with the administrators because we know that they are talking about it amongst themselves,” Braff said after his meeting.

Margarita Diaz, faculty adviser for the Chronicle, who also attended the meeting, told the Yale Daily News of New Haven, Conn., that she did not think that negotiations between the administration and the newspaper will happen.

Lynn Bushnell, Quinnipiac’s vice president for public affairs, wrote in an e-mail to The New York Times that changes to university policy must go through the “normal administrative channels.”

The school administration plans to put together a small task force to review the structure of the newspaper, the Yale Daily News reported. According to a

New Haven Register article, Bushnell thinks that it is likely the Chronicle will cut its ties with the university.

But in a statement posted on the university’s Web site, Kathleen McCourt, senior vice president of academic affairs at Quinnipiac, said the university might not need to grant autonomy to the Chronicle. Instead, the school will consider shorter-term structural changes to remedy the concerns of the university, the Yale Daily News said.

Federal court rejects publishers’ settlement with freelancers

A federal appeals court ruling Nov. 29 voided a settlement between publishers and freelance writers that required payment to the freelancers for past electronic reproduction of their work, The Associated Press reported.

The 2-1 decision, handed down by a panel of judges from the U.S. Court of Appeals in the 2nd Circuit in Manhattan, stated that the courts did not have jurisdiction over the copyright controversy because most of the writers had not registered their work with the U.S. Copyright Office. Without jurisdiction, the lower court did not have the authority to approve the settlement or to approve the case as a class-action lawsuit, Judge Chester J. Straub wrote in his decision.

Straub also noted that before reaching an agreement the defendants had similarly argued that no copyrights were violated because the vast majority of writers never registered their work. The publishers finally settled out of “the desire to achieve global peace in the publishing industry,” he wrote.

Judge Ralph K. Winter joined Straub in the majority.

“The decision is an outrage,

and I hope it’s appealable to the Supreme Court,” Gerald Colby, president of the National Writers Union and a plaintiff in the suit, told The New York Times.

Charles S. Sims, who represented six databases and dozens of newspaper and magazine companies named in the suit, also expressed disappointment in the court’s decision.

“This isn’t a victory for anybody,” Sims told AP.

He noted that since the litigation began, publishers have required freelancers to relinquish electronic rights as a part of the hiring contract. Lawyers might request that the full appellate court hear the case, Sims told AP.

Judge John M. Walker argued in his dissenting opinion that precedent existed for the lower court to approve the settlement. The registration requirement is more of a procedural rule than a strict limit on jurisdiction, he wrote.

Moreover, Walker stated that “all members of the plaintiff class — whether or not they have registered their copyrights — have been injured by defendants if we assume the truth of plaintiffs’ allegations.”

The dispute dates to 1993, when freelancers first sued publishers and companies that maintain electronic databases for infringing copyrights by not paying writers for the reproduction of their work in electronic databases.

In 2001, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Tasini vs. New York Times* that the digital reproduction of articles without obtaining permission from the writer was not legal under copyright law.

Still at issue, however, were claims for monetary damages for earlier violations.

In Federal District Court in Manhattan, Judge George B.

Daniels permitted a class-action suit by 21 freelancers and several trade organizations, including the National Writers Union and the American Society of Journalists and Authors, on behalf of thousands of authors throughout the United States. Without Daniels’ approval, writers would have had to file suits individually.

Named as defendants in the suit were several major publishers and electronic archive services, including Thomson Corp., headquartered in Stamford, Conn.; The New York Times Co., which owns The Boston Globe, its Web site, Boston.com, and the Telegram & Gazette of Worcester, Mass.; Dow Jones & Co., whose subsidiary Ottaway owns 16 newspapers in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine; and the Tribune Co., which owns The Hartford (Conn.) Courant.

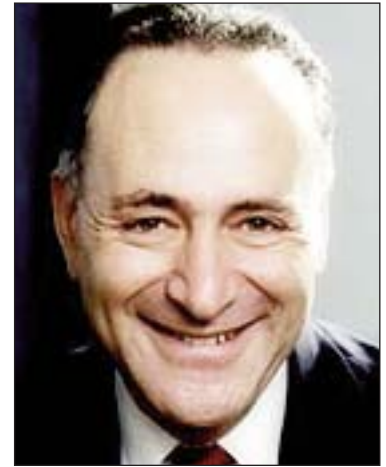
In March 2005, after years of negotiations, the parties reached an agreement. The settlement, which Judge Daniels approved, awarded the writers compensation, but capped the payout by publishers at \$18 million. Writers who had registered their work with the copyright office were awarded higher payments.

The case was brought before the appellate court after plaintiffs objected to terms of the agreement.

It was not clear whether either party would appeal the decision, whether the writers would file a new suit, or whether the parties would attempt to negotiate a new agreement, The New York Times reported.

Senate panel: No TV for federal trials, but Supreme Court OK’d

Television cameras might, despite opposition, soon be allowed in one of the most closely-followed government



Sen. Schumer

institutions, the U.S. Supreme Court.

The U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee approved a measure Dec. 6 that would allow all U.S. Supreme Court proceedings to be televised, in spite of division within the committee and opposition from the justices. Meanwhile, a motion to allow televised coverage of federal appellate and trial court proceedings was withdrawn after being met with opposition from both parties in the Senate.

The Senate Judiciary Committee approved, on a bipartisan 11-7 vote, a proposal to allow cameras in the Supreme Court. Eight Democrats, including Sens. Charles Schumer of New York, Richard Durbin of Illinois, and Russell Feingold of Wisconsin, and three Republicans, including Sens. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania and

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Sen. Specter

TRANSITIONS

CONNECTICUT

David R. Dear Jr. has been hired as publisher of The News-Times of Danbury after **John Dunster** left to become publisher of The Advocate of Stamford and the Greenwich Time. All three publications are owned by MediaNews Group, based in Denver. Before joining the News-Times, Dear was publisher of Southern Rhode Island Newspapers, a group of five weekly papers and four dailies based in Wakefield, R.I. Dear began his career with The Journal News of White Plains, N.Y. He also was editor and publisher of two publications in Iowa, the Herald-Index of Altoona and The Record-Herald of Indianola.

Elizabeth T. Yerkes has been named associate editor of the Mystic River Press of Mystic. She had been a staff writer for the publication. She has also been a reporter for The Westerly (R.I.) Sun and for the Times Community News Group, a division of The Day Publishing Co., both based in New London.

Frank MacEachern has joined The Wilton Villager as a staff writer after **Jared Newman** left to be a general assignment reporter with The Hour and the Sunday Hour of Norwalk. MacEachern has been a part-time writer for the Wilton Villager and The Stamford Times. Newman began his newspaper career at The Wilton Villager in October.

Glenn Shafer, a reporter for Imprint Newspapers of Bristol, has left the newspaper group, which includes 11 weekly

papers, to devote full attention to his investment company, Shafer Investment Management Company in West Hartford.

MAINE

Deborah Turcotte, a former business reporter for the Bangor Daily News, has been hired as acting director of the Division of Public Information and Education for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

MASSACHUSETTS

Alan White has replaced **Karen Andreas** as editor of the Eagle-Tribune of North Andover. White began his career there as a reporter in 1973. He became metro



Alan White

editor in 1988 and senior managing editor in 2000. Most recently he was editor for the North of Boston Media Group and was involved in the news operations of the Eagle-Tribune, the Gloucester Daily Times, The Daily News of Newburyport, and The Salem News. Andreas recently joined the Salem News as publisher. Andreas previously worked at there as a reporter, managing editor and editor.

Bruce Mohl, an investigative reporter, political editor and consumer reporter for The Boston Globe, has left the Globe to become editor of Commonwealth magazine of Boston. Mohl began his career in 1978 as a copy editor at the Globe.

Michele McPhee, a crime reporter for the Boston Herald, is leaving the paper to join WTKK-FM of Boston full time as host of a weekday evening

talk show beginning Jan. 7, according to the Boston Radio Watch Web site. She has been working as a weekend fill-in host for the radio station. Before joining the Herald in 2004, McPhee worked for the New York Daily News as its first female police bureau chief.

Clay Bennett, a Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist who recently left The Christian Science Monitor of Boston, will join The Chattanooga (Tenn.) Times



Clay Bennett

Free Press and will be syndicated by The Washington Post Writers Group as of Jan 1.

RHODE ISLAND

James M. Moroney III has been promoted to executive vice president of A.H. Belo Corp., a newspaper group based in Dallas that owns The Providence Journal. Moroney will join the Journal's board of directors. Moroney will also continue as



James Moroney III

publisher and chief executive officer of The Dallas Morning News.

Cynthia Needham, a Providence Journal reporter, has joined its Statehouse bureau. She replaced **Elizabeth Gudrais**, who left the Journal to join Harvard Magazine as assistant editor. It covers news and re-search at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass. Needham joined the Journal in 2003 as a reporter.

The Transitions were written from published reports and press releases by Bijoyeta Das, Jared Molton and Jesse Nankin. Das and Nankin are graduate students at Northeastern University's School of Journalism. Molton is an undergraduate student there. All are on the Bulletin staff.

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BRIEFS

Briefs from Page 2

the footage. Reibman said in a Dec. 13 story in the Boston Herald: "For students to be shocked that newspapers would show up and take photos, I don't see how they can be so naïve in this day and age when cell-phone cameras and video recorders are so ubiquitous."

Many commentators on the Somerville Journal's Web site objected to the paper's decision to videotape an activity on private property and without the consent of the people involved.

One commentator said Dec. 12: "This event at Tufts University is private and simply good, clean fun. The fact that a reporter came on campus and took numerous compromising photos and videos is very disturbing. This is not a responsible way to conduct journalism. As we understand it, this is not a public event where anyone can walk in and participate."

Other commentators responded to those assertions, saying that if students were upset about the footage, they should not have taken part in the event naked.

A commentator on the Journal's Web site Dec. 12, calling himself 'a fellow journalist,' responded to the various complaints from Tufts students: "No one needs your permission to take your picture as you walk down the street. There's no requirement for a media outlet to get your permission to take your picture or to publish it. It's the risk you take of being in public."

Other commentators questioned the newsworthiness of the event itself.

A commentator said on the Journal's Web site Dec. 12: "I don't care whose idea it was to get footage of the Naked Quad Run this year, but if the Somerville Journal is wondering why their insignificant little

publication isn't exactly The New York Times, the embarrassing lack of journalistic quality in this article might give you a clue."

Another Dec. 12 commentator agreed, saying on the Journal's Web site: "I know the event is accessible to the public and that there was nothing practical to stop you from taking the pictures, but just because you're able to get footage and publish it does not mean you should. An article on the event is news — a montage of naked asses is not."

Among the commentators defending the posting of the video footage was Auditi Guha, the Somerville Journal reporter who wrote the article.

She said Dec. 12 on the Journal's Web site: "I was asked to cover this event and get photos and video — I did. I carried a big notebook, stood next to a Tufts policewoman as I took the video, and identified myself as a Journal reporter with everyone I spoke to that night, just as I would at any other event."

The Somerville Journal removed a photo of two female Tufts students posted Dec. 11 on the Journal's Web site. The students complained that they were recognizable in the photo and had not consented to its posting.

Weekly Dig rapped by advocacy group for its toy parody

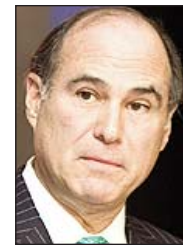
The Weekly Dig, a Boston-based alternative newspaper, recently came under fire from



Greg Reibman

the Anti-Defamation League's New England chapter for publishing Dec. 5 a parodied list of dangerous children's toys titled "Kiddie Kroakers."

A Dec. 13 story in the Boston Herald reported that Andrew Tarsy, the league's regional director, and James L. Rudolph, chairman of the regional board of directors, said in a written statement that the magazine "exceeded the bounds of acceptable language" and resorted to "slurs in the name of humor."



James Rudolph

The list, published annually by the Weekly Dig, included a video game play set branded with a swastika; a book titled "The Diarrhea of Anne Frank," and Trivial Prosciutto, a game the Dig staff wrote is "easy enough for Italians to play."

According to the Herald, Tarsy and Rudolph said in their written statement that certain items were "demeaning to the victims of the Holocaust."

Tarsy and Rudolph said the Anti-Defamation League is "strongly committed to free speech and freedom of the press ... (but) the Weekly Dig editors should exercise their freedom with greater discretion," the Herald reported.

Jeff Lawrence, publisher of the Weekly Dig, said he would not apologize, but would publish the Anti-Defamation League's letter in an upcoming issue.



Jeff Lawrence



Andrew Tarsy

Lawrence told the Herald that the list "was meant to be offensive. It was meant to (anger people) while they were laughing. At the end of the day, we are really trying to provoke people and get them to think."

Conn. paper victim of hoax about local soldier's Iraq death

The Advocate of Stamford, Conn., fell victim to a hoax Nov. 29 when it reported on its Web site that 26-year-old Gabrielle Costello was killed in Iraq, where he was serving as an Army Ranger.

The mystery unraveled in the days to follow, as Army officials could not verify that any Army Rangers had been killed recently, or that a Gabrielle Costello had ever served in any capacity in the armed forces.

Advocate reporter Donna Porstner picked up the story on an online police scanner, where members of the Glenbrook Fire Department, one of five volunteer fire departments in Stamford, had released a statement saying that Gabrielle Costello, a former volunteer firefighter, had been killed in Iraq.

John Breunig, city editor at the Advocate, said Porstner was initially skeptical about the story after she was unable to find any tax records for Gabrielle Costello in Stamford, and could not confirm his death with the mayor, the public safety commissioner, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the Connecticut governor's office.

But sources at the Glenbrook Fire Department, who said they had received the information from Costello's mother, who was driving to Fort Bragg, N.C., to claim her son's body, were already placing black bunting around the firehouse and plan-

ning to dedicate the department's annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony to Costello's memory, Breunig said. Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell and U.S. Rep. Christopher Shays, a Connecticut Republican, had issued statements mourning the soldier's death.



Rep. Shays

Breunig said that, despite its skepticism, the Advocate couldn't ignore the story, which had already been reported on local news stations.

Glenbrook Fire Chief Frank Passero told WTNH-TV, Channel 8, of New Haven, Conn., that the department did have a volunteer firefighter named "Gabe" who left to serve in the Army, but he realized after examining department records that his last name was not Costello. Glenbrook Fire Lt. Troy Jones, who took the original call, had incorrectly recalled the name Gabrielle Costello, and released it without verification, the Advocate reported.

"When we received this call, we have an Internet system, (the name) was put on our system and went to other systems and it shouldn't have," Passero told WTNH. "Consequently it went to ct.com and traveled throughout the state."

Army spokeswoman Shari Lawrence confirmed Dec. 6 that a 26-year-old Gabrielle Maldonado joined the Army several years ago and was once a volunteer firefighter with the Glenbrook Fire Department, the Advocate reported. Maldonado is alive and well and serving in Iraq, she said.

Further investigation of the incident is being left to the Glenbrook Fire Department to determine the identity and motives of the original caller, the

BRIEFS

Briefs from Page 29

Advocate reported. Stamford Mayor Dannel Malloy told the Advocate it was likely a prank, and “a terrible thing to do.”



Courant readers' complaints increase, reader rep says

A column in The Hartford (Conn.) Courant mentioned typos, the outsourcing of a customer service call center, advertisements on the paper's front page, and small font size as common complaints readers have had about the paper in the past year.

Karen Hunter, reader representative for the Courant, said readers have complained about services more this year than in any year since she began working for the paper in 2002.

Hunter wrote last month that readers have complained about typos in the past three months, and noted that this was a result of a new production system. Hunter told the NEPA Bulletin that Courant copy editors began training on a new pagination system in October, which has caused more typographical errors than usual.

Readers have also complained about the Courant's customer service call center, which was outsourced to APAC Customer Services Inc., an Illinois-based company with representatives in

Magician forecasts news on Foster's first a.m. front page

There was magic in the air the morning of Nov. 26, when Foster's Daily Democrat of Dover, N.H., debuted as a morning newspaper.

Magician B.J. Hickman had predicted that day's headlines a week earlier, on Nov. 17, and joined Patrice Foster, the paper's vice president of administration, and others at the WTSN-AM studios in Dover, where his predictions were to be revealed on live radio broadcasts airing on WTSN-AM and WBYY-FM of Portsmouth, N.H.

Hickman mailed his guesses in a sealed envelope to Kathleen Murphy, senior vice president of Laconia (N.H.) Savings Bank, Nov. 19. Murphy then stored the envelope in the bank's Dover branch vault for safekeeping.

Rod Doherty, Foster's executive editor, had said he was skeptical of Hickman's ability to predict the headlines, although he assured readers that “the editorial staff will do everything they can to ensure Hickman is not accurate with his headline predictions.”

“Pats keep it perfect,” “A holiday march,” “Heating costs fuel,” and “Today's weather, rainy,” were Hickman's forecasts, which Foster described on air as “scary right” after they were revealed. Except for the actual headline that read, “Heating costs fueling fears,” Hickman's guesses were accurate.

At WTSN studios, Hickman said with a sigh of relief: “I've

the Philippines, in November 2006.

Readers have said they don't like having their calls answered by people not directly associated with the paper. Hunter wrote that outsourcing the center has reduced the number of calls the paper has had to deal with over missed deliveries.

Advertisements on the front page were introduced in March at the Courant, and have also prompted complaints. Readers have argued that the ads compromise the aesthetics and ethics of the paper. Hunter wrote that the ads were introduced to deal with economic challenges.

Small type size, especially on page 2 and in the puzzle section, has been another source for complaints. Melanie Shaffer, director of graphics and design for the Courant, told Hunter that the font size has never decreased at the paper. Hunter told the Bulletin that complaints about font size are likely coming from readers with declining eyesight, and suggest-

ed in her column that readers go to the online edition of the Courant to read it in larger print.

Northeastern student newspaper to cover area neighborhoods

The Northeastern News, the student newspaper of Boston's Northeastern University, plans to expand its coverage to news in areas neighboring Northeastern, including the Fenway section of Boston.

The expansion in coverage coincides with the paper's expansion of its publication schedule this school year from weekly to twice-weekly.

In an interview with the Fenway News of Boston, Mark Larocque, the Northeastern News reporter appointed to the paper's new city editor position in September, said: “We want to cover real stories in the Fenway, Roxbury, and Mission Hill, especially those that involve the intersection of students with



Mike Ross photo, courtesy of Foster's Daily Democrat of Dover, N.H. Magician B.J. Hickman celebrates after successfully predicting several headlines on the front page of Foster's Daily Democrat's inaugural morning edition.

finally made the butterflies disappear that have been in my stomach all week!” Foster's reported.

permanent residents.”

According to an e-mail from Larocque to the NEPA Bulletin, since the creation of the city desk in September, the Northeastern News has published two city desk stories each issue, branded with a City Pulse logo. Because of the success of the addition of the city desk, the beat now will have its own page in the Thursday edition of the Northeastern News.

Larocque said by e-mail: “The new City Pulse page will include a police blotter, as well as event coverage, features, community profiles and a biweekly restaurant review.”

Danielle Capalbo, a Northeastern News reporter, said in the Fenway News that she recently wrote a story on Sajed Kamal, a Fenway activist and Northeastern alumnus whose Solar Boston organization has been working with a student group, HEAT, The Husky Energy Action Team, to convince Northeastern officials to install solar panels on campus

buildings.

Other successful city desk stories include coverage about expansion of the university, Boston City Council elections, and a local five-kilometer marathon for a neighborhood charity.

Capalbo told the Fenway News: “We're looking for more people in the neighborhood the students should know about.”

An e-mail account to accept suggestions has been set up by the Northeastern News city desk at thenarrativenewsteam@gmail.com.

Derek Hawkins, a Northeastern News reporter, told the Fenway News: “It would be hard to justify expanding to a twice-weekly schedule if we don't help students learn more about the communities they interact with.”

Larocque is seeking to expand distribution of the paper to more off-campus locations, including ice cream shops, grocery stores and restaurants in the Fenway, Roxbury and Mission Hill.

Some divorce files unsealed after years of secrecy

Some divorce from Page 7
restraining orders, but information on who made the claims or why was not made public.

Docket sheet information from opened Level 1 cases has been posted on the Connecticut Judicial Branch Web site at www.jud.ct.gov, and the judiciary is in the process of deciding whether the same should be done with Level 2 cases.

Scheffey said the “bare bones” docket sheet information sought by the Courant and Law Tribune has not led to additional suits requesting complete information, partly because filing to do so would be a significant financial burden for newspapers with limited amounts of money. Scheffey said it is a burden most newspapers, including the Law Tribune and Courant, share.

The value of changing the system has been that newspapers now have the opportunity to do the cursory screening necessary to decide whether a story is worth covering in the first place, Scheffey said.

Scheffey noted that the three-level system was not even legal; it was bureaucratic. On June 12, 2000, Judith Stanulis, civil court manager to trial court administrators and judicial district chief clerks, issued a memo to court clerks throughout Connecticut that outlined the three-tiered

system. With virtually no legal authority, Connecticut judges put the system into effect.

Scheffey theorized that judges came up with the system to hide computerized files.

“It was easy to hide files when they were on paper,” Scheffey said. “When files became computerized, judges had to come up with a format to hide files in the computer — to do something on the sly.”

Scheffey noted that the bureaucratic decision blatantly conflicted with judiciary rules established in 1995 that stated that records could be sealed only in the least restrictive way possible.

New Hampshire has also experienced efforts to restrict unreasonable favoritism in the sealing of divorce records.

In 1990, the Keene (N.H.) Sentinel discovered that U.S. Rep. Chuck Douglas, a former senior justice in the New Hampshire Supreme Court who was running for re-election in Congress on a family-values platform, had at least three divorces behind him.

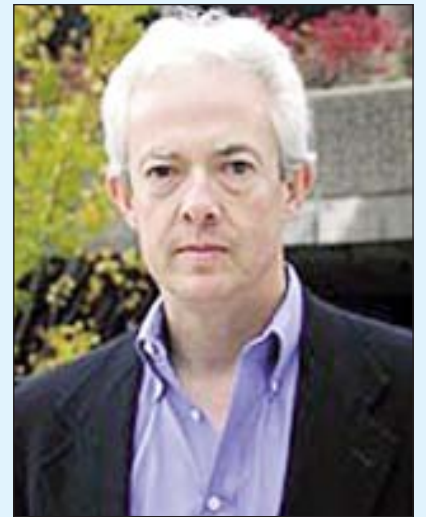
Tom Kearney, now managing editor of The Stowe (Vt.) Reporter and executive editor of the Keene Sentinel at the time, said that when the Sentinel went to court to get records of the divorces, all it received was a yellow Post-it note with the docket numbers.

The Sentinel argued for access to the records in a case known as The Petition of Keene Sentinel. The case was lost in the New Hampshire Superior Court in 1991, but was won on appeal to the New Hampshire Supreme Court in 1992.

The New Hampshire Supreme Court explicitly sided with the Sentinel on the grounds that the Douglases could not prevail in keeping the records sealed “merely by asserting a general privacy interest” without the judge providing a

‘Prior to the guidelines, there was a lack of understanding about what should be sealed, and what should be open. As the rules are becoming better understood, there is a sense that fewer records are being sealed.’

— Robert Ambrogi



“sufficiently compelling reason that would justify preventing public access to the document.”

The Supreme Court called for judges to provide general information to the public on the circumstances for sealing the record, in what the court called a general conclusory order, as well as a more detailed report on the reasons for sealing the record to be sealed with the record itself, in what the court called a specific conclusory order.

Kearney called the Supreme Court decision the “gold standard” for restricting the sealing of records in all civil cases, including divorce.

In 2004, several news organizations in New Hampshire challenged a then-recently enacted law, which had not yet taken effect, to seal financial affidavits in divorce cases. The law held that financial affidavits should be confidential, and that those seeking access should prove that their public interest outweighed privacy interests.

A key proponent of the sealing law was Douglas, the former Supreme Court justice and congressman, who lost motions in 1992 and 2001 to have his divorce affidavits sealed.

Testifying before a state committee, Douglas argued that public access to the records was “a gold-plated gift for anyone who wants to reconstruct any-

one else’s financial record.”

Eight news organizations challenged the law on the grounds that it violated the standard of access set forth by The Petition of Keene Sentinel. Those challenging were the Concord Monitor; the Keene Sentinel; the Valley News of Lebanon; the Portsmouth Herald; The Telegraph of Nashua; The Associated Press; the New Hampshire Association of Broadcasters, based in Manchester; and WMUR-TV, based in Manchester.

The organizations initially lost their appeal in the lower court, but were successful in their appeal to the New Hampshire Supreme Court in a case known as The Associated Press v. New Hampshire.

Although the New Hampshire Supreme Court held that the affidavits should be confidential upon filing, and that those seeking access should have to ask for them, they shifted the burden of proof from the party seeking disclosure to the party seeking to maintain the seal, if the sealing were challenged.

The court stated that the public right of access was a basic constitutional right.

Connecticut and New Hampshire are not the only states where news organizations have fought to hold judges accountable in the sealing of

divorce records.

Since 2005, the Massachusetts government Web site has maintained Guidelines on the Public’s Right of Access to Judicial Proceedings and Records, which outlines Massachusetts’ rules on public access to records.

The guidelines include information on the Massachusetts rules for impounding civil records (“impoundment” is the term used in Massachusetts for “sealing”), which states that all requests for impoundment, including those for divorce records, must be done in writing and must be accompanied by an affidavit. The rules also uphold that records can only be sealed when there is a persuasive enough reason offered to override presumptive First Amendment rights.

Ambrogi said judges have sealed records with more discretion since the rules were posted online.

“Prior to the guidelines, there was a lack of understanding about what should be sealed, and what should be open,” Ambrogi said. “As the rules are becoming better understood, there is a sense that fewer records are being sealed.”

The guidelines were the seminal project of The Massachusetts Judiciary Media Com-



Tom Kearney



Sen. Feingold



Sen. Feinstein

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Charles Grassley of Iowa, voted for the measure, which will now make its way to the full Senate.



Sen. Grassley

If the measure is approved by the full Senate, the Supreme Court would have to allow television coverage of all open sessions unless the justices decided by majority vote that coverage in a particular case would violate a party's legal rights.

The measure met with both criticism and praise within the Senate committee.

"The Supreme Court doesn't tell us how to run our business, and we shouldn't tell them how to run their business," Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a California Democrat and opponent of the proposal, said.

Proponent Schumer said that "with a governmental process, you should err on the side of openness."

Feinstein shared the opinions of Supreme Court Justices David Souter and Anthony Kennedy, quoting Souter as having said "cameras will be allowed here only over my dead body," and Kennedy saying that cameras would provide "an insidious temptation for justices to get a sound bite on the evening news."

The approval for the measure came after Schumer's plan to televise all federal court trials gained little backing, although he plans to try to modify that proposal to gain support.

Of that measure, Feinstein asked: "How does this improve the quality of justice one bit? Courts should not be entertainment. We already have Judge Judy."

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America, the Association of American Publishers, and Reuters, among others, according to the ACAP Web site.

Adherence to the new rules is voluntary, and has only been tested with the French search engine Exalead, but Web sites may already begin using them in addition to existing robots.txt rules. Larger search engines, such as Google, have said they must still closely evaluate ACAP to guarantee it will serve more than just the news industry before it is put into effect, AP said.

Newspaper online ad revenue grows as real estate sinks

Newspaper online advertising revenue grew 21.1 percent to \$773 million in the third quarter versus the same period last year, the 14th consecutive quarter of double-digit growth since tracking began in 2004, according to the Newspaper Association of America.

But total advertising revenue for U.S. newspapers was \$10.9 billion in quarter three, representing a 7.4 percent decline from a year earlier. In the previous quarter, total print and online revenue dropped 8.6 percent.

Specifically, overall classified print ad revenue in quarter three sank 17 percent to \$3.4 billion. Within the classified category, real estate advertising dropped 24.4 percent to \$1 billion from the same period last year.

A report from Borrell Associates of Williamsburg, Va., suggests that real estate advertising dollars are moving to the Web. The report predicts that by 2012, newspapers' rev-

enue from real estate ads in print will reach \$3.2 billion while online real estate ad revenue will hit \$3.4 billion.

So far in 2007, online real estate advertising has soared 25.8 percent to \$2.6 billion, as ad dollars shift from print to online.

Borrell suggests that newspapers will suffer more than other media as they are projected to experience 6.8 percent declines in real estate ad revenue this year and in 2008, followed by a predicted 16 percent drop in 2009.

A second report from Borrell predicts that overall local online advertising revenues will reach \$12.6 billion in 2008, but "pure play" Web sites that only have an Internet presence, such as Google and Yahoo, will capture the lion's share of those revenues. Newspapers now hold 33.4 percent of all local online advertising revenues, while pure-play sites hold a 43.7 percent share.

"Broader economic issues are impacting our industry the same way they are impacting other media," John Sturm, president and chief executive officer of the Newspaper Association of America, said in a statement. "Newspaper companies continue to take aggressive measures to prepare for the future during a period of economic challenges for the industry."



John Sturm

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mittee, of which Ambrogi is a member. The committee was established in 1995 to foster a good working relationship between the Massachusetts judiciary and print and electronic media.

In Maine, an advisory committee is scheduled to review restrictions on public access to divorce records, likely in the next year.

The Maine Right to Know Advisory Committee was established in 2005 to examine public-record law in Maine, including divorce-record law, and to make recommendations to the governor, the legislature, the chief justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, and local government entities to keep records and proceedings in line with Maine's Freedom of Access laws.

The committee is made up of 16 delegates, includ-

ing representatives of municipal interests, school interests, state government interests, broadcasting interests, the press, and newspaper publishing interests. The press representative is Judy Meyer, managing editor of the Lewiston Sun Journal. The newspaper publisher representative is Ralph Stetson, vice president of Maine Community Publications, which publishes the Coastal Journal of Bath, The Community Leader of Falmouth, and The Maine Switch, a lifestyle magazine in Portland. Maine Community Publications is a division of Blethen Maine Newspapers Inc., which publishes the Portland Press Herald and Maine Sunday Telegram, the Kennebec Journal of Augusta, and the Morning Sentinel of Waterville.

Mal Leary, a political reporter for the Bangor Daily News and president of the Maine Freedom of

Information Coalition, represents freedom-of-access interests on the Maine Right to Know Advisory Committee. The committee is meant to "block unneeded secrecy," Leary said.

Leary said the committee will review divorce records as early as this coming summer, and will make recommendations to the governor, legislature, chief justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, and local government entities as early as January 2009.

When it comes to weighing privacy interests against public interests in divorce cases, Ambrogi and Kearney agree: "It's a balancing test on the part of the judges."

Throughout New England, news organizations have successfully pressed judges to balance those interests with fair regard for the public and media's rights to access.

CLASSIFIEDS

See all of the latest updated classified advertisements online at www.nepa.org

HELP WANTED

EDITORIAL

MANAGING EDITOR, THE COMMONS, BRATTLEBORO, VT.

The Commons is an independent newspaper serving Windham County in Southeastern Vermont, published by Vermont Independent Media (VIM), a non-profit organization established to create a local, independent media voice to counter the trend of media consolidation and remote corporate ownership. We are beginning the third year of publishing a 24-page monthly newspaper with 6,000 copies distributed free to drop points or mailed to supporters. VIM is seeking an experienced, energetic, full-time editor to guide the paper through the next levels of growth, including increasing frequency to twice a month and developing an updated and interactive Web site. The managing editor position is full time, with the potential for a long-term contract after six months. A strong appreciation of in-depth, community journalism with a new-media sensibility is essential. Familiarity with the Windham County region is desirable. Responsibilities include writing editorials and some news articles, and overseeing all aspects of newsgathering by freelance reporters and writers. As our production staff is part-time, knowledge of InDesign is desirable. The managing editor reports to the VIM board of directors, which actively supports the publication through advertising sales and distribution throughout Windham County. The Managing Editor will also have general oversight of VIM's Media Mentoring Project, which promotes media literacy and community participation in local media via free journalism skills workshops and library/school partnerships. Please send cover letter and resume by Dec. 6 to Vermont Independent Media, POB 1212, Brattleboro, VT 05302, or e-mail to info@commonnews.org.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Current Publishing LLC is looking for a photographer who's interested in working in a fast-paced environment, covering local news and sports for a growing group of weekly newspapers in Southern Maine with offices in Saco and Westbrook. If you have a passion for photography and in interest in covering challeng-

ing news stories, from spot news to in-depth enterprise stories, as well as finding new and interesting ways to shoot local sports, then this is the job for you. Interested candidates should have experience with digital photography and Photoshop. An interest in online multimedia presentation is a plus. Contact Robert Wallack, general manager, at (207) 854-2577 or e-mail rwallack@keepmecurrent.com.

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Telegraph Publishing Company is seeking a professional, motivated and innovative individual to sell advertising space on nashuatelegraph.com. The ideal candidate will be Internet-savvy and possess some media advertising sales experience. Candidate must be comfortable prospecting new clients via cold calling. Job responsibilities will include managing Internet contracts and renewals; maintaining and updating tile and banner advertising space; Internet presentations to prospective clients; and working with Outside Sales staff on joint sales calls. This is a full-time position offering a competitive benefits package, base salary and commission. If you are interested in being considered for this position, send resume and salary requirements to Telegraph Publishing, 17 Executive Drive, Hudson, N.H. 03051 or e-mail jdibella@nashuatelegraph.com

INTERACTIVE ADVERTISING

The Day, an independent daily in Southeastern Connecticut, is seeking candidates for the following positions:

Interactive Account Executives: We are growing and adding two key positions to our interactive sales team!

Recruitment Advertising: This position will focus exclusively on selling online recruitment solutions on theday.com as well as our affiliated Web sites, Yahoo!, HotJobs and CTjobs.com. If you have a background in recruitment advertising or human resources, and see the potential that exists in online recruiting, we want to talk to you!

General Advertising: This AE will sell interactive media products to new and established businesses in our market. You must have a solid understanding of online metrics and be able to share this information with advertisers in a clear manner.

Each position requires a strong knowledge of online media and two to three years of sales experience with a history of exceeding revenue expectations in online, print, broadcast, cable or radio. If you can manage multiple priorities in a deadline-driven environment, build strong relationships with our advertisers and are not afraid of making a cold-call, then this is the opportunity for you. A valid driver's license and daily access to an automobile are required. These are salary plus commission positions with unlimited earning potential, full benefit package and a 401(k) with employer match. Please e-mail, mail or fax your qualifications and salary requirements to The Day Publishing Company, Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 1231, New London, CT 06320, Fax: (860) 443-6322; e-mail: humanresources@theday.com.

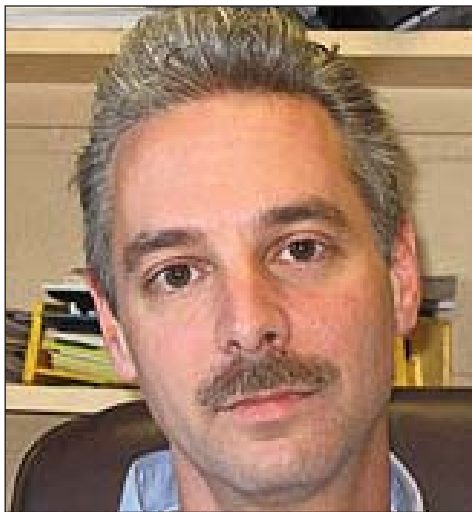
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The Day, an independent daily in Southeastern Connecticut, is seeking a Retail Advertising Manager. This key advertising manager will lead and motivate our local retail sales team to achieve our revenue objectives and grow market share. The successful candidate will make calls with account executives to ascertain customer needs and to coach and develop the sales staff into a winning team. If you have a proven track record of leading sales teams to achieve success and grow market share, along with the desire and ability to help small businesses succeed, then this is the opportunity for you. The ideal candidate must have a college degree and a minimum of three years' media sales management experience. The ability to manage multiple projects on deadline and to keep others focused on achieving revenue objectives is essential, as are excellent verbal and written communication skills. We offer an attractive salary, performance incentives and a 401(k) with employer match. Please e-mail, mail or fax your qualifications and salary requirements to The Day Publishing Company, Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 1231, New London, CT 06320. Fax: (860) 443-6322; e-mail: humanresources@theday.com

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Ed Woods



John Christie



Oreste D'Arconte

Smaller papers dodge hard times dogging bigger peers

_____ **Smaller papers** from Page 1

“It’s a self-fulfilling prophesy,” he said. “When the media reports on the decline of newspapers, customers begin to believe that print is dying. Print isn’t dying. We just need to get ahead of our own story.”

Mamis is publisher of the New Haven Advocate, Hartford Advocate, the Fairfield County Weekly of Bridgeport, all in Connecticut, and the Valley Advocate of Easthampton, Mass. The free weeklies have a combined distribution of about 175,000.

Ed Woods, publisher of the Bennington (Vt.) Banner, said stories that say newspapers are dying are “absolutely not true.”

The Banner is not experiencing a financial crisis, Woods said, and he’s expending significant effort to make sure that doesn’t happen. Woods said the paper has maintained steady advertising revenue and a circulation of about 10,000 daily in the 2 ½ years he has been there.

Oreste “Rusty” D’Arconte, publisher of The Sun Chronicle of Attleboro, Mass., said that although the financial problems plaguing the industry are serious right now, they are a natural part of the business cycle. The current trends “are more of a downward turn than a downward slide,” he said.

The Sun Chronicle has a daily circulation of 18,378 and a Sunday circulation of 18,990.

Ed Gunderson is publisher of three dailies and 12 weeklies in Central Connecticut, including The Herald of New Britain, the Middletown Press, Bristol Press, and Imprint Newspapers group, based in Bristol. He said the smaller community papers in the group maintain a strong position. Gunderson said the daily Herald of New Britain is “doing great, and revenue is up from last year.”

Gunderson said the weekly papers are mailed to nearly every household in their communities each week.

“It’s the only place for local news,” Gunderson said. “National news in daily newspapers has already been seen on TV, ESPN, or the Internet by the time the paper gets there in the morning. The local newspaper still has a service to offer its customers.”

Don Houghton, editor and publisher of the Bucksport (Maine) Enterprise, said the weekly Enterprise is thriving in today’s market because it is the only place for community news. The Enterprise, described in an October/November story in the American Journalism Review as “the center of the known universe,” has a circulation of 2,300 in a town of 4,961 people. The paper is an indispensable source of information in a community that would otherwise be ignored by the news media, Houghton said.

Houghton acknowledged the hardships facing the industry as a whole, but as far as he can tell in Bucksport, the local newspaper is still relevant and its steady long-term growth attests to it.

During the past seven years, the Enterprise has more than doubled its circulation and advertising revenue.

“People stand by their small weeklies,” Houghton said. “They’re not cutting subscriptions; they’re just not picking up the daily paper.”

When making decisions about saving pennies, people are more likely to cut the metro daily newspaper reporting news that they can easily access online, rather than a local paper such as the Enterprise.

The local scope of community papers also helps maintain steady advertising revenue from local businesses and tradesmen at a time when larger papers are floundering in bringing in ad dollars. Nationwide, advertising revenue is down, according to the Newspaper Association of America’s third-quarter report.

Although online advertising increased 21.1 percent between September 2006 and September of this year, total ad spending in print and online combined fell 7.4 percent overall, with classified advertising suffering the biggest blow: a 17 percent decline.

“It’s a dire time for advertising,” D’Arconte said. “Classifieds are feeling it.”

With large advertisers cutting back and mid-range advertisers disappearing altogether, the Sun Chronicle relies on smaller local advertisers to bring in revenue, he said.

Mamis said alternative weeklies such as the Hartford Advocate, part of the group he oversees, aren’t suffering as much as the bigger daily papers in advertising revenue because they have “made a career out of being scrappy.”

The Advocate finds dependable revenue in advertisers that are too small for the daily world, he said. Big dailies have to learn how to sell smarter and look for business in new places, Mamis said.

Some New England newspapers are also getting creative with circulation promotion and advertising strategies.

D’Arconte said circulation at the Sun Chronicle is growing because the paper is actively working to gain readers. Do-not-call rules in telemarketing hurt new subscriber growth, but special offers for new subscribers signing up for home delivery have been successful in converting single-copy buyers to subscribers, he said.

Woods said that, to combat losses in advertising, the Bennington Banner is promoting print and online combination ads, targeting buyers with niche product ads in special sections, and running bigger ads less frequently.

Publishers are also working on ways to capture more online dollars.

Mamis said: “With readership expanding across the globe, newspapers have to find ways to harness growing interest in online news.”

Karen Ladd, editor and publisher of The News & Sentinel of Colebrook, N.H., said the paper’s circulation, now about 4,300, took a hit with the postal rate increase that went into effect in July. To attract readers, the paper launched a paid online edition, hoping that mail subscribers would subscribe online to circumvent postage. The News & Sentinel used to offer a free sample of the paper online, but now online subscribers have access to the entire paper on the Web, Ladd said.

Although the economics of the newspaper business might be a struggle, the news is thriving.

John Christie, publisher of the Kennebec Journal of Augusta and Morning Sentinel of Waterville, both in Maine, said a recent study by Belden Associates of Dallas revealed that during a seven-day period, the print and online editions of the Journal and Morning Sentinel reached 87 percent of the market. Readership is a better indicator of a paper’s vitality than profit margins, he said.

Houghton of the Bucksport Enterprise said: “We don’t look for awards; we look for circulation. As long as circulation improves, the rest will take care of itself. That’s the honor you really want.”

At the end of the day, newspapers have to find ways to operate substantially less expensively and say goodbye to the 25 percent profit margins of the past, Christie said. He is working to bring expenses down at the Kennebec Journal and Morning Sentinel through consolidation of services and contracting out functions. He said papers need to look at more realistic pay increases for employees and better deals on company benefits.

“I love the business,” Christie said. “And I’m in it to help it succeed.”

The publishers interviewed agree that newspapers will survive the current hardships as long as they continue putting out a good product that is relevant to the community they serve.

D’Arconte said that in controlling costs, newspapers have to be careful not to destroy the product.

Gunderson and Mamis said newspapers have the advantage of being the best news gatherers.

“Look at news aggregators like Romenesko,” Mamis said. “The stories seen there originated in print media” because that is where the bulk of reporting is still being done.

While the industry is changing in drastic ways, the consensus in New England among those interviewed is that newspapers are here to stay.

Woods said: “Changes in the industry require us to think more creatively, but if those of us in the business are willing to do that, then we can grow and prosper.”