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**MORE JUDGES
NEEDED FOR APRIL
29 CONTEST JUDGING**

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**THE POWER
OF A FREEBIE
BY JOHN FOUST**

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ARKANSAS

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SERVING PRESS and STATE SINCE 1873

'Write for Arkansas' grants awarded

It took the "Write for Arkansas" Committee most of the day Friday to sift through the 26 applications for the two-year reporter grants, but in the end five Arkansas Press Association newspapers were chosen to receive grants.

The recipients of the grants and the geographic area of the state they represent are:

- Northwest: *Madison County Record*, Huntsville;
- Northeast: Areawide Media, Salem;
- Southeast: *Stuttgart Daily Leader*;
- Southwest: *Texarkana Gazette*;
- Central: *The Courier*, Russellville.

Applicants for the "Write for Arkansas" grants were required to submit budgets for the reporter position along with a flow chart of how the reporter would fit into the newspaper's organization and how they planned to utilize the reporter should they be selected for the grant. The applicants had also to include a plan to

retain the reporter at the end of the two-year grant.

The committee also selected an alternate for each grant in the event the newspaper selected for the grant was for some reason unable to fulfill the requirements. The program begins July 1 with an August 1 deadline for the newspapers to have a reporter on the job to keep the grant in place.

The grant recipients were notified Friday, and the search for a reporter meeting the grant criterion began immediately. The reporters must have a college degree and must have at least one year of experience.

The grants were made possible by a challenge grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation that provided the \$252,000 base grant. The matching funds are presently being raised by the Arkansas Community Foundation, which initiated the grant application.

APA Board convenes in spring retreat

The APA/APS Board of Directors convenes in their annual spring retreat today and tomorrow at DeGray State Park near Arkadelphia. President **Barney White**, publisher of the *Ashley News Observer* in Crossett, will preside.

The board will dispatch a lengthy agenda of APA business, including the selection of the annual APA "special award" recipients.

The board will hold their traditional Thursday evening dinner at the retreat where one of the guests will be **Derwood Brett**, past APA president (1989) and wife, Frances. The Bretts reside in Mt. Ida.

The board is scheduled to adjourn the retreat meeting session before noon on Friday.



CONTEST JUDGING - Elaine Burks, APA's Advertising Assistant, poses with entries for the 2010 APA's Better Newspaper Editorial Awards Contest. The Mississippi Press Association will be judging the 2,034 entries from 60 Arkansas Newspapers on the 22nd of this month in Jackson and on the 23rd in Grenada. The awards will be handed out June 26 at the MidSouth Convention Center in Tunica.

Reunion
on the
River

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DAYS UNTIL THE
TRI-STATE CONVENTION

• The Mississippi Press Association has created a Tri-State Convention Facebook Fan Page. Visit, join the conversation and let us know if you'll be joining us.

www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=112302842128845&ref=nf

• The Arkansas Press Association is currently working on an online registration form that will be available in the next several days.

• Donations are sought for silent and live auctions during convention (see page 3).

Arkansas • Mississippi • Tennessee
JUNE 23-26, 2010 | TUNICA, MISSISSIPPI



Tom Larimer's Potpourri

Congratulations to the winners of the “Write for Arkansas” grants! The five grant recipients were selected from the 26 applications received for the grants Friday by a committee comprised mostly of APA member representatives. The recipients included Huntsville, Salem, Stuttgart, Texarkana and Russellville.

Those five will receive grant money sufficient to pay for a reporter to cover local news at their newspapers for two years. Now let's see: a reporter to cover just local news for two year and it costs nothing? If you're looking for the catch there isn't one.

The “Write for Arkansas” program was, in my estimation, one of the best opportunities for APA member community newspapers ever to come along. Winning one and adding an extra reporter to cover local news for two years is a real plus for five APA member newspapers.

Local news has always been the franchise of community newspapers. Advances in technology have changed almost all our production processes at newspapers but it hasn't changed the fact that local news is still what we do and we do it better than anyone else. So a little extra help, or hopefully a lot of extra help over a two year period in gathering that news should be a real plus.

Thanks to the Arkansas Community Foundation for conceptualizing this grant program and for the Knight Foundation for providing the challenge grant funding for the “Write for Arkansas” program.

Newspapers begin writing history for their respective communities almost from the moment the community is settled. You often see historical accounts of those early newspapers, and there were a lot of them.

Not all of them were successful obviously. Some started and lasted only a few weeks. Some, on the other hand, have persevered, at least in Arkansas, since the 19th century.

Anyone who has ever taken the time to peruse the morgues of some of the old community newspapers knows that the writing styles sure have changed. Some of those early journalists were gifted writers. By today's standards they'd be considered wordy, perhaps too flowery, and overly descriptive. They were entertaining and well read by their audiences, however, and their style remains entertaining to this day.

When you look back on some of those early efforts at newspapering in Arkansas it's a wonder any of them survived. In so many cases they were producing newspapers for a community that was barely literate. In many communities in the late 19th century, those who could read and write were in the minority. That's hardly a good situation for an aspiring newspaper.

Still they came. Creating a newspaper from scratch has not always been rational action or even well thought out in those early days. Some people, mostly men but not all, just did it.

One of those families was the Russell Family, early pioneers of the Ozark Mountains area of Northwest Arkansas and newspaper people spanning at least three generations.

J.L. Russell wrote a book on the subject titled “Behind These Ozark Hills”. His motivation was his irritation at early historians like Goodspeed and Allsopp who got it all wrong, at least in Russell's estimation, regarding the chronology of start-up newspapers in the region and exactly who started them. Russell does write with some credibility since he witnessed most of the comings and goings of newspapers in the region and was acquainted with those who started them, financed them, and edited them.

In the publication Russell lists some excellent examples of the writing style of the day. It was obvious he was a big fan of **W.S. Tilton**, one of those early newspaper pioneers in the Carroll County area who was, no doubt, a gifted writer.

I found one of the examples of Tilton's writing interesting and containing relevance even today. The writing was an opinion piece on what it takes to produce a newspaper. It was headlined “Newspaper Making”:

“It isn't boy's play, reader, to make a newspaper. Everybody can't do it, though most persons think they can. More excellent qualities of head and heart are required in an editor than in any other profession in the world. He talks to more people than the pulpit does, and talks to people of all grades of life and all shades of belief. If conscientious —and no man who is not has any business in the editorial chair — he feels the responsibility of his position as if it were a mountain on his soul. He knows that the moral growth and peace of the community depend largely for weekly utterances. Many times does he draw his pen through the lines which he fears may be misunderstood, and do harm to one of those whom he desires to make better, and not worse. It is not an easy position — it is scarcely a desirable one; and yet if he happens to express a sentiment which does not suit the reader, the latter is uncharitable enough to lose no time in censuring him. The editor does not always think as the reader does; he can't. If he did, and never expressed a sentiment except such as the reader cherished, what would be the object of taking his paper? It is certainly foolish to pay for a journal which simply contains a rehash of what we long before thought ourselves. But, reader, when you are induced to find fault with the editor because he says something that doesn't suit you, remember that you can't get a paper under the sun, if it amounts to anything, that will not sometimes say things that you cannot agree with.”

Keep in mind that was written around 1875. Some things, truly, do not change in our business.

Don't bother looking for a copy of Russell's book. Sadly it's been out of print for many years. My Dad, **Ted Larimer**, has a copy which he purchased from the author who one day paid a visit to the offices of the *Green Forest Tribune* which my parents had purchased in 1946. The Russell family had previously published the *Tribune* for at least three generations.

Have a great week!

Jeff Christenson now recuperating at home

Jeff Christenson, past APA president (2005) and recently retired publisher of the *Harrison Daily Times*, returned home Friday after spending 96 days in Baptist Health Center in Little Rock.

Jeff underwent brain surgery at Baptist and struggled through the recovery process. Jane Christenson, past APA president (1991), reports that Jeff is settling into a new routine at home where he will have 24-hour home health specialist care as he continues his rehabilitation.

A large group of people attended Jeff's 62nd birthday party at Baptist on the Tuesday before he was released on Friday.

Those wishing to correspond with the Christenson's may do so at 1010 West Central Ave., Harrison, AR 72601.

Jackson recovering well from surgery

Former APA President Jay Jackson is recovering well from spinal decompression surgery according to his nurses and physical therapists. He underwent the surgery last Tuesday, April 6, at St. Luke's Hospital in the Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Mo.

According to his daughter, Janan Jackson Foster, Jackson was much improved this week and could go home next Tuesday. He and his wife, Patsy, reside at 5205 South 42nd St., Rogers, AR 72758-4117. Their email is jackson3355@sbglobal.net.

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Ruth Thomas

Alice Ruth Thomas, 93, died March 26. She was the daughter of T.L. Pound, founder of the *Danville Democrat* and publisher from 1904-1926. Her brothers, Carroll Pound and Dick Pound, published the newspaper for 19 years, from 1926-1945. The newspaper later merged with the *Mt. Magazine Rural Record*, becoming the *Yell County Record*.

More judges needed for Mississippi contest

Twenty Arkansas Press Association members and associate members have already signed up to judge the Mississippi Press Association's (MPA) Editorial Contest on Thursday, April 29, at the Association of Arkansas Counties building just across the street from the APA building in Little Rock. But, more are needed.

In fact Terri Cobb, APA contest coordinator, says 35 are needed to really give the MPA contest a good judging. Lunch will be provided for all judges.

If you've been intending to sign up and haven't, please do so today. APA needs your

help in providing this reciprocal judging to the Mississippi association. Members of the MPA will be judging APA entries April 22-23 in Jackson, Miss., and Grenada, Miss., respectively.

The APA awards will be presented Saturday, June 26, at the Tri-State Convention in Tunica, Miss. Those presentations will also include the new Young Journalist Awards being presented for the first time this year.

Call the APA office at 501.374.1500 if you would like to be among the judges April 29. Or, email Cobb at terri@arkansaspres.org.

Nominations open for Amos & McKinney Awards

Nominations are now being accepted for the National Newspaper Association's 2010 Amos and McKinney awards. They are the NNA's highest honors awarded to working or retired newspapermen and women who have exhibited distinguished service to the community press. The deadline for submission of letter of nomination and form is May 1, 2010.

Nominees may be working or retired newspapermen or women whose non-metropolitan newspapers are members in good standing of the NNA. Nominees must exhibit continuing and significant contributions to community

leadership and community journalism through advocacy, involvement in their community and dedication to the advancement of the journalism profession through participation in state and national associations.

The Amos and McKinney Awards will be presented during NNA's 124th Annual Convention & Trade Show, Sept. 30-Oct. 3, 2010, in Omaha, Neb. For more information visit the Amos and McKinney section of the NNA Web site (www.nna.org) or contact Sara Dickson at 573.882.5800 or saradickson@nna.org.

ANF urges "APAers" to support convention auctions

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) Silent Auction will take place during the Tri-State Convention in Tunica, Miss., June 23-26. Organizers are planning several special events, including a live auction, and the whole convention promises to be a great experience, combining the resources of three successful press associations.

"We really need the support of the newspaper publishers to make this event a success," said Karen Brown, ANF executive director. "The auction has always been a fun part of our summer convention and this year will be no exception."

Publishers are asked to support the silent auction by contributing one or two items per newspa-

per. Auction items can be a variety of things, such as a basket of local items that represent the area near the newspaper, a local product or service, a certificate for a dinner and a show, tickets to an event, etc. Those wishing to contribute can do so by contacting Brown (karenb@commpub.com) or Byron Tate, ANF Board President (btate@swtimes.com).

"We especially need some donations of big ticket items for the live auction," said Tom Larimer, executive director of the Arkansas Press Association. "For that auction we need things like Razorback tickets, vacation packages, tickets to events and similar contributions."

ADEQ and ANF present "Earth Day: Your Own Backyard"

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) has teamed with the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) to produce a set of educational features to raise awareness of the 40th annual observance of Earth Day on April 22. The series, titled "Earth Day: Your Own Backyard," includes three 3 x 10 features and is available to newspapers free of charge in the four

dominant print formats in Arkansas: Narrow, Pass, Web and WEHCO. Sponsorships can be sold to local vendors, creating a revenue-generating opportunity for newspapers in addition to providing a valuable educational service.

Newspapers can get the features by emailing Karen Brown at karenb@commpub.com or by visiting ANF's section of the APA Web site.

Eagles nominated to Federal District Court

Judge Catherine Eagles, a former Arkansan now serving as a North Carolina superior court judge, has been nominated by **President Barack Obama** to a seat on the United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina. She is awaiting confirmation by the United States Senate. Eagles was raised in Marianna, graduated from Lee High School in 1975 and worked at the *Marianna Courier-Index*, which her parents owned at the time. She graduated from Southwestern College (now Rhodes College) in Memphis in 1979 and earned her juris doctor degree in 1981 at the National Law Center at George Washington University.

Argus-Sun launches first Web site

The *Central Delta Argus-Sun* in Brinkley recently announced the launch of its first Web site and the creation of its first online edition. According to the announcement, "the online edition is the same as the print edition, but the website offers features and content that is exclusively online." The URL for the new site is www.argussunonline.com.

Ark. Democrat-Gazette adds Ford to staff

The *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* in Little Rock has hired **Kelly Ford**, most recently director of development and marketing at the Arkansas Repertory Theatre, as promotions director. Before joining The Rep in 2007, she was associate director of communications for Heifer Foundation and was a writer for *Arkansas Business* in Little Rock. She replaces **Crystal Thurman**, who became advertising and marketing director for Northwest Arkansas Newspapers, LLC, in February.

Send news of staff changes or additions at your newspaper to: **Tres Williams** (tres@arkansaspress.org) or **Brian Fellone** (brian@arkansaspress.org).



The Power of a freebie

BY JOHN FOUST, RALEIGH, NC

Recently, I ran across two interesting ads in the same paper. Each ad made use of one of the most effective tactics in the marketing toolbox – a free offer. The first ad was for an insurance company, and promised a free key ring – with built-in flashlight – to anyone who called for an estimate on car insurance. The second ad offered a free Mini Cooper automobile with the purchase of a high-end condo.

Obviously, there is a huge difference – in significance and cost – between a new car and a key ring. However, even though these offers are worlds apart, they have a lot going for them. Here's what we can learn from these two examples:

1. Make it relevant. The insurance ad targeted an older audience, a fact which was clearly stated in the ad. The real estate ad was aimed at hip, young professionals – the audience that also fits the profile of Mini buyers. That was no coincidence.

An offer has to be relevant to the target audience. The condo buyers would not pay attention to a key ring offer. And a Mini would have zero importance to senior readers.

Even though the flashlight feature may seem cumbersome and unnecessary to some readers, that feature makes the key ring particularly desirable for seniors. Many older people have difficulty finding keyholes at night.

The condo developer probably considered a variety of models, once he or she decided to give cars away. But I have a hunch that the choice was quickly narrowed by the fact that the Mini's "coolness factor" would make a statement about the personality of the development. If you're cool – or if you want to be cool – this

is the place for you. It's clearly an offer that appeals to their Yuppie audience.

2. Be a matchmaker. The value of the giveaway should match the action you want readers to take. A freebie that accompanies a purchase should be more expensive than a gift that rewards an inquiry. And of course, the bigger the purchase, the bigger the giveaway.

A car is an eye-popping gift – big enough to stop readers in their tracks. A key ring is small. But that's okay, because each offer is a good match.

3. Keep it fresh. If an advertiser offers freebies all the time, the tactic will eventually lose its appeal. To produce results, a free offer should seem special – and create a sense of urgency. ("Respond now, before we run out of these handy widgets.")

Each offer should seem new and different, not the same old thing. For years, a business magazine to which I subscribe made the same renewal offer – a free pen. Ho hum. They finally changed their tune, and their most recent subscription notice offered additional issues at no extra cost. That offer is much better.

Although free offers have been around for years, they continue to motivate consumers to take action. The secret is to think it through – and make the right offer to the right audience.

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

APA/NNA redouble efforts to save Saturday delivery

The National Newspaper Association (NNA), along with other newspaper industry groups, including the Arkansas Press Association (APA) continue their efforts to prevent the United States Postal Service (USPS) from doing away with Saturday delivery. On Monday NNA filed its formal opposition to the USPS proposal to end Saturday mail delivery. NNA has intervened on behalf of its newspapers in a proceeding before the Postal Regulatory Commission, which will issue an advisory opinion later this year.

The final decision on six-day mail delivery will be made by Congress, which has reaffirmed Saturday mail requirements annually for nearly 30 years.

The Postal Service said it expects to save \$3.1 billion a year from the cutbacks, but the newspaper associations argue that the USPS has grossly underestimated the public's concern about the change. The move would also seriously hurt smaller newspapers with late week editions who depend on the Postal Service for distribution.