

Editor-in-chief wins top North American award

Metroland's Joanne Burghardt named SNA Editor of the Year

Joanne Burghardt, Metroland's Durham Region Media Group editor-in-chief, is no stranger to winning.

Burghardt, who has been at the editorial helm of the media group since 1991, has won awards from the YWCA, Durham College, the Durham District School Board and, most recently, earned the 2004 Ontario Community Newspapers Association's Mary Knowles Award for Community Service.

Now, Burghardt, 44, who celebrates 25 years with Metroland in March, has been chosen Editor



of the Year for non-daily newspapers by the Suburban Newspapers of America. SNA is a non-profit, professional trade association specifically serving the suburban newspaper industry. SNA's membership is comprised of approximately 2,000 suburban newspapers published by the leading multi-newspaper publishing companies around North America.

"It's such a huge honour. So much of it is a result of the years of teamwork at the paper and the things we've all done together," said Burghardt.

"Joanne leads a staff of 34,

Continued on page 7

Brett family celebrates 110 years of ownership

By Sarah Fisher
Essex Free Press Staff

The New Year marked a noteworthy anniversary for the Brett family - the 110th year it has owned and operated The Essex Free Press. There is a history of newspapers in this town. According to available records, John Milne constructed a two-storey building around 16 Talbot Street in 1878 where he released the Essex Centre Chronicle to area readers with his business partner Robert Fair. The Talbot Street office would be the location of the town's newspaper through numerous changes in the edito-

rial leadership and ownership over the years.

The Brett family began its involvement in the newspaper business in 1896 when Ed J. Lovelace sold the business to W.H. Auld and R.R. Brett. The paper had used the name The Essex Free Press since 1889. The partnership between Auld and Brett continued until 1932 when Auld died. When R.R. Brett passed away five years later, his son, Kenneth E. Brett, took over the operation.

In January 1943 a fire destroyed the Talbot Street office. The letterpress survived the blaze and was transferred to the backroom of the town's bowling alley where the paper

was published until the current office on Centre Street was constructed in the mid 1940s.

At the Centre Street location production of the paper progressed from the old-fashioned letterpress ultimately to the digital format used today. Much of that transition occurred under the tenure of Wilber Brett, who also served as the town's mayor from 1977 to 1980 and as a town council representative from 1970 to 1980 and from 1985 to 2003. Brett and his business partner, Garth Ramsay, bought the paper together from K.E. Brett in 1979.

"Operating a weekly newspaper is a full-time job and as I

reached the age of 80 years last August I couldn't spend the hours required to properly manage the operation," Kenneth E. Brett wrote in an announcement about the change of ownership in the Feb. 2, 1979 edition. "So, I have sold, as of Feb. 1, the business to my nephew, Wilber R. Brett, associated with a long-time Free Press employee, Garth W. Ramsay. So the Brett name will still be in the ownership of the Essex Free Press."

Ramsay sold his share in 2000. In 2003, Wilber Brett's daughter, Laurie Brett, the great-granddaughter of R.R.

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a word from OCNA...

Sobering advice for newspapers

By Anne Lannan
OCNA Member Services

Listening to an industry expert talk about the state of newspapers recently was a sobering experience.

Similar to what he told us at OCNA's convention last year, Earl Wilkinson, Executive Director of the International Newspaper Marketing Association (INMA), says this is one of the most exciting times to be involved in newspapers - despite continued circulation declines and sustained profitability without revenue growth.

His discussion and statistics were mainly about daily newspapers, but we can draw some parallels and conclusions for community newspapers as well.

In order to revolutionize the industry, we must know what our value is and who our readers and advertisers are; understand that less is more; package our brand; and promote it in different mediums.

His statistics show us that paid circulation for daily newspapers in established, democratic countries is declining at an alarming rate. This is happening at a time when young adults are obtaining their information through a multitude of media habits, and while multi-tasking.

The trend with dailies is with free or 'lite' newspapers popping up to grab the younger readers such as Metro. Although profitable, Wilkinson says it's still too early to gauge their overall impact.

Paid circulation community

newspapers began producing controlled-circulation extended market coverage newspapers more than 10 years ago, but this was done mainly to capitalize on the flyer market. These papers, as I'm sure the dailies are, have continued to struggle with the fine line between the amount and type of news and feature coverage published in the free product for fear of losing the paid subscriber mid week. Last month, the Caledonia Grand River Sachem merged its paid and free publications into one controlled circulation publication. Could this be the start of a new trend for community papers?

Paid versus controlled is always a hot topic amongst publishers. Currently 54 per cent of OCNA members publish controlled or free publications for their first editions, and a number of the paid newspapers publish secondary controlled publications.

Big news with the dailies worldwide in the past year or so has been the switch from broadsheet to tabloid. This is being done in an attempt to secure younger readers.

Yet for Ontario's community newspapers, the switch to tabloids began many years ago, mainly for cost-saving reasons. Today, only 23 per cent of members (67 of our 290) remain as broadsheet. Once the switch started to gain momentum, the domino effect started as more publishers were encouraged to switch for efficiencies for printers who were then switching roll sizes between jobs.

Wilkinson touched on three areas that newspapers can build on to increase both readership and revenues: paid promotions, citizen journalism, and print product to multi-media brand. OCNA will feature more information and examples of these in news clips throughout the year.

Paid promotions - sell your paper for more on a single day with the inclusion of such things

as books, CDs, DVD, games.

Citizen journalism- don't cringe editors...your readers can help you.

Multi-media - so you can reach younger readers at different times of the day and week through various means that meet their needs, eg. newspaper, web site, mobile.

Watch for more next month.

News from this side of the tar pit

Let's hope newspapers choose wisely as they navigate a new, sometimes scary river of information

By Jeff Mahoney
The Hamilton Spectator - January 24, 2006

By the time you read this, Canada will probably have a newly elected prime minister, unless the vote got cancelled on account of the enslavement of Halifax last night by a 90-foot tall Dandie Dinmont Terrier demanding that the cast of Cheers be reassembled for one last season.


You see, that's the whole problem with newspapers. I'm writing to you from yesterday. And today is, well, today. So. How's the weather? Should I buy up more Dofasco shares? And have they figured out yet who's responsible for scooping up after a 90-foot tall Dandie Dinmont Terrier?

My deadline is 3 p.m., and so here I am at 4:15 p.m. on Monday -- Oh, what are they gonna do? Fire me? -- trying to anticipate what the world will be like when you read this, more than 12 hours hence.

There's a really, really good chance that Halifax did not get enslaved last night. And even if it did, we're Canadians. We're pretty calm. Our death-by-stampede rate is one of the lowest in the world. We wouldn't have had to cancel the election. We can handle an election

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New media journalism

Continued from page 2

and a municipal enslavement, without getting all harried and freaked out about it.

But I still can't tell you the name of last night's election winner. Actually, you could tell me. You've already read tomorrow's (I mean today's) front page.

You watched the TV news last night or listened to the radio or followed the results on the Internet.

Everyone on your side of the future/past continuum knows who won the election last night. But that part of myself that gets left behind in everything I write, like that part of one's spirit that is supposedly lost every time your photograph is taken, that yesterday me, the one who's talking to you now, will never know who won. And, who can say? Maybe that's for the best.

If this newspaper were a television, you could be seeing and hearing me live, which would probably not be good as I'm probably still in bed pulling the covers over my head.

But The Spectator is becoming, if not a television, then at least a pod-caster. A couple of weeks ago, The Spectator scooped itself, running a story on our website before it appeared in the morning newspaper.

The website now includes, or soon will, video footage -- prerecorded for now, but soon to be live perhaps. And voice recordings as well.

We must come to our users from multiple platforms, whatever that means.

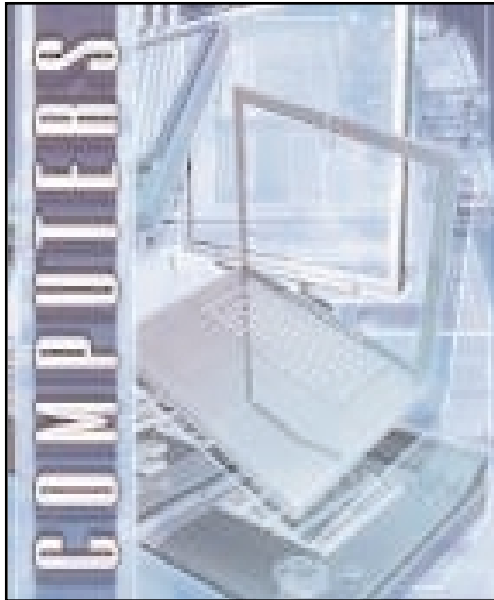
We're evolving. This is important. Because, according to evolutionary theory, if an entity fails to evolve, to keep up with the latest mutations, it is destined to get frozen out of the natural selection process and will have to resort to unreliable online dating services.

Newspapers have experienced declining readerships and circulations for some time. As an industry, it has been given lately to a lot of hand-wringing.

One expert says that every time newspaper people do journalism the old way, they are an animal lurching one step closer to the tar pit.

I don't think this was meant as a compliment. Tar pits, apparently, are places where animals go to quietly lie down and just be extinct.

Journalism the new way seems to



mean having a headset with mike and earphones permanently clamped on one's skull and a video camera fused onto one's eyes like that contraption that the Levar Burton character wore in Star Trek: The Next Generation.

The new journalist would be a kind of constant online, on-air, in-print, fibre optic media do-it-all.

The old-style journalist? Well, in a media consumption market every bit as vicious as a nature special, the old-style journalist would be the straggler at the back of the pack. He or she would be the wounded animal in the herd.

Do you know how South American farmers get their cattle across rivers and

creeks that are known to be infested with piranhas? (This is something I read on the Internet, so it must be true.) They take their weakest animal far from the crossing point and leave it bleeding in the water for the piranhas to feast on, distracting them while the rest of the herd fords the current safely.

I think right now my bosses are in the process of taking The Spectator over some kind of river. It's scary. Sometimes I think they're looking at me like they want to take me down stream.

Or point me to the tar pits.

During the past several years, I've had to "un-learn" and relearn so much stuff that there's nothing left of my journalism training but eraser smudges.

It's always something.

After Watergate we all assumed readers wanted long, involved investigative reports. Chains of evidence were methodically pieced together to form a noose of conclusive proof. Then the director of the Chesterville Little Theatre would resign in tearful disgrace over revelations that he once gave a part to his nephew without a proper audition. What do you want? You can't bring down a president every day.

For a time, many editors were hot on "think" pieces. They wanted readers to smell pipe tobacco and feel the itch of tweed when you sat down with the newspaper's analysis articles. Then the pendulum swung over to celebrity-driven news.

It's great that we're expanding our Internet presence. But whatever happens I think newspapers have to stick to what we do best. OK, we might not get you the news that Stephen Harper is or isn't the new prime minister as fast as TV.

But we can tell you the next day what it means, and go into greater detail than TV can ever give about how the new government plans to deal with the Dandie Dinmont Terrier crisis. It takes a bit of time. But it's worth the wait.

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OCNA employee profile

OCNA's first government relations employee

By **Shaba Qureshi**
News Clips Editor

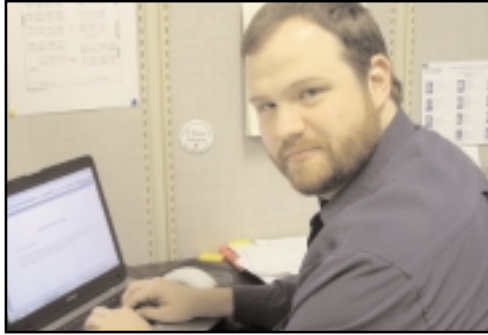
The government relations position, which was created in the fall of 2005, is the first of its kind at OCNA. Gordon Cameron, who was the communications coordinator at OCNA since February 2005, is now filling these shoes.

The position entails working closely with executive director Bill Laidlaw to build OCNA's government relations capabilities, so the industry's issues receive the attention they deserve from the provincial and municipal levels of government.

"Our main goal is to make positive and effective changes in laws and regulations that affect our industry," said Cameron about his new responsibilities. "Along with assisting members with the problems they routinely have with governments."

Cameron feels his previous position as an editor at a Community Newspaper in Alberta and his education including degrees in Political Science and Journalism give him an edge.

"This position gives me a chance to use my backgrounds in Political Science and Community Newspapers to help the indus-



try grow and tackle the challenges that face it," he said. "Having been in the trenches I know what it's like to try and cover a large area and put out a paper with a small staff and limited resources and I feel that will help me to advocate for the industry."

Cameron says the need to identify and decide how to tackle the industry's issues are paramount. He is developing an Issues Management Program which will include an advisory committee of members that will shape OCNA's position and plan of attack on issues facing the industry.

Also, OCNA has made several presentations to various political parties, as well as to a number of industry associations. The presentation shows how powerful Community Newspapers are and informs

them of what OCNA can do for them. So far the response has been very positive said Cameron.

He is currently working on two electronic newsletters, one for the members and the other for an external audience. The members' version would illustrate the work and progress OCNA is achieving in regards to all government relations initiatives. Information will also be included in weekly e-clips and the monthly News Clips. The external newsletter would reach MPPs, Deputy Ministers and industry associates to show them what is important to OCNA and what is being done to achieve it.

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Fast Facts on Gordon Cameron

Born: Burlington, ON

Education: BA in Political Science and Bachelors in Journalism from University of King's College, Halifax, Nova Scotia

Previous positions: Communications Coordinator, OCNA; Editor, Redwater Tribune, AB.

The Essex Free Press celebrates a milestone

Continued from page 1

Brett, took over as publisher.

Her family's involvement in the paper influenced her decision to enter the business.

"When I was young I was very influenced by the newspaper," Brett said. "I spent a great deal of time pouring over archive copies of issues and spending time at the office. It was fascinating to me."

Among the information discovered from past editions was the price of a subscription to the Free Press. A flyer from 1932 urges residents to consider paying 50 cents for a year's worth of papers.

The Free Press has changed a lot in recent years. Its 7,000 readers have witnessed the use of processed



Essex Free Press publisher Laurie Brett and her father and former publisher Wilber Brett review archival materials related to the publication's history. An enlarged photograph of Wilber working on the letterpress in the 1960s is flanked on the left by an image of the original building following the fire of 1943 and on the right by a photograph of R. R. Brett, the first member of the Brett family to own the newspaper.

colour on a weekly basis, a redesign of the entire paper and a commitment to providing consistent local news.

"We have invested a lot of time and effort into ensuring that we are providing quality news to the community," Brett said. "That has included hiring seasoned and professional journalists and putting a lot of resources into improving our news content. We are always evaluating the product we are delivering to the community."

According to the Ontario Community Newspapers Association, The Essex Free Press is the third oldest family-owned community newspaper in the province and is among 25 community newspapers in Ontario that continue to be family owned and operated by multiple generations.

design/production

Design 'creep' - it happens to the best of us

By Ed Henninger
Henninger Consulting

During a recent conversation, a client publisher used the term 'design creep.'

"Oh, my," I thought. "What have I done to upset him?"

The answer: nothing. His 'creep' was not a person but an action. What he meant was that over time design elements tend to metamorphose - and other elements tend to creep into the design. No one seems to know how or when it occurred or who initiated the change - it just happened.

Design creep is an ailment as universal as the common cold. It's just gonna happen. But-like the common cold-we can be

-If you don't have an ongoing staff development process, start one. And keep it going.

-When a staffer violates style, nudge that person with a gentle reminder that consistent style is important at your newspaper.

-When you arrive at a consensus that a particular design element or page or package needs to be changed, follow through on that change by updating the style guide.

-Give someone in your newsroom the responsibility and authority to be your design watchdog. If there's any creep, this is the person you want to identify it and fix it.

-When your design watchdog sounds the alarm, give him or her the required support.

-Develop an understanding in your newsroom that your design is as important as your reporting, your writing and your editing. Editors and staffers who foster good design will also watch for design creep.

Design creep often begins as a small speck of snow coursing slowly downhill. But if it isn't caught and corrected, it may eventually create a design landslide.

What makes a winning style guide? Want to see a sample page? Free? Go to www.henningerconsulting.com and leave a request with an e-mail address. We'll send the page out to you right away.

ED HENNINGER is an independent newspaper consultant and the Director of Henninger Consulting. Offering comprehensive newspaper design services including redesigns, workshops, staff

training and evaluations. Phone: 803-327-3322. E-mail: edh@henningerconsulting.com. On the web: henningerconsulting.com

Ad*Reach

2005 was a great year

By Sean Hind
AdReach

Last year has proven to be Ad*Reach's most successful year ever with revenues over \$12 million, which represents a 41 per cent increase over 2004. Many new Ad*Reach marketing initiatives were launched last year, including the Community Newspaper supplement which was delivered through Marketing and CARD magazines, sponsorship of the national Media Innovation Awards, and a Lunch & Learn presentation series.

This year Ad*Reach has continued to build on the strength of 2005. For the first quarter we have had consistent increases in revenue over last year. The negotiations for most major contracted clients are complete. With the release of the 2005 ComBase data over the next couple of weeks Ad*Reach will begin the successful Lunch & Learn series to again inform agencies and clients on the strength and benefits of community newspapers. These presentations will be supported with advertising in Marketing, CARD and Strategy magazines, sponsorship of industry events, and advertising in SRDS (the US version of CARD). We look forward to continued growth and to make 2006 another successful year.



Over time, the original design of a standing head morphs into something completely different.

on our guard for it and we can protect ourselves from letting it develop into something worse.

Here are some tips:

-Create a comprehensive design style guide, one that addresses all the factors that affect a particular design element or specific page. (See "What makes..." at end of this column).

-If you don't have a design style guide, create one.

-Keep your design style guide handy. Occasionally review it with your editors and paginators as part of your ongoing staff development program.

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technology

Common technology questions answered

Don't miss Kevin at the OCNA Convention in April!



By Kevin Slimp
Institute of Newspaper
Technology

It has to be some kind of record. At least it's a record for me. Over the past week, I've spoken at four press association conferences in four states. Speaking on the topic, New Technology for Newspapers, I noticed that the same questions resurfaced repeatedly during the Q&A portion of the presentations:

Is InDesign really that much better than QuarkXPress?

I get this question more than any other. I'm not on payroll of Adobe or Quark, so it doesn't really matter to me which software a newspaper uses. But the question is asked, so I acquiesce. Yes, the version (CS2) of InDesign currently available is, in my opinion, superior to the version of QuarkXPress that is currently available (6.5). I don't have any inside information, but I wouldn't be surprised if QuarkXPress 7.0 is on the market by the time many of you read this. If you want to know how QuarkXPress 7 will compare to InDesign CS2, I'll let you know after I've had a chance to test the new software.

If you were spending your money, which digital camera would you purchase for newspaper purposes?

I was spending my money and I purchased the Canon Digital Rebel XT. People who know a lot more than I do tell me it's the best camera available for less than \$1,500. I took their word for it and I've been pleased with my purchase.

How hard will it be for my newspaper to

move up to OS X and InDesign from OS 9 and QuarkXPress (or PageMaker)?

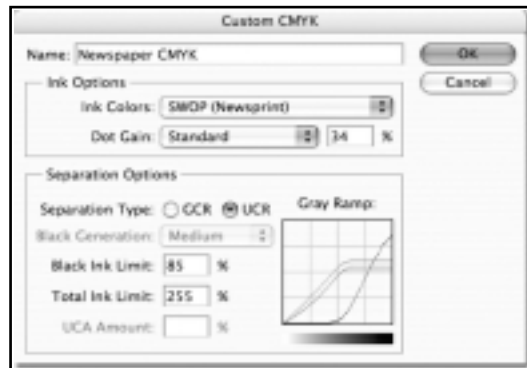
That depends on the size and makeup of your newspaper staff. There's always some resistance to change. Having worked with hundreds of newspapers who have made similar conversions over the years, I've learned it can take as little as two days and as long as a few months. When I've been involved, it usually includes time to determine software and hardware needs and purchase new equipment. This is followed by installation of the new hardware and software (one to three days, depending on the size of the staff), two or three days of training in the new software, followed by transition to the new workflow. In the best case scenario, the entire process can happen as quickly as a few days (after the equipment and software has been installed). In larger operations involving a pagination workflow (similar to Baseview or Managing Editor), additional time is involved for training in the workflow process.

Our photos always seem to be too dark. Is there something we're missing?

Most newspapers I visit haven't adjusted their colour settings in Photoshop to match their printing process. Photoshop's default settings are created with magazines in mind. Photos saved with these settings will produce too much ink which, in turn, soaks into the newsprint and comes out dark and muddy. To get better results, adjust the colour settings in Photoshop, especially the black ink limit.

Are Macs really better for newspaper pagination than PCs?

Yes. I have no stock in Microsoft or Apple, so it matters not to me which you use.



Coming from a guy who spent most of his years on the PC side of things, I've learned the hard way that Macs have far fewer printing issues, are faster and aren't susceptible to all those viruses that plague Windows-based machines. The idea that PCs are cheaper than Macs is false. Similarly equipped machines are pretty similar in price on both platforms. Besides, most of the money goes into software and maintenance, not hardware costs.

What's your favourite font management utility?

It's always been a toss-up between Extensis Suitcase and Font Reserve. They've recently been combined into one utility called Suitcase Fusion, so I guess that will be my new favourite.

What are the best restaurants you've found in your travels?

The Sunset Diner in Lebanon, Tennessee and Jersey Joe's in Tucson, Arizona.

OK. There you have it. The most common questions posed during my speaking engagements. That doesn't mean you should skip my session when I come to Ontario for the first time in April. I might find a new restaurant between now and then.

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tech corner with Ian Youseman

Regular maintenance

Regularly scheduled maintenance on your Mac (or any computer for that matter!) is essential to ensure its optimum performance and is a task that should be left to the experts. But what happens if you accidentally delete a file, your drive dies or you need emergency assistance, and your IT guy is not around? Having your own utilities ready at hand can be a lifesaver.

The favourite among Mac users used to be Norton Utilities from Symantec Corp., but this excellent utility does not offer support for Mac OS X. However,

Norton Utilities and Norton System Works are still available for the PC and I would rate them as a 'must have'.

Sometimes the use of the Disk Utility found in Utilities within the Applications folder on the Hard Drive will solve an immediate problem. You can also access this utility by booting from the Apple Install disc 1 and selecting it from the install menu.

There are several companies, each having different strengths, that market disk repair utilities for OS X but you should choose one that has a bootable volume. That way you can restart Mac from the disc should your primary boot volume fail.

Here are three of the most common:

Alsoft DiskWarrior 3.0.3 - an all-in-one disk utility for Mac. DiskWarrior does

everything from scanning and repairing directory structures, recovering files and folders to optimizing directories and repairing bad blocks. What is more - all these utilities come on a bootable disk!

Micromat Tech Tool Pro 4.1.1 - a trimmed down version of this utility is available in the box whenever you purchase AppleCare for your computer. Tech Tool Pro is also a comprehensive all-in-one disk utility that allows you to boot directly from the CD. File system and disk repair, recovery tools and more.



Prosoft Drive Genius - another exceptional utility, Drive Genius has been optimized for Mac OS X

Tiger. It contains comprehensive utilities for analyzing and rebuilding drives and volumes as well as performance benchmarking. One of its many features, from a tech's perspective, is resizing and moving volumes without the need to reformat. And of course, you can boot from the CD.

All of the above utilities have strengths and weaknesses. I like Drive Genius, but every tech I speak to has their preference. However, they all offer a handy preventative and emergency utility but, of course, there is no substitute for regular preventative maintenance.

Ian Youseman is the OCNA IT technician and general technology assistant. E-mail him at i.youseman@ocna.org.

Media-Pros trial basis for members

OCNA currently subscribes to Media-Pros, a company that provides brand management, sales and support programs for the complete brand cycle including supplier, retailer and media.

As a media subscriber our members have access to brand information, advertising program details, adtracking systems, Ad Ideas, Lead-of-the-Week, Industry News, Editorial, Logos & Trademarks as helpful tools.

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As a subscriber OCNA is given access to these tools with a certain number of IP addresses, should you wish to use one of the slots for a trial basis, please contact Shaba Qureshi by e-mail at s.qureshi@ocna.org or call 905-639-8720 ext. 244.

OCNA employee profile

Continued from page 4

Cameron feels positive about the direction OCNA is taking in regards to government relations and as a whole.

"I know both the joys and pains of this business and am glad to still be a part of it," he said. "We have a great staff and are headed in a right direction."

Joanne Burghardt

Continued from page 1

spread across five different offices and hundreds of kilometres, in publishing more than 100 editions each month. Over the last 15 years she has helped to guide our editorial department to a staggering 249 awards for just about every possible category.

"Joanne's drive to make our organization the best it can be is only equalled by her desire to give back to the community," says publisher Tim Whittaker. Since 1991 Joanne's newsroom has won 113 OCNA editorial awards, 74 CCNAs and 62 SNAs.

The judges commented, "Joanne Burghardt's achievements either in community service or in editorial excellence would make her a strong contender. Together they make her a clear winner as Editor of the Year. Her many contributions to education are especially commendable. Few weekly newspa-

pers undertake projects as ambitious as the North to Nunavut project."

North to Nunavut project resulted in an educational publication written for students in Grades 4-6 and distributed to every elementary school in Durham Region.

When Burghardt, fresh out of Durham College, joined Oshawa This Week back in 1981, the single edition published just once a week.

"I couldn't imagine us, back then, sending reporters and photographers to Nunavut or to Africa. It's hard to believe what we've been able to do accomplish in recent years," said Burghardt.

The Metroland Durham Region Media Group took home 19 awards and two honourable mentions at this year's SNAs and the OCNA's recently-announced Editorial Award included another 23 for the Group.

Like a car, your web site needs a regular tune-up

Reprinted from The Globe and Mail on February 2, 2006 with permission.

By **DAN MCLEAN**
ITWorldCanada.com

Set it and forget it,' is definitely not the way to think about your business's on-line presence.

A successful commercial web site, like a finely tuned engine, requires regular and routine maintenance to ensure continued peak performance. And a well-maintained on-line presence is simply too important to be ignored these days.

Among other things, web sites are often the first impression your company makes -- they're where many people actually discover your business in today's networked world. And web sites are a primary way to reach out and touch customers within local communities and around the world.

Whether your on-line storefront provides the means to process sales orders or simply serves up electronic brochures, the goal is ultimately to turn visitors into customers. But a lousy web site can just turn them off. Poorly maintained and obviously ignored sites rarely get more than one passing glance. Sites with rich content that are interactive, multifunctional, current and continually changing create a lasting impact and repeat visits.

The latter point might seem obvious, but it is particularly important. A web site can't rest on its laurels. It must be made continually appealing to visitors. Refreshing the content is critical, but it's something that many businesses forget about after they get a site up and running smoothly.

But what sort of routine maintenance is required? And where to begin?

The first step forward is a step back, says Steve Grushcow, the CEO of edit.com, a web site maintenance services company based in Brooklyn, N.Y.

"Ask, 'what do I want the web site to do for my business?' A lot of people don't even know," Mr. Grushcow says. "We say that you need to home in on another step. Should the site just give background information, or should it generate leads for me? And how do I get leads from my site?"

Businesses need to strike a chord with their specific type of customer, he says,

adding that the main challenge is to translate a storefront business into something that likewise serves customers on the Internet.

It's a process where, among other things, every month you brainstorm new ideas that add to and improve your site, according to Mr. Grushcow. So consider whether the web site looks fresh or whether updates are required. Is there new content to be added? Does the site function the way it should?

A checklist for regular web site maintenance includes tasks like verifying the function of outbound links from the site. Did these change and do these continue to work? Is the site fast? Do images used still look good or do they seem dated and old? Someone needs to actually use the site from time to time the way a potential customer would, so they can make sure everything is working properly.

Next, check the content itself. Are there date-specific items that haven't been updated or replaced? Does a successfully advertised event lend itself to a Web follow-up treatment, like posting photographs that might have been taken? Has your company received testimonials from your customers or press coverage that should likewise be posted?

Does the web site have a professional look? Check to see that formatting is consistent, that the site is displaying properly in all standard Web browsers, and that your company logo and general design give the right impression.

Consider how to improve your customer service -- especially with existing customers. Mr. Grushcow suggests creating hidden pages that only certain customers can access. These special value-added pages, set up just for them, might include items like photographs taken at a customer's event. Sometimes you can serve current customers better by creating member-only or custom pages, offering surveys and doing e-mail newsletters.

Have you considered better ways of capturing leads? Leads and sales generated through the site can be improved by enhancing the way a site captures information. Look at web site statistics to discover who visits your site, where your visitors are coming from and which search engines are directing traffic to you.

Web site maintenance means regular

analysis, updating and improvement of the site to keep it in sync with your "offline" business. This also helps it stay relevant to the search engines that potentially will direct traffic to the site and continue to be effective in keeping and attracting customers, Mr. Grushcow says.

"Productive web sites are immediate. Stale web sites taste like wood shavings and sell about as well," says Patty Barnes, who breeds dogs as a business and routinely revisits the content on her on-line storefront -- logcabinlabradoodles.com.

Log Cabin Labradoodles breeds and sells Australian Multigenerational Labradoodles. According to Ms. Barnes, 98 per cent of her sales take place over the Internet, and sales have increased fourfold as a result of a concerted effort to regularly update and maintain the site.

"I add new photographs and text daily. Customers comment that my web site is professional, creative and current," she says.

Ms. Barnes does most of the web maintenance work herself, through a set of editing tools. According to Mr. Grushcow, it's the sort of thing that most non-tech savvy people should be able to do these days. There are many simple tools available now that let people create images and content on a Web page. In addition, tools like Microsoft's MS FrontPage and Macrosoft Media's Creator are more functional products for the more technically astute.

"But you [might] also need to be able to pick up a phone and call an expert," he adds. "If you are setting up forms to capture information, you'll probably need an expert."

The annual cost for basic web site maintenance for a small business probably won't amount to much more than \$500 a year, according to Mr. Grushcow. That's only about \$40 a month.

"Some sites really don't require much maintenance," he says. "[But] they should look at it once a month, just to rethink it. It's not that there's always something to improve, but you should take a look at it routinely.

"If a business doesn't know that [statement] to be true, then they're probably not doing a good job in their business."

Dan McLean is editor-in-chief of publisher ITWorldCanada.com.

Newspaper industry cancer initiative to raise millions with help from the Andrew E. Shapiro Cancer Foundation

By Debra Shapiro Weiss
The Andrew E. Shapiro
Cancer Foundation

Andy Shapiro was always going some where. During his 40-year career with Metro Creative Graphics, Inc., Shapiro attended hundreds of newspaper conventions, conferences and trade shows, made innumerable presentations and met with countless people all with one purpose - to show how newspapers can increase revenue. Andy Shapiro understood the power of newspapers, and he challenged them to use that power in August 2005 - just two months before his death from non-smoking-related cancer - when he took to the podium for the last time to accept a lifetime achievement award from the Newspaper Special Sections Network (NSSN).

During his acceptance speech, Shapiro called on publications large and small to use their influence in the fight against cancer. Everyone in the audience listened closely, and no one listened more intently than myself, Metro's Executive Vice President and Andy's daughter. From my seat in the audience that day, I was moved to take up my father's call to action - and the concept of the Andrew E. Shapiro Cancer (AESC) Foundation was born.

When my dad spoke to the NSSN audience, he exuded such bravery in the face of the fatal cancer that was ravaging his body. Knowing the numbness he was experiencing in his feet

and legs, the strength he showed standing at that podium created a drive in me I had never felt before. It was at that moment I knew I had to do something to continue his work and propel his hope that newspapers, as an industry, would join in the fight against cancer.

In recent months, the Foundation has been transformed from an idea into a reality. Its purpose, however, was clear from the start, having been inspired by Shapiro's personal battle and faith in the industry: to engage newspapers in driving expanded cancer awareness, in addition to fundraising for more aggressive cancer research, especially the development of prescreening technologies to ensure earliest-stage diagnoses.

To achieve its goal, the AESC Foundation will inspire and support efforts to raise consciousness and funds within the newspaper industry. Its web site, www.andreshapirocancerfoundation.org, will feature stories of successful programs, events and products submitted by newspapers, along with access to editorial content - including materials developed by the American and Canadian Cancer Societies. Proceeds from these projects will benefit newspapers and their communities and can be donated either wholly or in part to organizations

such as the AESC Foundation.

All donations made to AESC will be combined into an annual contribution on behalf of the newspaper industry as part of the Foundation's Newspapers Fighting Cancer (NFC) initiative. The program will bring together newspapers from across North America to promote cancer awareness and raise



money to fight the many forms of the disease through outreach to the continent's millions of newspaper readers. The NFC initiative will, for the first time in the history of the newspaper industry, bring together newspapers - dailies, weeklies, shoppers, and both paid - and free-circulation publications - in the fight against cancer through fundraising efforts including its annual Dollar Drive.

AESC will provide participating newspapers the information and materials they need to reach out to their readers during the year and request a \$1 donation to the NFC initiative. The potential impact of this initiative is staggering: If each of the over 125,000,000 daily and weekly newspapers circulated were to collect just \$1 from each of its readers during the year, the newspaper industry could donate at least \$125,000,000

annually to help fight cancer.

Participating newspapers will be provided with the NFC logo, which can be inserted in its publisher's box and/or marketing materials to show that they support this important cause. Donations by newspapers that are a part of the NFC initiative will be organized by the AESC Foundation into an annual donation to the American and Canadian Cancer Societies on behalf of the newspaper industry. In addition to providing editorial content for NFC newspapers, the American and Canadian Cancer Societies will team up with AESC to sponsor awards to newspapers that demonstrate outstanding outreach efforts during the year.

Newspapers can join the NFC coalition either by visiting www.andreshapirocancerfoundation.org, clicking on the home page button for 'Newspapers Fighting Cancer,' printing the participation form, and returning it to the Foundation or by emailing the Foundation at info@andreshapirocancerfoundation.org and requesting participation materials.

The Andrew E. Shapiro Cancer Foundation is based in New York City, the Foundation was established in early 2006 as a creative, informational and fundraising resource for newspapers that are committed to engaging the communities they serve in efforts to promote cancer awareness, research, prescreening, prevention and patient support.

advertising

Big surprises in little packages

Don't miss Chuck at the OCNA Convention in April!

By **Chuck Nau**
Murray & Nau, Inc.

She's too small. Their products are really unique. He provides a great service, but it's so specialized! She draws her clientele from a very wide geographic area, in most cases it's outside of our community.

Do those simple statements describe how you and your newspaper feel about some of your smaller, non-traditional retailers and service providers in your community?

In the past, have you and your newspaper found it difficult to develop an ongoing relationship with many of these unique, yet local business people? Various circumstances from your advertiser's perspective and from you and your newspaper's perspective may preclude the opportunity for one-on-one selling to some of your market's smaller, unique retailers or service providers. Available budget, inventory limitations or restrictions, or seasonal variances are just some of the constraints some of your market's retailers may face when planning a promotional or advertising campaign.

Overcoming these limitations and challenges and developing some creative and well thought out opportunities will help these smaller, unique retailers or service providers GROW. Likewise, you and your newspaper will benefit by converting these smaller and unique non-newspaper advertisers into regular, consistent albeit limited smaller space clients.

Clustering these potential advertisers with or without traditional advertisers will help solidify you and your newspaper's presence in the marketplace, and help your smaller retailers and service providers grow, also assuring your mar-

ket's growth.

Let's briefly review what we mean by cluster selling and review some cluster or group selling techniques to enhance your selling efforts and increase the likelihood of your success.

- Cluster or group page promotions consist of a number of smaller retailers and service providers grouped together in similar size spaces within a larger (full page) ad configuration

Insurance Specialists, 'We Deliver!' Restaurants, Day Care) or all three may be linked (e.g. a high school Spring sports package - baseball, track, golf). Each and every cluster page and each and every ad within the page should include a call to action (... stop in and ask for a free insurance quote and receive a ...).

- Sell a campaign, NOT an ad. Whether you are pitching

authorization form details the campaign specifics - ad theme, insertion dates, individual costs ... you and your retailer each fill in a copy (duplicates of each other) sign them, and each of you retains one for reference.

- Additional considerations ... Invite each and every sales rep to participate in your cluster or group page promotions. Consider offering an additional discount of 15 per cent (first and second ads are billed at normal rates with the third and last ad billed with a 15 per cent discount). DO NOT sell location within the cluster or group page ad, rather develop a balanced 'spec ad' ... three horizontal rows with four advertisers in each row for a total of 12 advertisers ... and rotate position during the course of the campaign (top row moves to the bottom, middle row moves to top and bottom row moves to middle on second insertion, etc.)

Helping the retailers and service providers in your community maintain a public awareness of who they are and what they do or sell helps the growth of your retailer or service provider, your community, your newspaper and YOU!

Your newspaper best represents your community. Through a local environment of news and advertising, your newspaper creates the marketplace for your community.

Chuck Nau of © Murray & Nau, Inc. is a Seattle area based publishing consultant and sales and management trainer. He has been a speaker for and conducted advertising, marketing, management and sales training workshops with newspapers, niche publishers, publishing groups and press associations, throughout North America. E-mail: murnau@nmlink.com. or call (425) 603 - 0984.

**Don't forget that an
advertising campaign must consist of five
elements ... a series of ads - in a timeframe
- to meet an IDENTIFIED need, problem or
opportunity - with an allocated budget -
with a desired outcome.**

under a common theme. Cluster or group pages tie into a community event, a sales opportunity (Halloween ideas for little ghosts and goblins) or to help to build awareness to a competitive advantage or location (Savings Galore in Old Towne) and allow a mutual and equal sharing of ad costs. Sense of community, reduced ad investment costs, and increased awareness to who they are and what they do are the major benefits to your small retailers and service providers.

- Each account list or territory at your newspaper has a variety of cluster or group page advertising opportunities. Don't overlook a whole market cluster or group page opportunity, too (e.g. eight non-advertising veterinary clinics are grouped into one community wide 'vet' reference ad).

- Ideally, work to develop a MINIMUM of three clusters or group pages at a time. Each of the three may stand alone (Auto

stand alone clusters or theme linked cluster or group pages, sell a schedule with a MINIMUM of three insertions. This should be a must! Why? A campaign maximizes your advertisers opportunity for success by increasing visibility (... and response!) through frequency and maximizes your selling time by selling three at a time. Don't forget that an advertising campaign must consist of five elements ... a series of ads - in a timeframe - to meet an IDENTIFIED need, problem or opportunity - with an allocated budget - with a desired outcome.

- Utilize some special selling tools to eliminate misunderstandings ... create a powerful 'spec ad' (with colour) allowing you to strategize with your potential advertisers, to show your newspaper's creativity, to save your retailer AND you time and to assure BOTH you and your retailer's success. Additionally, create a written authorization form for your retailer and you to sign. Each

Grand River Sachem celebrates 150th



Congratulations to the Caledonia Grand River Sachem for its 150th anniversary of serving its community. They celebrated in style at an Open House on February 6. Shown here, left to right, are Sales Representative Nancy Plank, Haldimand County Mayor Marie Trainer, Associate Publisher Neil Dring, Candonia Regional Chamber of Commerce President Randy Peirson, and Sales Representative Jill Maraszkiwicz.



Water Cooler

- Joel Hoidas stepped into the role of editor for the **Fort Erie Times**, effective February 6. Hoidas, who joined The Times as the paper's Reporter/Photographer in February 2004 will take over the reins for one year while the paper's editor, Dianne Duckett, is on maternity leave.
- The **Glencoe Transcript and Free Press** was sold to Hayter-Walden Publications Inc on January 12, 2006. Walter VanderKwaak will stay on for a few months during the transition. Hayter-Walden also publishes the Parkhill Gazette, Forest Standard, and Watford Guide Advocate.
- The Osprey Media Income Fund has acquired the 1000 Islands Publishers Ltd in Gananoque, which runs a commercial printing business and operates the **Gananoque Reporter**, a paid circulation weekly.
- Jim Blake, publisher of the **Chatham Daily News**, has assumed the responsibility of publisher of the North Kent Leader group of publications in Dresden, Ontario. Blake will also be responsible for the Farm publication Voice of The Farmer, also produced in Dresden.
- Robert Heath former owner of **Weyburn This Week** of Saskatchewan has accepted the duties of editor at the local Dresden weekly newspaper. Heath, a former SWNA/CCNA board of director member, sold his newspapers and moved back to Ontario.
- Former Leader publisher Denise Thibeault has accepted the position of specialty publications manager at Osprey's **Sarnia Observer newspaper**.
- Elliot Tremblay has joined **Metroland's Runge Newspaper Group** as distribution manager.
- Ellwood Shreve, a reporter for the **Chatham Daily News** has been nominated for an Ontario Newspaper Award (ONA) for his coverage of municipal affairs in 2005.

CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

The Advertising program at Sheridan is hiring (again!) in response to continued high student demand and program growth.

Now hiring a Professor of Advertising. Minimum qualifications would be at least five years advertising or other related industry experience and a B.A.

The job posting is on Workopolis now and closes in mid March. Please don't send any resumes to the address below - it must all go online.

Please advise anyone you know who might be interested.

--
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The Backyard Astronomer Brings The Stars Down To Earth

Written for anyone with a sense of curiosity, The Backyard Astronomer, will turn on the light bulb inside your head and put a smile on your face. Author and amateur astronomer, John Crossen, brings a lively and informative writing style to a subject which he enjoys passionately. And his enthusiasm shows in an intriguing array of articles that entertain readers and score big as the universe on the "wow-meter." Updated weekly, they are available in halfpage or quarter-page sizes. The handy PDF formats are

an easy "plug-in" to your existing newspaper layout. And at just \$5.00 per article, they're also an easy "plugin" to your budget. Who says a local weekly newspaper can't cover the cosmos? Certainly not The Backyard Astronomer. For samples in pdf format, contact: sconolly@lakefieldherald.com

Life 101

Guaranteed laughs mean guaranteed readership. Give your readers ANOTHER great reason to open your paper. Life 101 by Mark Thrice. E-mail: jhollingsworth@bowesnet.com.

Looking to improve your sales?

Have your sales fizzled? Light a fire under your sales team. acquireyourfire.com

Buying & Selling A Business Column

Are you looking for punchy articles from an Ontario author who specializes in mergers and acquisitions? Doug Robbins is your solution. Doug writes columns to capture interest. Your circulation gleans valuable, useful tips regarding buying and selling a business. He is a member of the editorial board of a GTA newspaper. His fees are nominal. Call Joyce Hansen, Class Act Connections, 905-278-0952 today to book Doug.

Spaghetti for Breakfast

by Catherine Cunningham is an award-winning humour column loved by readers of all ages is available for syndication at only \$7.00 per column. To receive a promotional package call 705-440-6771 or e-mail spaghettiforbreakfast@rogers.com Previously published columns can be viewed online at <http://www.simcoe.com/sc/alliston/column/v-scv2/> Laughter is now on the menu. Order your weekly serving of Spaghetti for Breakfast today!

Community Newspaper photography seminar

By Marianne Helm

Western Canadian News Photographers Association

On behalf of the Western Canadian News Photographers Association, I am writing to encourage you to come and check out a fantastic opportunity during the Photojournalism 2006 Conference that will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on May 12, 13 and 14th.

Grant Black, senior photographer at the Calgary Herald, is holding a Friday afternoon workshop specifically geared towards community newspapers. For an incredibly reasonable rate of \$40, Grant is inviting community newspaper photographers, reporter/photographers, editors and publishers to attend this three-hour workshop, designed to help community newspapers take and publish better photos, and will cover topics like:

- Picture thinking and planning
- Bright ideas for routine assignments we all shoot
- Eleven techniques to help you take pictures with impact
- Captions and archiving
- Photo editing and designing picture pages for impact
- A quick look at PhotoShop and digital workflow
- Overview of resources

available to continue learning about news photography

•How your digital camera thinks and tips to overcome the inherent limitations of digital point-and-shoot cameras

•Also, a chance to meet with camera company representatives at the trade show who can help you with specific camera questions.

Grant Black, 48, joined the Calgary Herald in April 2000. Born in Deloraine, Manitoba, he grew up in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, and worked as a photographer for Yorkton This Week before joining The Windsor Star, where he was a photographer and photo editor. He was a staff member of the Loyalist Photography Workshop, which offered a four-day photography workshop for community newspaper reporters for over ten years. He's given workshops at the Ontario Community Newspapers Association convention, the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association convention and at the Caribou Press conference in BC.

He covered the Salt Lake City Olympics in 2002 and won

the Western Canadian News Photographers Association Photographer of the Year award for work in 2001. He's also worked on several book projects including 'A Day in the Life of Canada', 'Share the Flame' and 'A Day in the Life of the NHL'.



His photographs have been published in many Canadian newspapers, and in Macleans, Canadian Geographic and Newsweek.

Should you or your employees decide to stay for the rest of the weekend for the WCNPA Photojournalism 2006 conference, the \$40 workshop fee will be deducted from the weekend fee (see www.wcnpa.ca/pj2006.htm

for more details).

We have some great speakers already confirmed*: Jim Gehrz, the NPPA Newspaper Photographer of the Year from the Minneapolis Star Tribune; Farah Nosh, a Western Academy of Photography grad who was recently named to the Photo District News '30' - the 30 emerging photographers in the world to watch for; Andrew Stawicki, co-founder of PhotoSensitive who will speak about long-term projects and the sensitivities of documenting social issues; and Warren Toda, a freelancer who is Canada's foremost voice on the business of photography. (once more speakers are confirmed they will be announced at www.wcnpa.ca/pj2006.htm) (*speaker list subject to change)

You can get your registration form at: <http://www.wcnpa.ca/grantworkshop.htm>

If you have any questions about the seminar, contact Grant Black directly at inlandce@telusplanet.net. I would also be happy to answer any questions you may have about the conference. Feel free to contact me in Winnipeg at 204-231-4782 or by e-mail at mariannehelm@mts.net.

Marianne Helm is the WCNPA Photojournalism 2006 Conference Chair.



Published monthly by the Ontario Community Newspapers Association

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