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A journal for  
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 **ISWNE**

Published by the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors

## High stakes in the High Plains



## A global field trip: Comparing community journalism around the world



volume 56, no. 4 • winter 2015



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**Editor:** Dr. Chad Stebbins  
**Graphic Designer:** Carl Fowler

**Grassroots Editor**

(USPS 227-040, ISSN 0017-3541)  
is published quarterly for \$50 per year by  
the International Society of Weekly  
Newspaper Editors, Institute of  
International Studies, Missouri Southern  
State University, 3950 East Newman  
Road, Joplin, MO 64801-1595.  
Periodicals postage paid at Joplin, Mo.,  
and at additional mailing offices.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes  
to **Grassroots Editor**, Institute of  
International Studies, Missouri Southern  
State University, 3950 E. Newman Road,  
Joplin, MO 64801-1595.  
Volume 56, Issue 4, Winter 2015

**Subscription Rate:** \$50 per year in  
the United States and Canada;  
\$60 per year elsewhere.

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# High stakes in the High Plains: Attitudes of rural editors and publishers in areas facing depopulation

By DAVID GUTH

## Abstract

This survey research focuses on the attitudes of rural newspaper editors and publishers in the U.S. High Plains. The region faces depopulation that threatens the existence of their newspapers and communities. The editors and publishers are comfortable in their potential conflicting roles of community watchdog and booster. While respondents have positive attitudes toward the future of their publications, they are concerned about succession – Who will take their place when they are gone?

## Introduction

Newspapers have always played a central role in the settlement and survival of the American West. Four years before becoming best known as publisher of the *New York Tribune*, Horace Greeley gave his most memorable advice – “Go West, young man, and grow up with the country.” Greeley saw the vast, unsettled region as a “safety value” to relieve pressures building in eastern cities from the flood of European immigrants. (Sloan, 2008) When a new settlement was established, among the first items shipped in was a printing press. Frontier newspapers were started for a variety of reasons, including the desire to promote political points of view and promote additional settlement within the community. (Folkerts, Teeter, Caudill; 2009)

Nearly two centuries later, Greeley County, Kansas, named after the eastern publisher who encouraged settlers to inhabit a great frontier, struggles to survive. The latest population estimate for the county is 1,290, a greater than 60 percent drop since the 1960s and a nearly 20 percent drop since the turn of the century. The county’s population density is less than two persons per square mile. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014)

Director Jeremy Hill of the Center for Economic Development and Business Research at Wichita State University predicts that the county’s population will be less than half its current size within 25 years. However, county government and business leaders, using a variety of local and state initiatives, recently have met this challenge with modest success, witnessing a 4 percent increase in the local population since 2010. (Peters, 2013) At the center of this effort to revive a dying community is the local weekly newspaper, the *Greeley County Republican*. Its future is tied to the community’s future – and both remain in doubt.

There is a large region of the United States that is often referred to as “fly over country” or “the empty middle.” Yet, because of its agricultural and energy resources, the Great Plains plays an integral role in the U.S. economy. Wedged between the fertile farmlands along the Mississippi and Missouri river valleys and the Rocky Mountains, lies a region known as the High Plains. And it is there, in the dozens of Greeley counties within eight states, that a struggle against depopulation is being waged. Newspapers played an important role in the region’s settlement. This paper focuses on the question of whether the leaders of those same newspapers, facing turbulent times within their own industry, feel they can help these sparsely populated areas maintain community cohesion and, in turn, help ensure their own publication’s survival.

## Literature review

The newspaper industry continues its slow and, at times, painful evolution. The numbers tell the story: Total employment in newspaper publishing in the United States dropped by more than 52 percent, down from 414,000 in 2001 to 217,650 in 2013. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013) *IBISWorld* proclaimed in 2012 that newspaper publishing was one of “the 10 fastest dying industries in America,” with a 6.4 percent annual rate of revenue decline over the last decade. (Badkar, 2012) Newspaper advertising revenues (daily and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Sunday) dropped 8.6 percent in 2013 from the previous year to \$17.3 billion. (Newspaper Association of America, 2014) One commentator in *Forbes* noted that the US newspaper industry is now smaller than Google. (Worstell, 2012)

Regardless of rapid technological transformations, many believe news and information will remain valuable commodities no matter what business or delivery models may evolve. “I believe newspapers that intensely covered their communities have a good future,” said Warren Buffet, whose Berkshire Hathaway multinational conglomerate owns 65 newspapers including the *Buffalo News*, the *Omaha World-Herald* and the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. “No one has ever stopped reading halfway through a story when it was about them or their neighbors.” (Buffett, 2012)

Buffet’s optimism may be borne out by industry figures that show advertising revenue losses being somewhat offset by a rise in circulation and modest increases digital advertising and direct marketing revenues. (Newspaper Association of America, 2014)

This cautious sense of optimism appears greatest among the 7,500 small-town rural newspapers that dot the American landscape. “The community newspaper business is healthier than metro newspapers, because it hasn’t been invaded by Internet competition,” said Al Cross, director of the University of Kentucky’s Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues. “Rural papers own the franchise locally of the most credible information.” Broadcast journalist and USC Professor Judy Muller wrote, “It is more than a little ironic that small-town papers have been thriving by practicing what the mainstream media are now preaching.” She also wrote that the concepts of *hyper-localism*, *citizen journalism* and *advocacy journalism* have been around for a long time in small-town newspapers. (McGhee, 2011)

This is not to suggest that community and small-town newspapers are not feeling the same economic pinch facing their big-city brethren. Newspaper consultant John Morton wrote 20 years ago that these papers – especially those part of a newspaper chain – faced the same challenges evident elsewhere in the American economy. He said they were making money, but not enough to satisfy the home office. He also noted that in the face of local agricultural and business consolidations – he called it the Wal-Mart Effect – even locally owned newspapers were facing hard times. (Morton, 1995)

Severe cutbacks in the U.S. Postal Service further aggravate the situation. From the earliest days of the American republic, newspapers have been aided by favorable postal rates and timely deliveries. But with pressure to increase rates and a proposed elimination of services, including weekend delivery, the tide appears to have turned. *The Willard Cross Country Times* in Missouri serves as an example: With the consolidation of a regional mail processing center to a more-distant facility in Kansas City, subscribers saw a delay in their newspaper delivery. “It will take them three to four days to get their paper, which would make the news stale,” said publisher Laura Scott in 2012. “It will be really hard on the newspaper business. I don’t want to be the one to shut down a 130-year-old paper.” (Landis, 2012) Unfortunately, that was her fate as the *Cross Country Times* was sold and consolidated with the *Ash Grove Commonwealth* on January 7, 2015.

## Survival on the High Plains

A greater threat to the future of rural newspapers is the loss of circulation and advertising revenues because of population declines. Approximately one in every three of the nation’s 3,142

counties experienced a population decline during the 2000s. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, counties in decline were clustered in Appalachia, the High Plains, the Mississippi and the northern U.S. border. (Mackum and Wilson, 2012) Fifteen percent of the nation’s population (46.2 million people) resided on 72 percent of the nation’s land area in 2013. (USDA/ERS, 2014)

A major factor in rural population decline is a phenomenon known as natural decrease, when a county’s death rate is higher than its birth rate. This is exacerbated with the exodus of younger residents looking for better-paying non-agricultural jobs. According to 2012 census estimates, 1,135 counties faced natural decreases, compared to only 880 three years earlier. “These counties are in a pretty steep downward spiral,” said Kenneth Johnson, a demographer at the University of New Hampshire. (Yen, 2013)

One rural newspaper that fell victim to declining population was *The Raton Range* in New Mexico in July 2013. “My hope was that things would turn around,” wrote publisher Paula Murphy in a letter to her subscribers. “My company is saddled with so much debt that it would take the glory days of advertising revenue to pay it back.

“I don’t see that happening in the near future.” (Murphy, 2013)

Reversing this trend is complicated by what some describe as an innate hostility within traditional communities toward outsiders. As Common Cause founder John Gardner noted, these communities tend to be homogeneous, experience relatively little change, appear to resent changes that do happen, and are unwelcoming to strangers. (Gardner, 1990) This tendency is especially problematic in areas such as western Kansas, where the Hispanic and Latino population increased by 26.1 percent, mostly through migration, during the first decade of the 21st century. A soon-to-be published study of the region’s community leaders in the *Journal of Applied Journalism and Media Studies* reports that while all respondents said they welcome newcomers, only one in five indicated they were comfortable with the rising numbers of Hispanics and Latinos in the region. (Guth, 2015)

While it may seem counter-intuitive, urbanization is yet another threat. Families are moving from the country and smaller towns to larger regional centers. Again, Kansas is a good example, where the overwhelming majority of its population is clustered in the eastern one-third of the state. The state’s urban population was 71 percent in 2000, compared to 52 percent in 1950. While most western Kansas communities are in population decline, a handful of communities such as Garden City and Colby have experienced modest growth. “Despite the image of Kansas as part of the nation’s breadbasket, urbanization has been one of the most profound changes of the twentieth century,” wrote Laszlo J. Kulscar in *Kansas Policy Review*. (Kulscar, 2007)

For rural family newspapers, the question of who will take over once the editor/publisher is gone looms large. Rod Haxton, editor and publisher of the *Scott City News* in Kansas, is, for all intents and purposes, his entire news staff. “There was a guy here who used to joke that I am Underdog because ‘you’re everywhere, you’re everywhere!’” It is a grueling lifestyle that few hearty souls love. “I kind of wonder if J-schools are turning out somebody who will want to come in and take on this kind of operation,” said Haxton. (Haxton, 2014)

“I have no clue what I am going to do,” said C.F. David, editor and publisher of the *Boise City News* in the Oklahoma panhandle. “I have no children who are interested in doing this.” (David, 2014) David is in a particularly vulnerable position. Boise

City is the county seat of Cimarron County, the epicenter of the Dust Bowl in the 1930s. It has lost 35 percent of its population since 2000. The population density is 1.27 persons per square mile – technically classified as frontier. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014)

The *Scott City News* and the *Boise City News* lie within the physiographic region the U.S. Geological Survey classifies as the High Plains, where the greatest hurdle to growth is the dwindling supply of fresh water. Once known as the “Great American Desert,” the region receives an average of 10-20 inches of annual rainfall. Since the middle of the 20th century, the region’s agriculture-based economy has depended on water pumped from the High Plains Aquifer, a vast underground ocean of fresh water. The problem is that the water is being pumped out much faster than it is being replenished. The Ogallala Aquifer, the largest of the underground systems that comprise the High Plains Aquifer, contains enough water to fill Lake Erie nine times. However, since the 1950s, the Ogallala’s volume has been reduced 11 percent – the equivalent of one Lake Erie (Ashworth, 2006). Declining water reserves have become especially acute in recent years, as much of the southern High Plains have experienced drought that rivals the Dust Bowl days of the 1930. According to the Kansas Geological survey, the High Plains Aquifer has dropped an average of 36 feet in the southwest corner of the state in the last 18 years. (KU News Service, 2015)

## The battle for a future

The implications of declining population and dying counties are significant for locally based journalism. Many young people leave these regions for a better life elsewhere. And it can be difficult to lure young journalists to these communities. Combined with a sluggish national economy that exacerbates the challenge of already dwindling advertising revenues, survival is problematic.

However, the greatest implication, at least as far as the conduct of a civil society is considered, is the potential for the loss of a local watchdog to monitor the public life of local towns and rural counties. In this wireless and digital age, will it become easier for local residents to know what is happening in far-away places than it is to follow activities at their own county courthouse?

Kathryn Olmstead, a community correspondent for the *Bangor Daily News*, has written “a town or region without a newspaper that cares about it more than any other place loses a gift of democracy.” Olmstead, a former associate dean of journalism at the University of Maine, has written that a local newspaper “helps define and preserve the personality of a town and enables those who have moved away to stay connected. It fosters the local marketplace in a time when people are realizing that the future of their communities depends on supporting local businesses.” (Olmstead, 2012)

Some see the role of their local newspaper in a different light. “The local weekly newspaper is a community bulletin board with not much more than land auctions and school sports,” wrote Layton Ehmke, formerly a Chicago-based free-lance writer who has bucked the out-migration trend and chosen to return to his native western Kansas. “The ‘Word of God’ column always makes the front page – placed next to the weather and grain markets as if it were given, sobering fact, no matter the verse.” (Ehmke, L., 2014)

“The community newspaper’s greatest glory and strength is at the same time a reason for its weakness as a social force and for

seeming obscurity among the mass media or communication: it is so personal,” wrote former publisher and professor John Cameron Sim. “The readers of a weekly tend to regard it with a proprietary interest (“our hometown paper”) and they see its virtues or tolerate its defects just as they do members of the immediate family.” (Sin, 1969)

Boosterism has been a long-standing practice in rural journalism, evidenced by the 1937 textbook *Country Journalism*. Charles Laurel Allen wrote that being a community booster is the most important thing a successful country newspaperman should do. “Boost, even when something needs correcting; a positive suggestion showing the way to better the town will accomplish far more than showing how poor the town is,” Allen wrote. (Allen, 1937)

A survey of Midwestern rural weekly newspaper publishers found widespread agreement with the notion that they have to be “married” to their communities by devoting many extra hours to civic duties. Most of the respondents indicated that they felt that they could handle any conflicts of interest that could arise from this kind of relationship. However, as the principal investigator in that research noted, “The majority of recorded mission statements for these community weekly publishers included some reference to promotion or the role of cheerleader for their towns.” (Tezon, 2003) “I, at times, have to be a cheerleader for the community,” said Editor and Publisher Dena Sattler of the *Garden City Telegram* in Kansas. “I want this community to succeed, because, frankly, my business succeeds when it does.” (Sattler, 2014)

Doug Anstaett, executive director of the Kansas Press Association, said he felt this pressure early in his career. While serving as the editor of a small-town newspaper, he said he had to remove one of his journalists from writing a weekly column after the writer – to the horror and disgust of local merchants – suggested it was easier find Christmas gifts for his family at a mall in a nearby town. (Anstaett, 2013)

With digital technology as the fuel to power local journalism, many have looked to the Internet and services such as AOL’s Patch, a hyper-local news aggregation site, as a means for filling local information needs. However, most of these sites are clustered in metropolitan areas and have little or no presence in rural areas. And while converting newspapers to an online product has some attraction, rural publishers face the same challenge as their big-city counterparts when it comes to finding a viable economic model. (Shors, 2012) There is also resistance to using non-journalists as the eyes and ears of the community. (Stinle and Brown, 2012) Citizen journalism also attracts a different audience than traditional newspapers; people who, at best, are moderate consumers of local journalism and have also no contact with national media. (Bentley et al., 2006) When studying how people get their local news and information, a Pew Internet and American Life Project study concluded that rural residents are most likely to rely on traditional news platforms and “most likely to worry about what would happen if their local newspaper no longer existed.” (Miller, Rainie, Purcell and Rosenstiel, 2012)

Sarah Kessinger, editor and publisher of the *Marysville Advocate* in north central Kansas, said it is important for her paper to have a Web presence. “I do agree that we are giving away a lot of news,” she said. “But we have a large portion of our readership who still are not regular Web readers. So they want their paper in hand.” She added that she expects some “blowback” when the newspaper inserts a pay wall to its website. (Kessinger, 2013)

This discussion suggests the following research questions:

- RQ1 *How do rural editors/publishers in the High Plains reconcile their potentially conflicting roles as community watchdog and community booster?*
- RQ2 *To what degree do rural editors/publishers in the High Plains see the Internet as a viable option for providing information within their communities?*
- RQ3 *To what degree do rural editors/publishers in the High Plains have confidence in their ability to find replacements for departing staff and for themselves?*
- RQ4 *How much confidence do rural editors/publishers in the High Plains have in the future of their communities, newspapers and profession?*

## Methodology

This research represents a natural progression from an initial pilot survey administered in February 2012 to newspaper editors, county officials and chamber of commerce officials in 39 western Kansas counties. The response rate for that mail survey was 25.5 percent. That area was chosen for the pilot study because its location in and near the High Plains Aquifer, which straddles the borders of eight western U.S. states and is the geographical focus of this research. The results of that survey helped refine a questionnaire used in a series of personal interviews with newspaper editors and community leaders in Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Colorado during summer 2014. In turn, those interviews and the earlier pilot study were used to create the online survey instrument used in this research.

The survey frame was created through the use of membership directories of the state press associations in the targeted region – which, for purposes of clarity, will be referred to as the High Plains. The targeted area consists of 123 counties in eight states (Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming) covering 171,236 square miles. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of these High Plains counties was 1,237,830, 0.4 percent of the total U.S. population. The population density of the High Plains Region is 7.23 persons per square mile, compared to the national average of 88.4 persons per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

Of the 98 daily, non-daily and online High Plains newspapers listed within the various state association membership directories, nine had non-functioning e-mail accounts – reducing the survey sample to editors and/or publishers at 89 publications. Following an institutional human subjects review, an e-mail invitation containing a link to a Survey Monkey website was issued on 15 February 2015. A follow-up reminder was delivered eight days later.

Twenty-four editors and/or publishers participated in the survey for a response rate of 26.9 percent. While all of the respondents answered most of the 36 questions on the survey, four declined to answer demographic queries and, therefore, their responses are not included within the cross-tabulations included within the analysis. The final sample is, from a statistical standpoint, of insufficient size for meaningful analysis. However, considering the small sampling frame and that a 26.9 percent

response rate for an e-mail survey is generally considered good, these results should serve as a strong indicator of the attitudes among rural High Plains editors and publishers.

Eighty-five percent of the respondents worked at non-daily newspapers, while 15 percent worked at daily newspapers (defined for this purpose as newspapers that publish five or six times a week). In terms of ownership structure, 55 percent of the respondents worked for chains, companies that publish more than one newspaper. Forty-five percent said they are affiliated with stand-alone independent newspapers. Sixty-five percent of the respondents identified themselves as male and 35 percent identified themselves as female. In terms of age, 35 percent were 30-45 years old, 60 percent 46-64 years old, and 25 percent 65 years old and older. All of the respondents willing to identify their race and/or ethnicity said they were white.

The respondents were presented a series of rating scale questions that asked the degree to which they either agreed or disagreed with various statements. The scale utilized in this study was 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree). Therefore, responses with a mean greater than 3.00 are considered a measure of agreement and those with a mean of less than 3.00 are considered a measure of disagreement.

## Analysis

### *General description of the respondents*

Sixty percent of the respondents described themselves as an “owner/publisher” of their newspaper. Of those, 75 percent said they were male and 25 percent said they were female. Another 35 percent described themselves “non-owner managing editor,” with 57.1 percent of those male and 42.9 percent female. The remaining 5 percent, a female, described herself as “other.” Among owners/publishers, 91.7 percent said they “live within the local community,” compared to 14.3 percent of the non-owner managing editors. When broken down by gender, 41.2 percent of the nondaily newspaper respondents were female and 58.8 percent were male. All of the daily newspaper respondents were male. The male to female breakdown at independent newspapers was 72.8 percent to 27.2 percent. At chain newspapers, the male to female ratio was closer, with 55.6 percent male and 44.4 percent female. There was a greater discrepancy when it came to where respondents said the owners of their newspapers lived: 100 percent of the owners said they live within the local community, compared to only 11.1 percent for the chain newspapers.

- RQ1 *How do rural editors/publishers in the High Plains reconcile their potentially conflicting roles as community watchdog and community booster?*

As shown in Table 1, the respondents were in agreement (mean 4.35) with the statement that “it is a role of local media to serve as a booster and advocate for the local community.” A bivariate analysis showed only one group, respondents affiliated with daily newspapers registering slight disagreement (2.67). That compares to a mean 4.65 among respondents from non-dailies. Respondents who were also owners of their newspapers were in stronger agreement with the statement (4.58) than those who said they were non-owners (3.86).

**Table 1 – Boosterism versus objectivity (<3.00 is negative, >3.00 is positive)**

	All	Non-dailies	Dailies	Ind. papers	Chain papers	Live inside	Live outside	Owner	Non-owner
Serve as a booster and advocate for the community?	4.35	4.65	2.67	4.64	4.00	4.58	4.00	4.58	3.86
Report news without regard to how outsiders see it.	4.40	4.41	4.67	4.36	4.44	4.36	4.38	4.50	4.14

Despite a desire to advocate on behalf of their local communities, the respondents were in near-equal agreement (4.40) to the statement that “it is the role of local media to report news, whatever it is, without regard to how it will be seen by those living outside of the community.” The level of agreement remained above the 4.00 threshold in all cross-tabulations.

*RQ2 To what degree do rural editors/publishers in the High Plains see the Internet as a viable option for providing information within their communities?*

Skepticism is evident when it comes to the use and future role of the Internet. Eighty percent of the respondents said their newspapers had their own website. Of those newspapers with websites, 56.3 percent restrict some content behind a subscription pay wall. The remaining respondents provide web access to all of their content.

As shown in Table 2, there is general agreement (3.70) when it comes to the posting of breaking news affecting the local community on the newspaper website prior to publication in the print edition. However, respondents at daily newspapers (4.67), those at chain newspapers (4.11), those who live outside the community where the newspaper is published (4.13) and non-owners (4.00) were stronger in support of posting breaking news than their counterparts.

**Table 2 – Newspapers and the Internet (<3.00 is negative, >3.00 is positive)**

	All	Non-dailies	Dailies	Ind. papers	Chain papers	Live inside	Live outside	Owner	Non-owner
Appropriate to post news on web before publication?	3.70	3.53	4.67	3.36	4.11	3.42	4.13	3.50	4.00
Web can adequately inform about local government?	2.20	1.76	1.91	2.56	1.83	2.75	2.00	2.00	2.57
Internet as primary source of government information?	2.50	2.41	3.00	2.36	2.67	2.33	2.75	2.33	2.86

While the editors and publishers saw value in using the Internet as an extension of their print editions, they were universal in their belief that the Web cannot be a replacement for what they provide. There was strong disagreement (2.20) among respondents when they were asked about the statement “I believe that the Internet can adequately provide information about local government and local issues.” They also disagreed, albeit to a slightly lesser degree (2.50) with the statement “I believe that in the future the Internet will be the primary source for information about local government. There was also a gender difference on the Internet adequacy issue (not shown in Table 1), with women more negative (1.86) than men (2.36).

*RQ3 To what degree do rural editors/publishers in the High Plains have confidence in their ability to find replacements for departing staff and for themselves?*

Rural editors and publishers in the High Plains appear to lack confidence when it comes to the issue of succession. As indicated in Table 3, the respondents expressed a lack of confidence when it came to filling vacant reporting positions (2.70), vacant editor positions (2.55), and replacements for themselves upon their retirement or death (2.75). While cross-tabulations show little differences in recruiting reporters or editors, that did not hold true on the question of finding the respondents’ own replacements. Respondents affiliated with dailies were slightly positive (3.25) while those at non-dailies were slightly negative (2.65). That pattern held for those at chain newspapers (3.33) compared to those at independents (2.24). Respondents living outside of the community of publication were positive (3.38) and those living inside were negative (2.33). Non-owner respondents were neutral about the prospects for finding their replacements (3.00) while owner respondents were slightly negative (2.67).

**Table 3 – Succession** (<3.00 is negative, >3.00 is positive)

	All	Non-dailies	Dailies	Ind. papers	Chain papers	Live inside	Live outside	Owner	Non-owner
Confident I can fill vacant reporter's position in a timely manner?	2.70	2.71	2.67	2.73	2.67	2.54	2.63	2.92	2.43
Confident I can fill a vacant editor's position in a timely manner?	2.55	2.47	3.00	2.36	2.78	2.42	2.75	2.67	2.43
Confident that my own replacement can be found in a timely manner?	2.75	2.65	3.25	2.24	3.33	2.33	3.38	2.50	3.00

*RQ4 How much confidence do rural editors/publishers in the High Plains have in the future of their communities, newspapers and profession?*

There is a dichotomy among rural High Plains editors and publishers when it comes to the cohesiveness of their communities: While they feel they live in communities where most people share the same basic values (3.80), they also disagree with the statement that their communities are more close knit today than they were 10 years ago (2.80). However, as indicated in Table 4, the editors and publishers also have a strong belief (4.35) that the presence of local radio and newspaper is an aspect of maintaining community cohesion.

This was one of the few areas where gender (not shown in Table 4) appeared to be a factor. Female respondents were more positive than their male counterparts on the question of whether their community today is close knit (4.14 to 3.62), on the question of whether their community is more close-knit than 10 years ago (3.14 to 2.62), and the on role of local media in community cohesion (4.57 to 4.23). There were also differences based on each newspaper's Internet presence (not shown in Table 4). Respondents from newspapers who share all of their content online responded negatively to the statement that their community is more cohesive than it was 10 years ago (2.57). That compares to 3.11 from respondents whose newspaper use a pay wall to restrict access and to 4.50 for the newspapers with no Internet presence.

**Table 4 – Community Cohesion** (<3.00 is negative, >3.00 is positive)

	All	Non-dailies	Dailies	Ind. papers	Chain papers	Live inside	Live outside	Owner	Non-owner
I live in a close-knit community where most people share basic values.	3.80	3.82	3.67	3.82	3.78	3.83	3.75	3.83	3.86
My community is more close-knit and cohesive than it was 10 years ago.	2.80	2.82	2.67	2.91	2.67	2.92	2.63	2.92	2.71
The presence of local media is an aspect of maintaining a cohesive community.	4.35	4.47	3.67	4.55	4.11	4.58	4.00	4.58	4.00

Taken as a whole, rural editors and publishers in the High Plains say they are positive about the future of their communities (3.60), region (3.75), newspapers (3.60), and journalism, itself (3.80). And as Table 5 also shows, this optimism may stem from the higher degree of trust they feel they enjoy from their readers (4.32), compared to regional media that cover their community (3.22) and national news media (2.53).

Each publication's Internet presence (not shown in Table 5) was the only variable where respondents exhibited different attitudes toward the future of their newspapers and of journalism. Respondents affiliated with newspapers with open access to their content were most affirmative in their attitudes toward the future of their newspapers (4.29) and journalism (4.57). In comparison, respondents from newspapers with restricted online content were less enthusiastic about the future of their newspapers (3.56) and journalism (3.89). Respondents from newspapers without an Internet presence expressed negative attitudes toward the future of their newspapers (2.50) and journalism (2.75).

**Table 5 – Attitudes About The Future and Trust (<3.00 is negative, >3.00 is positive)**

	All	Non-dailies	Dailies	Ind. papers	Chain papers	Live inside	Live outside	Owner	Non-owner
I think my community has a bright future.	3.60	3.59	3.67	3.36	3.89	3.50	3.75	3.58	3.43
I think my region has a bright future.	3.75	3.76	3.67	4.91	4.00	3.67	3.88	3.58	3.43
I think my newspaper has a bright future.	3.60	3.53	4.00	3.36	3.89	3.50	3.75	3.75	3.57
I think journalism has a bright future.	3.80	3.76	4.00	3.55	3.38	3.67	4.00	3.75	3.71
My community trusts local news media.	4.32	4.38	4.00	4.20	4.44	4.20	4.38	4.36	4.14
My community trusts regional news media.	3.22	3.31	3.33	3.30	3.33	3.27	3.38	3.18	3.43
My community trusts national news media.	2.53	2.63	2.00	2.80	2.22	2.73	2.13	2.64	2.14

## Conclusions and Limitations

After two surveys and extensive travel to interview editors and publishers throughout the High Plains, one cannot help but come to the conclusion that they are a hardy and optimistic lot. However, as they results of this survey shows, they are also hardened realists – and that some of their responses may be attributable to “putting on a brave face.”

The survey respondents felt that the people of their communities trust them more than news delivered from outsiders. This echoes what community leaders when asked about trusting media in a 2012 survey (Guth, 2015). The respondents also expressed a strong belief that their newspapers play a vital role in maintaining community cohesion. They are also comfortable straddling the line between community watchdog and booster.

“I get the county commissioners mad at me every now and then because of something we write,” said Publisher Sharon Friedlander of the *Colby Free Press* in northwest Kansas. “Someone has to be there and fulfill that need.

“We are right up there banging on the drum every chance we get for Colby. That’s also part of our role,” said Friedlander. “We should be a cheerleader.” (Friedlander, 2014)

However, even with the many expression of optimism, signs of doubt are evident within the survey. The respondents said they see their communities as being less cohesive in terms of shared values than just a decade ago. They also acknowledge that succession – the concept of who will take over when they are gone – is problematic.

“I have no clue what I’m going to do,” said *Boise City News* Editor C.F. David. David, 69, with a history of heart trouble, said during that June 2014 interview that his health prevents him from covering the news as aggressively as he once did. “I figure that the community deserves to have somebody that will be more aggressive in investigating,” he said. “But I don’t know how to find that person.” (David, 2014)

The survey results suggest independent newspapers and chain newspapers view the succession problem through different frames. The smaller rural papers are more concerned about turnover at the top – it’s hard to find someone willing to buy a newspaper and wear many different hats in the manner of Boise City’s David. However, chain newspapers within the High Plains are less concerned about management turnover than they are about recruiting entry-level reporters. “On the news side, it is hard to recruit people to come out here,” said *Garden City Telegram* Editor and Publisher Dena Sattler.

“It’s hard to get people to consider this side of the state.” (Sattler, 2014)

Some of the survey respondents have readily adapted to the technological, cultural, social and climatological changes that are redefining the High Plains. Others seem to understand that if they don’t make adjustments to the way they do business, their survival will be at risk. This attitude appears to play out in the Internet presence cross-tabulations. The respondents affiliated with newspapers that operate websites expressed significantly more optimism about the future of their publications and their profession than those who are not online.

Lance Maggart, editor of the *Lamar Ledger* in eastern Colorado, says he “posts everything” to Facebook and Twitter, linking them to the paper’s website. “Our subscribers are mostly people the older folks who are not online,” said Maggart. “So most of the people who are going to see the paper in print are not the people looking at it in the digital realm.” (Maggart, 2014)

The limitations of the research are related to the very issues it has studied. Geographically, the High Plains is enormous. However, in terms of population – especially when it relates the resident newspaper editors and publishers – the numbers are relatively small. The choice of using an online survey instrument was dictated by time and cost considerations. Even if there had been a highly improbable 100 percent response rate, the sample would still have been small. The best way to ensure people will talk to you is to go out and meet them. But again, there are time and cost considerations when considering a 134,000-square-mile region. The author’s 1,500-mile road trip through four states may not have exhaustively covered the High Plains, but provided valuable insight that aided in the preparation and analysis of the survey.

It would be a mistake to see this research as being about a few small-town newspapers in the backwaters of journalism. In reality, it is about the role journalism plays in the lives of 3.4 million Americans – people responsible for the production of much of the meat and grain that are staples of the American diet. The people of High Plains play an important role in the nation’s economy and have had left a lasting impression on the country’s collective consciousness. In many ways, the region is still as much a frontier as when settlers in pursuit of a better life joined the native peoples of the High Plain two centuries ago. If anything, this survey of rural editors and publishers demonstrates that these 21st century journalists share the spirit of tempered optimism that guided their predecessors through many storms – figuratively and literally – since the mid-19th century.



*Sharon Friedlander, publisher of the Colby (Kansas) Free Press*



*Dena Sattler, editor and publisher of the The Garden City (Kansas) Telegram*



*Dry river bed south of Scott City, Kan.*



*Pivot irrigation sprinkler in northeast New Mexico.*



*Lane County, Kansas, windmill*



*Wide-open spaces in the Oklahoma panhandle*

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# Learning about journalism in South Africa from the ‘born-free’ generation

By JOHN HATCHER

They are referred to as “born-free” generation. They are the first South Africans to have lived all their lives in the free, multi-cultural democracy that Archbishop Desmond Tutu hopefully described as the Rainbow Nation. In 2014, many in this generation voted for the first time in a South African general election.

On an August 2015 afternoon, a hundred or more of these young people packed the auditorium at Tshwane University of Technology in Shoshanguve, near Pretoria, to hear me and Bill Reader from Ohio University talk about the future of journalism in South Africa. A long line of students had filed in. They were animated and excited as we were introduced.

When it was my turn to speak, I stood before them and broke the first rule of public speaking: I told them I was nervous to talk to them. I explained that I had heard the questions they had asked Reader, who had spoken just before me. I knew I could expect tough questions.

I was pretty sure I didn’t have the answers.

## Three visits to South Africa

My talk at Tshwane University took place during my second trip to South Africa: a non-stop, 11-day journey that took our entourage on a dizzying tour across the central and northeastern regions of this country. We would visit newsrooms, speak at workshops and community events and meet with countless journalists.

My personal goal on this journey was to try to learn more about the state of journalism in South Africa 21 years after the country held its first truly democratic election.

This story is about three visits to South Africa. Two of them were trips I took: one in 2015 and another in 2009.

But the first visit was taken by someone else. Husband and wife journalists Helen and Richard Dudman came to South Africa just as the country was transitioning to a new democracy.

These visits offer a chance to reflect on the state of journalism in South Africa at different moments in time, and, serendipitously, to do so in a way that parallels the lives of the students in that auditorium who were born in the early days of this democracy and are now preparing to take on the responsibility of the future of journalism in this country.

## Visit No. 1: 1996

I learned about Helen and Richard Dudman’s trip to South Africa by accident this August. We were in the office of the Middelburg Observer where longtime editor Tobie van den Bergh was going through stacks of articles, photographs and other documents as he recounted the stand his paper took during the apartheid era and the price they paid for their unpopular position (a noose hammered to the office door next to the word “Volksverraaier,” translated roughly from Afrikaans to mean “traitor of the people”) when he pulled from the pile a letter writ-

ten in February 1996.

It was addressed to the publisher at the time, John Frewin, and was written by Richard Dudman. The letterhead read “The Knight International Press Fellowship Program.”

“I was much impressed with Middelburg and those of its leaders that Peter Brandmuller was good enough to bring together for my brief visit,” Dudman wrote. “My wife, Helen, and I would like to return and spend a few days working with newspaper and radio people.

“Would you please see whether your editor in Middelburg would be willing to let me visit the newsroom sometime soon?”

Van den Bergh said Dudman had visited his paper, but he never knew much about who he was, why he was visiting or what came of his trip.

I made a copy of the letter and told van den Bergh I’d look into it.

Richard Dudman and his wife, Helen, I would learn when I returned to the U.S., actually made at least two trips to South Africa. The first one they took in 1994 just as South Africa was having its first democratic election. The second one was in 1996 when they visited the Middelburg newspaper as part of a program called the Knight International Press Fellowship Programme, according to a November 1996 article Dudman wrote in for *American Journalism Review* titled “Journalism’s Peace Corps.”

In their visits to South Africa, the Dudmans spent time working with and observing journalists. Dudman filed a series of articles published in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* where he reported on the power of community journalism – and specifically community radio – to give a voice to South Africa’s historically marginalized groups.

In one of the articles, Dudman was critical of South African journalists’ use of jargon in their writing.

“In this transitional period, when millions are experiencing freedom of movement and freedom of information for the first time, the newspapers are seeking a whole new crop of young readers,” he wrote in a 1994 article published in *Rhodes Journalism Review*. “The newspapers can either entice these prospective new readers with clear, understandable stories or turn them off by filling stories with unexplained jargon.”

But he also offered a strong caution to journalism fellows from the U.S. visiting other countries.

In the 1996 *American Journalism Review* article, Dudman tells the story of working with the Middelburg editor on a story in which he pushed the journalist to go public with a controversial issue in the community. He followed up with the editor only to find that no article had been published. Dudman asked the editor about the situation:

*I said, “I have been wondering if I pushed you too hard.”*

*He said, “You did.”*

*I apologized and said I had violated my instructions: Fellows are supposed to supply the tools, not build the house, and he was the one who knew the territory.*

*I learned a lesson. I hope I planted a seed.*

Dudman, who is now in his late 90s, had had a distinguished journalism career that included covering the assassination of John F. Kennedy in 1963 and being held captive in Cambodia for 40 days while he was a correspondent covering the Vietnam War (he published a book from this account called *40 Days with the Enemy*). He spent much of his journalism career as the chief Washington, D.C., correspondent for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Yet, he was keen enough to be wary of bringing his own outside expertise to South Africa and using it to try to “fix” journalism in this country.

In the *AJR* article, Dudman took an in-depth look at the Knight program’s efforts in countries around the world. He cautioned American journalists not to assume that their way of doing journalism was the right way.

“Preaching comes across as American arrogance,” Dudman wrote. “And it doesn’t work.”

## Visit No. 2: 2009

It was hard for me not to judge South Africa and its journalism based on my own experiences when I arrived for the first time in May 2009. After 24 hours of travel, I landed in Johannesburg in time to grab a few hours sleep. The next day, I was picked up by a journalist named Zaidi Khumalo, who took me to his newspaper’s office in the township of Vosloorus, a community that was created in 1963 when the government forced black South Africans to relocate because their previous community was too close to a city inhabited by white South Africans.

I had no idea at the time that Khumalo would become a true friend and that we’d meet several times in the years to come.

As we drove through Johannesburg on our way out to the townships, I took out my camera to take photos.

You should probably put that away, Khumalo told me. It could easily be stolen if someone saw it.

His warning coupled with my jet lag amplified my anxiety. I had been cautioned by so many people to be careful in South Africa. For three weeks, I would be on my own, driving a car on the left side of the road in a country with one of the highest death rates from car accidents in the world, according to the World Health Organization.

(In fact, over the course of my three weeks there, I never once felt in danger, though I’d wager some South Africans might have been concerned when seeing me behind the wheel of a car driving in the wrong lane on the highway before I remembered where I was.)

Khumalo’s newspaper office was a thatched hut inside the gated property of his modest-but-tidy home. It was cozy. It had a work space and an area with couches and comfortable chairs where we sat, drank rooibos tea with lemon and talked about journalism.

If the shacks, sprawl and squalor of the townships were unsettling to my brain, then the front pages of Khumalo’s newspaper, *Kathorus Mail*, left me without words. Shocking images of murders and atrocities coupled with huge one- and two-word headlines shouted out the most grisly events. Issue after issue of the paper was filled with stories that left me numb.

Zaidi Khumalo had been a journalist nearly as long as I’d been alive. During the apartheid era, he worked for the famous black African magazine, *Drum*. He was, in 2009, the only full-time person working at the newspaper he had founded.

His view of journalism was a simple one: If it happened in his

community, it was his obligation to tell his readers about it. If it was repulsive and ghastly, so be it. His front pages, I would learn, were not much different from many of the newspapers that catered to the black African audience in the country. In the United States, it would be classified as tabloid journalism, a term used to describe a sensationalized portrayal of the world.

This question of what is news and how to present it proved to be the key question I’d wrestle with on that trip. In some respects, it still is.

I talked with 62 journalists, educators and media experts during the visit. Some worked at newspapers; others worked at community radio stations.

Many of the people I met echoed Khumalo’s view of journalism. In a country rife with “bad news,” it was the job of the journalist to put this information out there and hold nothing back.

But there were other journalists who embraced a solution-oriented approach to news that may have its roots in the Peace Journalism movement, an idea first championed by Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung and espoused by NGO-sponsored news organizations in developing nations.

Many of these journalists worked at community radio stations where they were trained to see themselves as offering hope to people who had known great hardship.

I remember talking with a woman who hosted a public affairs show at the famous Bush Radio in Cape Town. She told me her audience had grown weary of bad news: “You know, most people in communities know that next door, there is a drug dealer there.

They have been knowing that for the past 20 years so they do know that crime happens every week. They know all these things, but what they don’t know is that there are alternatives to their life.”

## Trip No. 3: 2015

My second trip to South Africa was not as shocking to my senses. Perhaps it was because I knew what to expect. Perhaps it was because we were treated like visiting dignitaries. I was even more comfortable driving on the wrong side of the road this time. Whatever the reason, I felt at home.

Traveling with Bill Reader, his partner, Sarah, and my wife, Michele, I tried to keep my mind on the conclusions I had drawn from my first visit. I wanted to see if they still made sense.

I learned from Louise Vale, executive director of the Association of Independent Publishers, that one thing that had changed since I was last in the country is that there are more independent community newspapers owned by black South Africans.

Of the 210 newspapers that are part of AIP, 70 percent of them are black owned and 20 percent are owned by women, according to a 2015 AIP report.

In a January 2013 article on the Wits Journalism website, Vale said that most black townships in South Africa are still woefully underserved. The journalists are passionate about their work but have little business experience and serve communities that offer few advertising opportunities.

Meanwhile, much of the country’s community media is being bought up by four larger media groups. Even Khumalo eventually sold his newspaper to the Caxton media group, though he still runs the newspaper.

Our trip was a blur. Most days we woke, packed and traveled to a new community where we would meet a group of journalists.

Our first stop was Louis Trichardt where we spoke at a commu-

nity event celebrating the anniversaries of two newspapers owned by our host, Anton van Zyl.

Van Zyl, our escort for most of the trip, is a passionate newspaper publisher who had been my primary contact for my first trip to South Africa. Van Zyl and Khumalo came to Minnesota in 2010 to speak to community journalists at the Minnesota Newspaper Association convention and go on a dead-of-winter tour of community media in the northwoods.

Van Zyl's appetite for information is insatiable. Each evening we could count on him grilling us for hours about the future of journalism, the impact of mobile technologies on print newspapers, and the challenges of running a newspaper in a country that faces so many cultural and economic challenges.

On our last day in the country – just hours before we would drive back to Johannesburg and board a plane back to the United States – we spoke at a workshop hosted by the Forum of Community Journalists titled “No Guts, No Glory, No Story.”

There, I asked the journalists to envision the kind of journalism they wanted to produce. I shared with them examples from around the world in which journalists were experimenting with creative ways of encouraging citizens to tell their own stories.

What I learned in this workshop is that many journalists are not content just reporting the day-to-day events that happen. “I’m tired of bad news,” one of the journalists said.

Many of them were. A few longtime journalists told me that the transition to mobile news, government rules that inhibit free speech, and what they perceive as unfair intermedia competition are daunting obstacles for journalists in South Africa.

But many remain passionate about their work. In small groups, they brainstormed creative ways of telling contextually rich stories they hope will solve community problems and bridge the differences among diverse groups.

## Keeping connections

We left South Africa eager to continue our relationships with all the journalists we met, but our highest priority were those students. They inspired us.

Starting in January, my journalism classes in Minnesota will learn about South Africa's new democracy and the role journalism has played in the struggle. Then my students will meet the journalism students at TUT, if only via online video chats for the

moment.

In late November, I received an email from one of the students at TUT asking me to help her apply to my university so she could come to the United States and study journalism. The request is more complicated than it sounds.

We learned during our visit that the students we met at TUT are among the lucky few who have been able to gain acceptance to college. Since the vast majority of black South Africans come from incredibly poor communities, they cannot afford to attend college without full, government-funded support – tuition and room and board. This puts severe limits on the number of black South Africans who can get a college education.

This fall, I began to notice photographs in my social media feed from people I knew in South Africa: large crowds of people protesting, images of vehicles that had been set on fire, and buildings that had been severely damaged.

On closer inspection, I saw that many of the images came from Tshwane University's Shoshanguve campus – the campus we visited. Protests had erupted around the country over school tuition costs and demands of free education for all. TUT had canceled classes and postponed final examinations.

They may have been born free, but this next generation of journalists inherits a legacy of challenges.

As I suspected, I was right to be nervous on that August day when I spoke to the auditorium of students. They asked important, difficult questions. And, as I had warned them, my answers were not adequate.

I was not there, I said, to tell them what journalism should look like in their own country. I could not pretend to know the answers. All I could offer were examples from journalists I had visited around the world in the past decade – including many from their own country.

I look back on that moment now and know what I should have said. The students in that room will be answering their own questions in the years to come.

And, if they are the future of journalism in South Africa, then I'm optimistic their answers will inspire us all.

*John Hatcher is an associate professor of journalism at the University of Minnesota Duluth. He can be contacted at [jhatcher@d.umn.edu](mailto:jhatcher@d.umn.edu).*



*John Hatcher speaking at Louis Trichardt, South Africa in August 2015.*

# Redesigning page templates will fix inconsistent layout

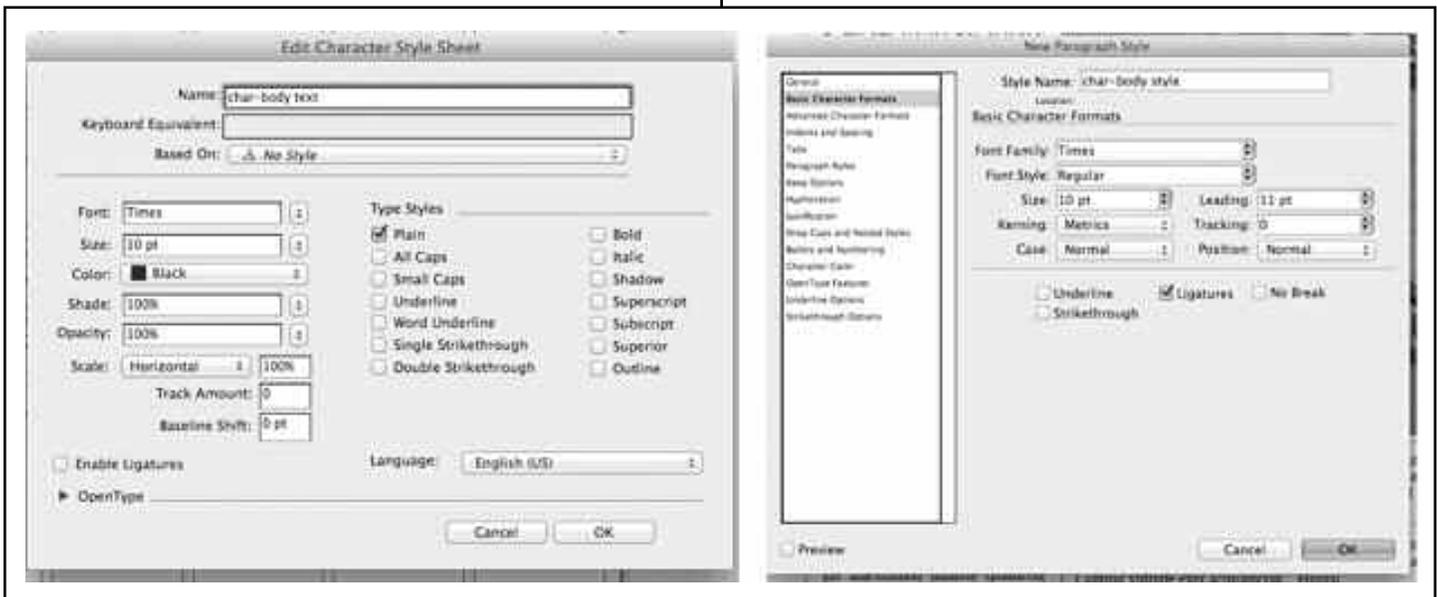
By BILL READER

*Editor's note: A discussion on the ISWNE Hotline listserv in October 2014 focused on the problems of consistent design at weekly newspapers where multiple staff members handle page layout. Several ISWNE members recommended that newspapers develop robust page templates and accompanying stylebooks to improve consistency and streamline the layout process. This is the second in a series of how-to articles about developing and using page templates and style guides, and it is aimed at editors who are relatively new to digital pagination.*

your newsroom is likely to be quiet and you are unlikely to get many phone calls or walk-ins. Once you get into the groove of the work, it will proceed much more quickly without too much interruption. And after a few hours, you will have templates that should serve you well for many years.

## First steps: Something borrowed, something new...

Some publications don't have "templates" per se, but rather recycle the pages from previous editions. Open last week's file,



Most desktop publishing programs allow users to create pre-set type styles. Here, a basic "body text" style is set up in Quark XPress (left) and Adobe InDesign (right).

In the previous installment (*Grassroots Editor*, Winter 2014), a plan for DIY redesign was offered that can fit into the schedule of even the busiest newsroom and the budget of the smallest news operations. It suggested spending about 15 minutes per day over five days to assess your current newspaper design to determine what works and what doesn't.

If one of the "doesn't work" observations is inconsistent layout, then it is time to redesign your publication's page templates.

Most news professionals know what a template is – it's basically a blank page that already includes page headers, folios, and other standing elements on the page. But a well-designed template is much more than that – it should include other elements to ensure consistent layout from issue to issue, especially if the work is done by two or more different staff members.

It's best to set up templates in one block of time, ideally without much interruption. Rather than try to work on it a little bit here and there, set aside a block of about five hours on a day when

delete everything but the page headers, and start from there.

That can work, certainly, but the "recycle" approach is far from ideal. It creates too many opportunities for "design drift" – little adjustments made to accommodate tricky layouts from issue to issue that can quickly become normalized. In time, that can lead to a lot of inconsistency and amateurish layout errors.

A far better approach would be to spend a few hours taking one of those recycled pages and using it to set up proper page templates. Keep what works, delete what doesn't, and set up some new type styles and page elements that will ease workflow and ensure consistent layout from page to page, issue to issue.

One of the added benefits of setting up proper templates includes the ability to quickly set up new templates for special sections, new community publications, and the occasional "one-off" publication. That helps to maintain your publication's brand in the community, so that audience members will think "this looks like something *The Journal* would do" without even having to see

The Journal name on the page.

Even those using older versions of desktop-publishing software have the ability to create templates – that functionality was built into such programs almost from the start, going all the way back to Aldus PageMaker in 1985. That function is one of the benefits of using a professional-level DTP application such as Adobe InDesign or Quark XPress, but even entry-level options (such as Microsoft Publisher) and low-cost/free options (Scribus, ReadySetGo) have that ability. The ideal is to create one template file that includes multiple “master pages” – for a basic community newspaper, that would include at least three page options: the front page, a generic “section front” (that can be used for sports, features, opinion, etc.), and a typical inside/jump/classifieds page. More master pages can be added, certainly, but those three would suffice in most situations.

Given the benefits of having proper templates, and the ease with which they can be created in nearly any desktop-publishing application, there really is no good reason not to create templates for your publication. Or, if you’ve been having problems with consistent design, there’s no reason to not take the time to update your current templates, starting with the type styles that are pre-programmed into the file.

## Style sheets – the drivetrain of your redesign

Desktop publishing programs provide numerous options for handling type, but they also give users the ability to set all of those options in advance to make applying text styles a one-click process. The added benefit is that when creating new templates for special sections, spin-off publications, and other special projects, type style sheets can be easily imported to the new templates, saving considerable time.

The process starts with font selection. It’s a good idea to choose one serif typeface and one sans serif. Newspapers on a budget can just use common “system fonts” found on most computers. Times and Times New Roman are workhorse fonts for body text and headlines, whereas Helvetica and Arial are excellent for photo captions, pull-quotes, subheads and the like. Whatever typefaces you choose, just plan to use a serif typeface for body type and a sans-serif typeface for photo captions – when those different type styles are packaged close together, the visual distinction will help readers distinguish one from the other.

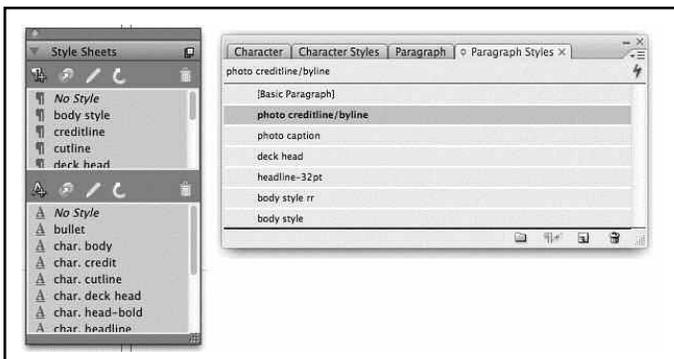


Illustration 1: Quark XPress stacks character and paragraph styles in its palette (left). InDesign’s palette uses tabs (right).

Both InDesign and XPress have distinct style sheets for “characters” and “paragraphs” (see Illustration 1). The difference is

self-explanatory – character styles deal only with the type specifications (font, type size, color, etc.) whereas paragraph styles deal with alignment, indentations, leading, and other paragraph attributes. There are slight differences between the two programs in this regard, such as whether leading is assigned to the character style or to the paragraph style, but other than that, the principle is the same. Emphasis for newspaper templates should be on creating paragraph styles, as those are the most commonly used.

Both programs allow you to capture type settings that you set up on the page with the WYSIWYG controls. In Quark XPress, select the text that you have formatted, hold down the “Command” key and click in the style-sheet window, which will open a new dialogue box from which you can create a new paragraph style. InDesign users select the text and use the tiny pull-down menu in the style-sheet window and select “New Paragraph Style.”

Here are some basic tips for creating style sheets for the most common newspaper purposes:

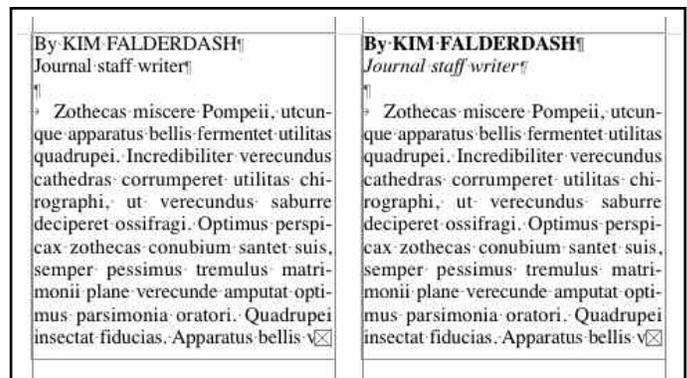


Illustration 2: To keep things simple, don’t bother creating separate style sheets for bylines and affiliation lines. Rather, use “body style,” then make the byline boldface and the affiliation line italics. Tip: Work with non-printing (or “invisible”) characters displayed, so you can see paragraphs, tabs, and spaces.

- Body text (Illustration 2) should be one of the serif fonts, as they are much easier to read at relatively small sizes and in dense blocks of text. Size should be between 9 and 11 points, and leading should be one point greater (for example, if you choose 10 point Times, set the leading to 11 points). Do not put extra space above or below body-text paragraphs – that wastes space. As for alignment, justification is more formal and easier to read in narrow columns, and justification also can save a little space compared to “ragged right.”

- Bylines can be set up as separate style sheets, but the most common (and easiest) technique is to use the body-text style, adding boldface to the name and italics for the affiliation (see Illustration 2).

- Photo captions (“cutlines”) should be a sans-serif font, to ensure the type looks significantly different from nearby body text (see Illustration 3). If you decide to use a separate style for photo credits (the “photo bylines”), create a different style sheet for that.

- You will want at least two headline styles, one for primary headlines (aka “main heds”) and one for secondary headlines (aka “deck heds”). Headlines and deck heds should always be significantly larger than body type, and as such there is unlikely to be confusion if the same font is used as for the body style. However, it is typical to use regular or bold type for main heds and to use

By KIM FALDERDASH  
Journal staff writer

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JOURNAL STAFF PHOTO

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LEFT: Illustration 3: Photo captions often appear so close to body text that it is important to use a different typeface for captions. Here, 9-point Helvetica is used to stand apart from the body type, which is 10-point Times. The photo-credit is set up as a different style - 8-point Helvetica, all caps, flush left. (Image from FreeStockPhotos.biz)

BELOW: A default headline size of 32 points can be easily increased or decreased in size to fit (this one was increased to 42 points). Deck heads should be significantly larger than body text, but distinct in size and style from headlines - here, the deck head style is 20-point Helvetica on 22-point leading, italicized. (Image from FreeStockPhotos.biz)

# Smallville edges past Littleton, 2-1

*Fariq scores both goals for Tigers, named MVP*

By KIM FALDERDASH  
Journal staff writer

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JOURNAL STAFF PHOTO

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italics for deck heds (see Illustration 4).

Deck heds should be the same size every time, ideally between 16 and 20 points in size with leading 2 points greater than type size. Alignment should flush-left rather than justified to avoid awkward spacing between the words.

Because main headlines will vary in size, you should set up the style to be easily resized up or down. I have found that setting headlines to start at 32 point size is a happy medium. As for leading, do not set a fixed amount of space; rather, it should be relative to the final size of the headline. Quark XPress allows for “relative leading,” which is ideal for headlines – I recommend entering “+2” in the leading field, which will automatically make the leading 2 points greater than the type size. InDesign does not support relative leading, but rather uses proportional leading (Quark also supports proportional leading). By default, InDesign’s “auto” leading is 120 percent of the type size, which is a bit much; better to change the auto-leading to 110 percent under the “Justification” settings (see Illustration 5).

- Subheads are useful for breaking up longer articles into distinct sections, but need to stand out amid the body text. As such, it’s a good idea to make subheads from narrow sans-serif type, slightly larger than body type, with more space above than below (simple boldface is not distinct enough for subheads to stand out to your readers). Fiddle with the spacing and leading to ensure that a subhead takes up only as much space as two lines of body text, which helps the text to line up from column to column. It’s not that difficult to get an approximate solution – if you are using 11-point leading on body type, then the subhead style should take up 22 points of vertical space (if you use 12-point type, add 7 points of space above and 3 points below to total 22).

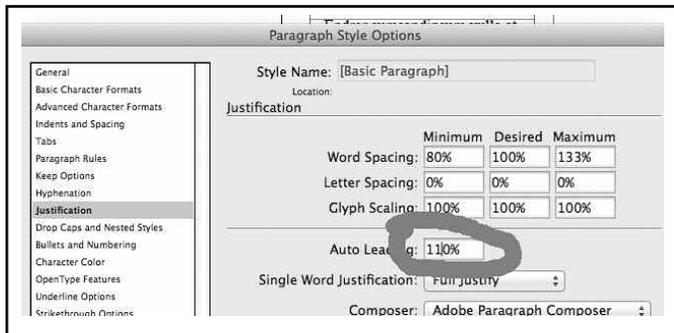


Illustration 5: Headlines will be resized from a basic default size (32 point is a good default), and as such leading should be set to adjust to varying text sizes. Quark XPress supports both proportional or “auto” leading and “relative leading.” The latter is achieved by entering an addition value in the leading field – for headlines, setting leading to be 2 points greater than type size is done by setting the leading to “+2.” InDesign does not support relative leading, but rather uses proportional or “auto” leading, which is 120% by default; that’s a bit too much for headlines, especially large ones, so consider changing the auto leading value to 110% under the “Justification” tab.

- Pull quotes are tricky because they involve three distinct styles, all of which must be visually different from both body text and headlines/deck heds. You will want to have three different style sheets for pull quotes, one for the quotes themselves, one for the attribution line, and a third for the caption to the attribution line. (See Illustration 5). Both InDesign and XPress allow you to choose “next style,” and pull-quote styles are ideal for that func-

tion: just hit return after applying “pullquote1” and the style automatically changes to “pullquote2,” and another return after that and you get “pullquote3.”

- Some additional style sheets may be helpful for briefs headlines, calendar text, taglines, and so forth. The great thing about creating a template is you can add, delete, and modify style sheets as needed.

## Page templates: Start with a basic ‘inside’ page

Front pages and section fronts tend to have many elements not found on inside pages, so leave those for later. The bulk of any newspaper is made of inside pages, so start the template design there.

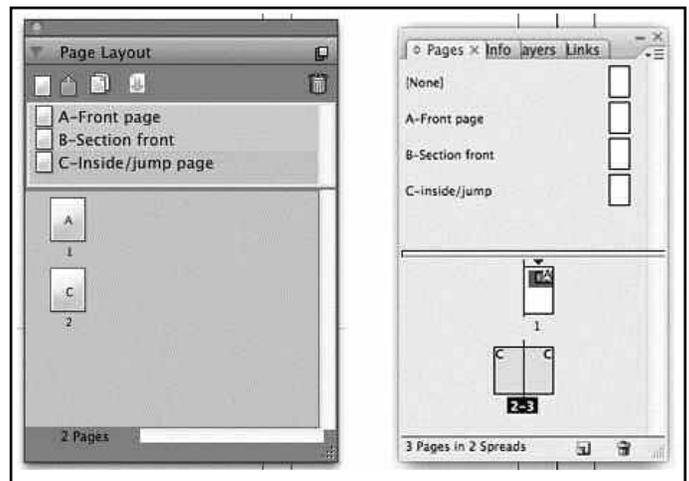


Illustration 6: Both Adobe InDesign and Quark XPress have “Pages” palettes that include sections for templates, or “masters,” in the top section, and the ability to add or delete pages from the documents in the bottom section. When building templates, only work in the top section “masters”; when building pages from the templates, only work in the bottom section.

Both InDesign and XPress have “Pages” windows that are divided into two sections. The top section of the window shows the “Master” template and all other page templates available in the file; the bottom section shows pages in the current document. When building templates, only work in the top section of the window. (See Illustration 6).

Your “Master” should be a blank page with the basic grid of margins and columns, nothing more. All of your pages will be built upon that simple foundation, so don’t add anything else to it. To add a new template, right-click your mouse in the top part of the Pages window, and select “New Master.” You can rename the master page at that point; name this one “inside/jump.”

For a standard inside page, you will want to add the page number, publication date, and newspaper name (sometimes called “the folio”). Most newspapers put folio information at the top of the page, but the bottom works, as do the outside margins – the only real requirement is consistency. Decide whether you want one universal folio that can work with both even-numbered and odd-numbered pages, or you want separate folios for each placement. The former is simpler, the latter is more traditional, and that’s about the only significant difference.

Each element of the folio can be in a separate text box, or

# Students go on global journalism ‘field trip’

By JOHN HATCHER

Many of the articles being published in this issue of *Grassroots Editor* were written by students in a class I teach called Community and Journalism.

The course is an attempt to study journalism at the community level and to give students a deeper understanding of what journalism at the local level is all about.

I tell the students that we are going on a global journalism field trip. Each student is asked to serve as a tour guide for one of the countries we visit. We learn about journalism in that culture by visiting with one journalist in that country, and, often, invite that journalist into our classroom using real-time video conferencing technologies such as Skype and FaceTime.

We start simply.

In this batch of stories, produced during the spring of 2015, we began our field trip in Decatur, Texas, where we met legendary newsman Roy Eaton and learned about his newspaper, the *Wise County Messenger*.

We talked about the challenge of being a journalist in a small town. We read Jock Lauterer’s book, *Community Journalism: Relentlessly Local*. We read Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*.

And then, just when we thought we had it figured out, we made it more complicated. We left the United States and met journalists from countries across the globe. Culture changed. Community changed. And journalism changed. We met newspaper journalists like Semantics King Jr., a native of Liberia who created a newspaper called *The Vision* in the refugee camp where he lived in Ghana.

But we also met people who don’t consider themselves jour-

nalists at all. Luke Pearson, an Aboriginal from Australia, explained to us how he created the social media project called IndigenousX as a way of teaching Australians about the lives and stories of the indigenous people in his country by letting citizens of these communities tell their own stories.

This collection of articles is special to me for a couple of reasons. The first is that these students were willing to join me in a very risky experiment: They were in the first class to try this field trip out. What if, I told the class on the first day, we try to meet journalists from around the world and invite them to join us in our classroom via Skype?

They accepted the challenge.

But without question what makes these articles even more special to me is that, for most of these students, this is their first – and perhaps their last – byline. These students are part of the University of Minnesota Duluth’s Honors Program. Only two are journalism majors. The rest have majors from across the university: biochemistry, civil engineering, marketing, music, and economics, to name but a few.

What they shared was a willingness to take a chance and join me in exploring whether, when we look at community journalism on a global scale, differences in culture, medium and approach mean that the role the journalists see for themselves is also different.

Do community journalists around the world have a shared understanding of what it means to do this work?

Read the articles and decide for yourself.

*John Hatcher is an associate professor of journalism at the University of Minnesota Duluth. He can be contacted at [jhatcher@d.umn.edu](mailto:jhatcher@d.umn.edu).*

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## Redesigning page templates

continued from page 18

you can use a one-line deep, multi-column box. (I prefer the latter approach simply for efficiency.) For the “dummy date,” use “Wednesday, September XX, 20XX,” which is the longest day/date combination possible – if that fits, any other day/date combination will fit. The dummy date can be updated easily each week by simply doing a “Find/Replace” edit to the dummy date, replacing with the publication date. Page numbers can be changed manually or using automatic page numbering, which is easy to do in both InDesign and Quark XPress.

The next step is to create the standing page header. It’s a good idea to have a page header on every page, as they help readers navigate back and forth through the paper. The page header need not be overly large – 36-point type is plenty large for a tabloid or even broadsheet page, whereas you might use 24-point for smaller formats.

That’s really all an inside page template needs to be adaptable to many different uses.

From there, creating additional master pages is the same process. At minimum, you should add a master for the front page

and a generic “Section front” that can be retitled as needed (“Sports,” “Opinion,” “Business,” etc.). Obviously, you can add more if you want, but if the goal is to create a simple template that is easy to use by various people in your newsroom, don’t go overboard. Some editors might have a tendency to create a master page for every imaginable contingency, but such micro-management can be both time-wasting and counter-productive. Giving staffers a basic template with three or four master pages and no more than a dozen type styles will help them achieve the goal of this exercise, which is to promote consistent layouts from issue to issue, regardless of who is doing the layout.

After setting up the template, it’s time to create a library of commonly used layout items, such as breakout boxes, photo boxes with captions, headshots, etc. Creating that library will be the focus of the next installment in this series.

*Bill Reader is an associate professor in the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University. He can be contacted at [reader@ohio.edu](mailto:reader@ohio.edu).*

# Texas publisher reflects on changes in his paper, the industry

By JUSTINE OLSON

Roy Eaton began his journalism career in 1956 when he became a reporter for a Fort Worth radio station. Two years later, while still attending college, he became the news director. In 1968, he switched to an NBC radio affiliate and continued with the same job title.

Since then, Eaton has been inducted into two halls of fame, been named a “citizen of the year” in Decatur, Texas (1980), led a large number of programs and foundations, developed a county-wide emergency medical service system, and aided in the building of the \$5 million Decatur Civic Center. He has also been an announcer for local livestock shows and parades for the last 40 years.

Eaton has also been involved with the Texas Center for Community Journalism, where he is the publisher in residence. The Texas Center for Community Journalism, based at Texas Christian University, offers invaluable workshops – typically about 40 people per workshop – to small-town journalists from around the state of Texas. The all-expenses-paid workshops are fully funded by the Texas Newspaper Foundation.

Since 1973, Eaton and his wife, Jeannine, have owned the *Wise County Messenger*. During the early days, the *Messenger* focused on stories about community members and very local happenings.

Since then, Eaton said, the newspaper has strived for a balance of fewer personal features and more hard news. In the past, they used to write stories about class field trips and events around town, but now, in order to compete with other newspapers, they have to put a lot of focus on stories that can apply to and interest a regional population.

Eaton said the key to good journalism is simply having good reporters, a great editor, and someone to keep up with social media and the newspaper’s website.

Today, the *Wise County Messenger* is still a small-town newspaper based out of Decatur, Texas. The twice-weekly newspaper’s paid circulation is down to just over 5,000 from 7,000 from a few years ago.

Sometimes living and working in a small community isn’t easy. As Jack Lauterer notes in his book, *Community Journalism: the Personal Approach*: “It’s the kind of journalism practiced by newspapers where the readers can walk right into the newsroom and tell an editor what’s on their minds.”

Although the *Wise County Messenger* serves more people today than it did 42 years ago, this quote still describes the newsroom. According to Eaton, the publisher of the *Wise County Messenger*, between five and six times per year an angry reader will storm into the building and have a discussion with whoever is willing or coerced into listening.

Although recent paid circulation is down, community journalism is alive and well. As well as regularly updating their Internet pages, the paper also prints and distributes a free publication, *Messenger Update*, every Monday through Friday to keep

up with the emerging trend of the availability of instant news. Additionally, the paper sends out a non-subscriber circulation, titled *All Around Wise*, which is essentially a shopper that also contains the classifieds.

With technology advancing, the preference of a lot of people is to read the news online instead of in print. This brings more pressure to news outlets to advertise on their websites and online; it is also the likely culprit of the recently diminishing paid paper circulation.

## When a national story came to town

Standing 5-foot-2, Evan Ebel opened fire on officers responding to a police chase of the man accused of a double murderer in Colorado whose multi-state chase came screaming through the middle of Decatur, Texas, on March 21, 2013. With his car totaled from hitting a rock hauler, Ebel now faced more prison time after his accidental release or death. He chose to go down fighting.

The entire conflict lasted just 24 minutes, and the *Wise County Messenger* reported the whole story as it was occurring.

Beginning with the police scanner located at the office, the news team began hearing of gunfire and a car chase. Immediately, they sent out a photographer and a reporter to the location where they were able to gather more information and watch the events unfold right in front of their eyes. Back at the office, a reporter remained online, constantly updating the paper’s social media pages and website.

This story was the perfect storm; the suspect began in Colorado where a staff member of the *Messenger* has family who live just a few blocks from where one of the murders took place. In the end, the chase concluded in the tiny community of Decatur, making the scene easily accessible by the team of journalists.

National news outlets quickly picked up the story. It was shared with a total of 27 daily newspapers including the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, which then placed the story on the Associated Press wire. The story went to national news outlets and almost 100 percent of the reporting came from Eaton’s news team at the *Wise County Messenger*.

Meanwhile, the town continued to swoon over the first responders that made the safety of its people possible.

They loved the tale of this major event as it put their small community on the map. The articles written about the case continued to gain positive feedback from readers for almost five months after the chase happened.

In 2014, the newspaper won an award from the National Newspaper Association for “best localized national story” regarding the Ebel pursuit. Also coming from the 128th Annual Convention and Trade Show were 13 other awards and eight honorable mentions for other stories.

Some stories that were published on Eaton’s watch, however, were not so highly honored by the community. In one instance,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

# Liberian journalist builds community in Ghanaian refugee camp

By NICOLE BRODZIK

It was 4 a.m. on Feb. 23, 2003, in the Buduburam refugee camp near Accra, Ghana.

War helicopters invaded the camp as the Ghanaian military searched the camp after receiving reports of criminals hiding at Buduburam who were reportedly working against the local governments in Ghana.

"All men and young boys from age 15 (and up) were rounded up and stripped naked in the scorching sun on a very large soccer pitch in the refugee camp," remembers Semantics King Jr.

King was no stranger to police brutality but this time, he'd had enough. He needed to do something that would make a difference for his fellow Liberian refugees in camp of Buduburam.

The answer, he thought, was to start a newspaper. He called it *The Vision*.

"There had been other misleading reports from the Ghanaian media about Liberian refugees in Ghana, but that singular event inspired me to launch *The Vision*," King said in an email interview. "Tensions between both communities have simmered for years based on suspicion, fears, doubts and misinformation. So the goal of *The Vision* was to bridge that gap and unite both communities."

The former radio broadcast journalist from Harbel, Liberia, knew he could use his skills as a journalist to help give the people of Buduburam a voice.

One of Liberia's exiled people himself, King landed in Ghana in 2000 after being beaten by police forces in Liberia for reporting a story of a rape that took place in the Roberts International Airport in Liberia. He was rescued by security forces from a nearby rubber plantation and fled the country.

He left a country in the middle of a deadly civil war that left over 200,000 Liberians dead and the country in distress years after the wars were over. King said he had difficulty coming to terms with that decision, worrying he'd committed "a serious crime of evasion and betrayal to the Liberian struggle for a better nation" by fleeing.

After the incident with the Ghanaian police forces, King knew he could and needed to make a difference in his new home. He and colleagues Jos Cephas and Emmanuel Nimwillay began publishing their newspaper with hopes of avoiding another incident in the camp.

*The Vision* went to print for the first time in May 2003, entirely funded by King's personal savings. King distributed the paper not only to the refugees of Buduburam, but also to "foreign embassies accredited near the Ghanaian capital, Accra and governmental and non-governmental institutions." His goal was to get *The Vision* on the newsstands every two weeks, free of charge, even if it meant not having the funds he needed for medical attention.

Having used up all of money in publishing *The Vision*, it was not uncommon for King to go without treatment for diseases like malaria and typhoid fever. The value of spreading information

was higher to King than that of his own physical health.

"My main goal was ensuring that the paper never goes off the newsstand," he said. "It was difficult for me to fight it, but somehow, I managed to get through it. I thought that any show of signs of weakness or sickness to my local trainee refugee journalists would have discouraged them and probably make them stop sacrificing as much as I (was)."

The spread of disease happens quickly in camps like Buduburam, which, at the height of its population, was home to an estimated 82,000 refugees living in a space meant for no more than 5,000. The tight living spaces and lack of proper sanitation also allowed insects like mosquitoes, who are major agents in the spread of diseases like malaria, to thrive.

For months, King not only fought disease, but also worked and reported through it to make sure his paper was still telling the stories refugees, people in the local communities and all the people of Ghana needed to read.

"I became a journalist partly because I believe democracy cannot flourish if citizens do not have accurate, timely, contextual information about what is happening in their communities," King said.

While living in Buduburam, King heard word that there had been beatings of men, women and children at another refugee camp in central Ghana by the Ghanaian police. However, he couldn't find any actual coverage of the events in the local media. Even the United Nations Refugee Agency denied accusations of the beatings.

But that wasn't enough for King.

After the mistreatment of Liberian refugees at Buduburam, King knew he had to investigate. He went to the camp undercover, posing as one of the local refugees in order to get the inside story and interviewed a number of refugees, taking pictures of what he saw and reporting the information he found out.

After speaking to the women who were brutalized by the police, King knew the story needed to get out and printed his findings in *The Vision*.

"It was risky, but a risk worth taking," King said.

After publishing the story, he was recognized by the U.S. Embassy in Ghana for his work.

The place King really hoped to be recognized and make a difference, however, was in his home country of Liberia.

In 2006, King had been planning to bring *The Vision* back to Liberia and visit his family who still lived there. Unfortunately, the trip never happened and King is unsure when he'll return to Liberia.

"After getting in touch for the first time with former colleagues, friends and my mother back in Liberia, many advised me against returning to Liberia because the rebels responsible for killing my father when I was only 13, and those who sought after my life, were now working with Liberian government," King said. "So my mother said she would prefer having me from afar alive than having me near and dead."

King sought political asylum from the United States govern-

# Citizen journalism in Australia: IndigenousX

By KATE STEEN

Primary school teacher Luke Pearson first created a Twitter account to vent his anger toward racism and stereotypes that people inflict on the Indigenous peoples of Australia. The general population didn't know the culture and therefore didn't respect Indigenous peoples.

Through Twitter, Pearson says, "I met other teachers who shared my frustration. I met other people who shared my love of stories and history, who had other amazing stories to share with me."

Slowly, Pearson gained 5,000 Twitter followers and became a popular voice for Australia's Indigenous people.

In 2012, Pearson changed his Twitter account and gave all his followers ownership of his organization @IndigenousX. Now, Indigenous people from across Australia run IndigenousX.

Every week, a new person is in charge of the account. They choose what stories they want to follow and what they share on IndigenousX's Twitter account.

As of today, Indigenous X now has accounts on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

In just three years, IndigenousX's Twitter followers have risen to 23,100 and include people from all over the world.

IndigenousX also has its own webpage that shares a five-question bio of all its previous hosts.

IndigenousX is also featured online in *The Guardian Australia*. *The Guardian* shares who will be the next host and what the host plans to tweet during their week.

Although IndigenousX makes a profit through fundraisers and donations, that money is put into growing the IndigenousX name instead of paying Pearson and the weekly hosts.

Making money isn't Pearson's goal. This is evident in a TED talk he gave: "I would like to invite you to come in and join with [me and Indigenous X's hosts] in this conversation, this ongoing conversation. I want you to recognize the humility and humanity within yourselves and with those around you. I want us to rebuild a stronger understanding of the then. I want us to have faith that what we are doing now matters and I want us to have true sense of hope for what will come next."

Pearson sincerely wants to educate all people on Indigenous culture to ensure equality among all people. IndigenousX is allowing that change to happen.

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## Liberian journalist

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ment in 2008 and has been studying at the University of Minnesota ever since. He is currently working on a master's degree in public affairs at the Humphrey School and plans to make another attempt at returning to Liberia upon graduation.

"Even though I am now a naturalized U.S. citizen, my heart is far away with the voiceless people of Liberia in particular and Africa in general, and I intend to return to Liberia to help make that country a better place to live and work," King said. "I want to continue to be a change agent that I have been back in Liberia, Ghana and now the United States."

King still writes for *The Vision*, only now it's an online publication that has been renamed NewLiberian.com and covers cur-

rent events in Liberia from afar. He's still dedicated to making a difference in his home country, waking up at 5 a.m., Monday through Friday, to get news from across the globe over the Internet.

He says the Liberian situation is a very complex one, and making sense of the environment there is often difficult for Americans who have never lived in a place like it.

"To some extent, I think many Americans take their freedom for granted," King said. "If some could actually live in other parts of the world say at least for two years where freedom of speech, assembly, press and religion are never guaranteed; then they would know how blessed they are in this great nation."

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## Texas publisher reflects

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Eaton actually uncovered a crooked sheriff in the 1980s who was pulling people over near a rest stop, accusing them of committing homosexual acts - which was a criminal offense in Texas until 2003 - and exploiting them for a \$5,000 bond in exchange for dropping the charge.

When a sheriff is crooked, who might someone turn to for justice? The newspaper.

During this time, the *Wise County Messenger* had been receiving complaints about this exploitation so Eaton conducted his own investigation and pieced together a story about it.

When this was published, the sheriff had some words for him. Those who may have been close to the sheriff went on the defense. Sheriff Leroy Burch had eventually resigned from his

position to serve nearly three years in prison because of this story.

He has since passed away.

This kind of investigative journalism goes to show the power that one journalist can have over anyone in a community. With this in mind, journalists must make a conscious decision to expose scandals that could potentially affect their next-door neighbor, simply because it's their job.

With regard to this kind of reporting on a friendly acquaintance (more specifically, the school's well-liked special needs operator or the fire department's treasurer embezzling money), Eaton said, "It's hard to be a journalist in a small community because you've got to run the story." You could lose acquaintances; you could lose friends, but the verdict is in: you've got to run the story.

# Norwegian community journalist says local print papers continue to thrive

By EDEN MILLER

Line Sandvik is a journalist at the Hallingdolen Newspaper in Al in Hallingdal, Buskerud, Norway.

Al in Hallingdal is located in the southern part of Norway amid mountains, rivers and large valleys. It is located between Oslo (the capital of Norway) and Bergen. Sandvik attended the Institute for Journalism in Fredrikstad, Norway – after which she began her career at a larger, daily newspaper.

After moving to another large city newspaper, she landed at the Hallingdolen newspaper – where she has now worked for 12 years.

Hallingdolen is a small newspaper (published three times weekly), which offers a large variety of articles, ranging from culture, to sports, to news. Most of the news is community happenings; however, they do include “breaking news” stories – mostly about crime in the area.

Most small newspapers in Norway publish with the intent of reporting local happenings in a positive light; generally, content published isn't “watchdog”-esq, according to Sigurd Host, an expert in the Norwegian newspaper system.

Unlike many community newspapers in Norway, Hallingdolen is not afraid of reporting on more controversial issues, according to its editor, Bjarne Tormodsgard.

Sandvik said in an email interview that she does not think of herself as an activist or advocate when she writes. In her own words, she said doesn't want her personal feelings to “shine through.”

She described her role as a journalist to be a “guard-dog in a community,” but that articles should remain relatively objective.

Similarly, when asked how her relationship with her community affects herself as a journalist, she responded that she “make[s] a clear border between work and [her] private life.” But, she added, she is always at work: “When you work in a local newspaper, it is the way to get the good stories.”

When asked to describe her style as a journalist she said, “human and non-aggressive.”

Sandvik tends to write mostly culture or feature articles – her favorites being articles with a particularly good narrative.

Her favorite article is one she wrote last spring about a 19-year-old girl training to be a reindeer herder.

Sandvik describes the article as taking a lot of effort as she and her team had to go out with the working herders in minus 20 degrees Celsius weather. They interviewed the girl and a number of experienced herders, took many pictures, and wrote and shot a video for the story.

Yet to Sandvik, all of this work was well worth the story that went with it. “The story just had to be told,” she said. “It was so special.”

Sandvik said the story “shows that it is still possible to live a

life outside the ordinary one – but you have to choose it.”

She also liked the story because she thought that its purpose was “to make people realize that they have to make choices in life. And that the choices affect how life will be, and that a focus on traditional jobs is possible to do. Be proud of native work.”

This kind of writing helps to show that there is still interest in very local subjects in parts of Norway.

Like Sandvik's reindeer herder article, the usual type of writing at papers in Norway is generally focused on portraying individuals in a good light.

Sandvik said that in Norway, journalists' ethical decisions when it comes to handling sensitive stories are based on a formalized code that journalists agree to follow.

“We have strict rules for writing sensitive stories, the ethics,” she said. “These are written down as orders we follow. I guess every country has these. If we write about something sensitive, sometimes the name is considered public; it depends of the person's role in the community, depends of what is the problem, depends on many things. It's difficult to say.”

She said many papers still write negative stories or publish the names of individuals involved if they see that it is in the best interest of the community.

Even in Norway, a country that has historically had very high newspaper readership, the future of the print newspaper is in question. Recent data shows a decline in circulation as more and more Norwegians are choosing online sources for their daily news, according to the Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research.

Today, 60 percent of Norwegians read at least one online source for news, whereas only 58 percent of Norwegians read at least one physical paper for news, according to the Norwegian Media Business Association's 2014 report.

But these trends have not severely affected local newspapers such as Hallingdolen. In fact, the paper has recently begun to require a subscription if people wish to access their online content.

“Local papers will maybe live longer in paper format than the larger ones. But still we have very good numbers of paper-readers of our paper,” Sandvik said. “People try advertising in social media, Facebook, etc., but as we say: You maybe have 2,000 friends – but we have 20,000.”

Recently, their newspaper began charging readers to access their content. Sandvik said readers were upset at first, “but what can they say? They don't work for free themselves – do they?”

Sandvik said she is hopeful about Norwegian journalism.

“Journalists are still very important for local areas, as well as the bigger cities,” she said. “We are still a guard-dog in the community. And I think for many years to come as well. It is still a good climate for journalism. We just have to make more and better work. Make better stories.”

# Community radio takes on social issues in Honduras

By ARIA KAMPFER

With a bachelor's degree in literature education and foreign languages, a master's degree in administration of education centers and another in counseling of family education, Róger Martínez Miralda is an impressive man.

He has a wife and six children, which is his inspiration for his radio program in Honduras that counsels parents in their relations and in strengthening their family. Miralda is also a guest contributor on the editorial column *Diario La Prensa*.

All of his work revolves around the similar themes of civility, morality, family, child rearing, and religion. Although Miralda produces radio and writes for a newspaper, when asked whether he is a journalist, Miralda quickly replies no via a Skype interview.

He says he is a communicator. His most basic reasoning for this answer is because journalism is a profession, but Miralda doesn't get paid very much for his contributions. Instead, he calls himself a "social adviser."

He doesn't write news or do investigative work. He doesn't interview people or write objectively. Instead, he educates his listeners and readers on a single issue that he believes he can help change: family relationships. Miralda is a communicator because he asks people what problems they need help with, then he broadcasts how to fix them.

Miralda has a huge job when it comes to changing the dynamics of family relationships in Honduras. He explains that Latin Americans are a traditional people and hold on to their habits and beliefs even if the rest of the world is changing. Miralda considers it his personal calling to show Hondurans that there are better ways to conduct their lives.

Honduras home-life is still the traditional ideology: the man works while domestic duties such as cleaning and child rearing are done almost exclusively by the woman.

Other issues he believes are important to address include ending the violence against women and saying no to machismo. Gender inequality is still very prevalent in Latin American countries and it is an important issue to address and change.

While Miralda may not be a journalist in the traditional sense, what he produces is still community radio. According to Bruce Girard, author of *A Passion for Radio: Radio Waves and Community*, "[Community Radio's] most distinguishing characteristic is its commitment to community participation at all levels. While listeners of commercial radio are able to participate in the programming in limited ways – via open line telephone shows or by requesting a favourite song, for example – community radio listeners are the producers, managers, directors, evaluators and even the owners of the stations."

When asked how he decides what to cover during a show, Miralda said unless there was something particular he wanted to speak on, his listeners decide. They mail in letters, send texts, post on social media, call in, or even stop him in the grocery store. Miralda said they rarely air live shows and let people call in because they get so many callers that it is impossible to develop

one topic. Miralda is an influential member of his community, and those who listen are involved and active listeners.

While listening to the radio is more popular in the upper, educated class, people of all income and social levels participate with radio in Honduras. Government officials listen to the grievances from the people who call in to complain, and often answer.

Unlike most radio stations in the U.S, radio in Honduras is a two-way communication. On top of that, the literacy rate in Honduras is 25 percent, so radio provides a way that the poor can keep in touch with news and the rest of the country without having an education. Community radio creates a bridging capital, bringing together people from different places and with different social or economic class status.

The power of community radio to communicate can be illustrated by the kidnapping of Ingrid Betancourt, a French-Colombian who was held hostage by a revolution group called FARC (the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) during her presidential campaign.

She, along with others, were held captive for six years in the jungle. They were brutally tortured, dehumanized, and pitted against each other. The guerillas who held them hostage gave them a radio for a little while every day to keep the prisoners from committing suicide. A man named Herbin Hoyos founded and hosted a radio program called "Voices of Kidnapping," a program that allowed the family members of hostages to speak on air, to tell the victims of life at home and to hold on to hope.

"I never attempted it," Betancourt said in a *Bloomberg News* article. "I put it off every day upon hearing my mom and my children on the radio."

The power of radio to bring people together, even under the circumstances of prison, is astounding. Hearing their families' voices was the only hope these hostages had in a six-year sentence of abuse and loneliness. Even without being able to actually speak with each other, hearing her mother's and children's voices was all the reason Betancourt needed to survive.

Since the 1920s, radio has risen as a popular and influential medium of communication. Radio can reach an audience that newspapers can't. People who live in rural areas, countries with low literacy rates, and regions with incomes too low to afford a newspaper all benefit from radio broadcasting. These stations are focused on reaching a specific audience, usually with a specific purpose, leading to the rise of community radio.

Community radio has roots as far back as 1947, when Bolivian Miners used radio to protest against the repressive autocratic and military government, according to Bolivian author Alfonso Gumicio-Dargon.

The only people allowed to vote were the *rosca*, or rich class, which only represented 10,000 of the population. Bolivian miners were an important part of the working class because 60 percent of Bolivia's exports were coal, and the news they broadcasted was very influential.

After the social uprising of 1952, the Bolivian Miners' radio stations began to gain power and multiply.

What started as two radio stations grew to 30, and although their social standing and wages didn't improve much, their influence over government decisions did.

Pride grew in the radio stations, which were all locally organized and run, paid for with a portion of the miners' wages.

They broadcasted anything from music to call-in complaints to grievances against the governments, often being the main communicator against the corrupted government between a decentralized people. The radio hosts were deeply respected and many went on to become successful journalists.

Even during military coups and other instability, the radio stations fought to remain open and the listeners fought to protect them.

Often, the Bolivian miners' radio stations were the last to be shut down, but eventually, after 50 years of broadcasting, they were all destroyed. Despite their demise, these community radio stations are the predecessors and inspiration for radio in other developing countries in the current time.

According to Steve Buckley, the president of the World Association for Community Radio Broadcasters, an international activist group dedicated to organizing and supporting community radio in developing countries, community radio grows in democratic nations.

In 1997, community radio began in Nepal following the first democratic revolution. It was used to advocate democracy and human rights during times of turmoil, then really flourished after the second democratic revolution in 2006.

Buckley also asserts that not only does community radio in nations with corrupt government "provide access to knowledge and information but can contribute to transparency, good governance and the rooting out of corruption."

Community radio is necessary to empower citizens with a voice against tyranny. Much like the Arab Spring where social media ousted corrupt leaders, radio has been a primary tool in speaking up against government.

A primary example of community radio is Bush Radio, which broadcasts from Cape Town, South Africa, and has been on the air since 1992. They had a rocky start; when the apartheid government wouldn't give Bush Radio a license, they started broadcasting illegally.

The government quickly shut them down, arresting the producer and co-producer. Supporters of the radio station rallied together and protested against the arrest, and a year later, all charges were dropped.

With the first democratic elections in 1994, Bush Radio was given a license to broadcast.

The station is well-known for its openness and liberal perspective. They air the only gay talk show on the continent, and once a week go to high schools around the country to talk to high schoolers about sex and HIV. They are community-based and care deeply for their listeners.

If a child goes missing, they stop all scheduled shows and report on the child, urgently calling all listeners to help find the kid. On Saturday nights, they have local kids do the broadcasting, as young as five years old.

One of the ways Bush Radio exerted its peaceful motives was when the Iraq War was first declared. Station director Zane Ibrahim remembers it, saying:

When the war started, *Bush Radio* had to immediately inform the people of the townships how it would affect them so they could make informed decisions about how they feel about the war. When President Bush gave the world a 48-hour ultimatum we decided to give him an ultimatum for peace, and we suspended all our programming for 48 hours, and played John Lennon's "Give Peace a Chance" 576 times, again and again.

Bolivian miners influenced government by bringing together and informing citizens. Community radio in Nepal advocated democracy and human rights while the country struggled to fully accept a democratic government. Bush Radio voices its own opinions while educating its listeners.

The ability of community radio to empower ordinary citizens is huge.

In countries where government is corrupt and where many people are poor or oppressed, community radio offers them a voice and a source of education as to what's going on around them.

# Blogger fights to get message past 'Great Firewall of China'

By ASHLEY MURR

Once, the Great Wall of China was built to protect its people. From its northern borders to its southern range, the wall was a miraculous achievement.

Today, there is a "Great Firewall of China" that defends unwanted government exposure. From government-fabricated stories to censored blogs, this wall is intimidating. Injustice lurks behind its heights.

Just as scaling the Great Wall may have been a daring act centuries ago, evading the "Great Firewall of China" may prove to be just as threatening. And it is this feat that citizen journalist Zhou Shuguang attempts on a regular basis.

Known online as Zola, 29-year-old Zhou Shuguang is a self-taught blogger who rose to fame in 2008 after his coverage of a series of government-sensitive events that he believed the public had a right to know.

A native of the Hunan province of China, Zola began his work in 2004 after dropping out of college. Since then, he has traversed the country digging up stories to report through his blog in hopes of chipping away at the Great Firewall and bringing increased press freedom to China's citizens.

His determined and rather fearless search for the truth in the midst of injustice and corruption quickly targeted him as a rising image of Chinese citizens and its media.

A citizen journalist, one who reports without ties to corporation and generally by means of social media, Zola reports stories not covered by traditional Chinese journalists who are heavily monitored by the state.

Beginning in March 2007 with his coverage of a "nailhouse," a case of illegal land acquisition by the Chinese government, Zola took advantage of the up-and-coming Internet blogs as the medium through which he communicated stories with hundreds of followers.

After this story, the hundreds became thousands.

With that, Zola took to blogging, saying in a *Wall Street Journal* article in July 2008, "Generally speaking, the local people have a belief in the Internet. They believe it can help them to get their voice heard."

And it is in this light that Zola confronts the "Great Firewall."

He scales the wall of falsified or censored information to become a new kind of gatekeeper, one that permits information to flow to the public uncensored while at the same time becoming a voice for the voices characteristically oppressed and beaten back.

Through his blog, Zola has the ability to reach thousands of readers both in China and outside its borders.

He wrote on his blog regarding one particular story on industry fraud: "It get almost 60k page view form [from] search engine referral, almost 500 people leave comments share story and some-one decide won't sign contract with such business company."

Because his blog is written in English and Chinese, those in foreign countries also are able to follow his reports.

While the fame of thousands of followers is appealing and enables his message and stories to reach his neighbors and people around the world, it is the simple desire to make a difference that motivates Zola.

His hope is to "save potential victim[s]" because "people deserve to know," he wrote.

Even with the threat of the government being able to shut down his work and delete the information he has compiled, he said the risk is well worth it. In stories of individual lives, Zola recognizes that it may "make a litter [little] difference, but it is huge difference for system."

In his story regarding the murder of a teenage girl, he set out covering the story with the mindset of opening the gates and letting the voices be heard in order to make a difference. According to government authorities and local police, the girl committed suicide from a bridge after watching a man do pushups. Her parents and other citizens however, claimed that the girl was raped and murdered by the son of a local official.

Without the work of Zola, the story of the grieving and angry villagers would have likely simply slipped into the file cabinet of officials and been kept hushed among a select group.

This censoring and falsifying of information are exactly the weak points that Zola targets in his reporting.

Definition of journalism, right?

Not in the China's media climate.

When asked if he considered himself a journalist, Zola simply replied via e-mail, "I am not journalist, journalist is most respected job and need official certificate especially in China. I am guilty if admit as journalist without certificate."

Going so far as to block 500,000 websites, including Facebook, Twitter, Gmail, and Zola's blog, according to an article in the *Huffington Post*, the Chinese government is countering the attack of its protective wall by building it higher.

In 2008, after his rapid rise to fame, becoming China's second "citizen journalist," his blog was blocked by the Chinese government. Zola states, "Authorities control all mainstream media, censored all sensitive news but not include me. I can distribute news content via RSS reader or social network service."

With his loophole of using American and foreign websites, Zola continues to reach thousands upon thousands of readers.

# U.S. journalist breaking the ice on journalistic censorship

By LEXI WACKER

Iceland consistently finds itself on the top 10 list of the freest countries in the world when it comes to freedom of the press. For journalists, this translates into better access to sources, heightened safety, and stronger protections against mistreatment during news investigations as well as in the aftermath of putting forth the truth. “Journalists in Iceland say they work in relative safety with generally good access to politicians and sources – an atmosphere much different from their news counterparts in repressive regimes like China, Cuba, Mexico, Pakistan and Russia,” wrote Jennifer Karchmer in a 2012 article in the *Reykjavik Grapevine*.

These freedoms began with the 2008 financial crash and gained impetus when, in 2010, the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative (IMMI) and WikiLeaks opted to propose a journalistic safe haven.

Karchmer, a U.S. citizen and a member of Reporters Without Borders, went to Iceland in 2012 to look at how journalists viewed freedom of the press and how well the system of free speech really worked. During her trip, she found that, in general, reporters in Iceland enjoyed a better work atmosphere than found in many other countries.

In “A Letter from Iceland,” published by *Whatcom Watch*, Karchmer wrote that journalists have easy access to sources that are traditionally closed off in other nations. Icelandic reporters can garner an interview with politicians without having to deal with public relations offices or security. Likewise, the atmosphere in Iceland seems to shrink the size of the country to a much more personal level, making it easy to get in touch with nearly anyone with very little trouble or effort.

However, the big surprise was the disparity she found in the definition of “free” and the idea that journalists in Iceland had grave concerns over their chosen profession. While reviewing journalism practices it became clear that although the working conditions of reporters are better in Iceland, the media there are still controlled to some degree by politics, nepotism and money.

As an example, she continued in her article, “The other big theme is cronyism/nepotism: family members doing favors for others and getting them into places of power due to their connections versus qualifications. With a country of this (small) size, it has been a way of life.”

This sense of entitlement is something the press is fighting against. They want to report facts that everyone knows as facts, but often are afraid to do so because of the smallness of the country and the repercussions this can have on oneself or one’s family. One of the ways Icelandic reporters are suppressed is through subtle censorship, or an increase in libel suits that can leave journalists broke and/or jobless.

This is something IMMI and Reporters Without Borders are working to remedy. Reporters Without Borders is a Paris-based organization that began in 1985 with the purpose of improving safety, defending freedom of speech and exposing the mistreatment of reporters.

In addition to helping journalists, RWB was instrumental in

creating the freedom index based on calculations and surveys that include threats, harm and deaths inflicted upon journalists within each country. This is the list that often honors Iceland as a free country in regards to the press.

As a member of Reporters Without Borders, Karchmer writes articles on freedom of press, as well as issues that face small community newspapers. With only two national newspapers and a small handful of weekly publications, Karchmer feels that the entire country is a single community.

Despite its population of 330,000, Karchmer believes that Iceland is a close-knit community with everyone knowing everyone else’s business. On her website, she addresses this, commenting several times on how “small” the country is in regards to social and political life.

She further illustrates this idea in an email interview: “It’s true that everyone knows everyone and that if you’re looking for Smari, Birgitta or Jon you ask for them by first name at the cafe and someone will know them. The phone book lists people by first name.”

This sense of closeness creates a unique sense of unity and can make it difficult for reporters to navigate the nuances of community in terms of reporting on difficult or revealing situation.

In fact, despite the progress made by IMMI, press freedom has been on the decline in Iceland for the past two years. With the IMMI laws that passed, only about 50 percent of them have been implemented and practiced.

Additionally, IMMI is largely a volunteer program run without headquarters or stable funding, making the push for true journalistic freedom difficult to attain.

This is where organizations like Reporters Without Borders and journalists like Jennifer Karchmer come into play. By discussing the difficulties of true freedom of the press and fighting for the uncensored right to report the truth, laws can be changed to protect the world’s right to factual information and the reporters who diligently unearth the real news, not just the stories backed and approved by corporations, politicians or government entities. Of all her articles, Karchmer’s favorite includes “Two Years Old: IMMI Inches Through Icelandic Parliament.” This independent research project and the resulting article was Karchmer’s first time writing for an international audience. It also happened to be published in her native English language in the prominent *Reykjavik Grapevine* on a topic she holds dear. She worked heavily with an editor over the course of several weeks to perfect it for the Icelandic community.

She calls it her “enterprise story,” one she could really dig into. And dig she did. From start to finish, Karchmer spent months researching for the project and visiting Iceland to gain a better understanding of what she wanted to relay and why. This self-funded, self-directed project not only earned her an international byline, but it also raised awareness for an important aspect of journalism worldwide.

Her work in this area has heightened awareness of the censorship problem encountered by many journalists, while shedding light on some solutions, namely the work being done by IMMI

# Cambodian newspaper hopes to inspire strong journalism

By MACKENZIE LIEBL

“All the News without Fear or Favor”: This is the motto of the *Cambodia Daily* newspaper.

The *Daily* was started in 1993 by American journalist Bernard Krisher, whose goal was to create an independent newspaper that had the press freedom that was necessary to report stories in Cambodia.

Krisher covered the nation of Cambodia leading up to 1993 when he worked for *Newsweek* in the U.S. as a primary Asian correspondent.

Cambodia has had a tumultuous history, starting in the mid-1970s when the Pol Pot regime came in and more than one million people were killed in a genocide, which resulted in the nation becoming one of the poorest in Southeast Asia.

Even today, Cambodia struggles with issues of corruption, crime and insecurity in its political system.

In fact, according to the Human Development Index, Cambodia ranks at 136 in a measure that combines health, education and income.

Its press freedoms are equally low. Cambodia has a ranking of 144 on the Reporters Without Borders website.

Krisher’s vision was that the *Cambodia Daily* would provide a foundation that press freedom could build upon.

Although the newspaper’s staff is about half foreigners, more and more native Cambodian journalists are being trained in a system that promotes objective, thoughtful journalism.

Many newspapers in the country have issues with objectivity since many are funded by one of the many political parties in Cambodia.

This is what makes the *Daily* special; since it is not funded by a political party but rather funded primarily by NGOs or international companies, it does not have political influence on the news it reports.

The newspaper is published six days a week in both English

and Khmer, the language most Cambodians speak.

Its stories vary much like a traditional newspaper, covering cultural issues, crime reports, and providing political information.

Although the readership of the *Daily* in Cambodia is not as high as they might like it to be, their ultimate goal is to be able to provide their news to a large enough portion of the population so that they are able to be better informed on major issues that affect the nation, according to the newspaper’s editor-in-chief Colin Meyn.

Meyn has lived in Cambodia for six and a half years since graduating from Northwestern University.

When asked about his favorite stories, he said via a Skype interview that he viewed the political analysis pieces he has written as those he is most proud of, specifically those covering the 2013 elections.

These elections were very important because, for the first time, the opposition party gained some seats in the government, thereby increasing its future influence in government. Along with that, the election results actually showed how the nation had been displeased with the actions of the government, since the popularity of the primary party (the Cambodia People’s Party) and its leader, Prime Minister Hun Sen, had clearly decreased.

Meyn said he sees the role the newspaper plays with the government as important and essential.

Meyn is very passionate about the newspaper he works for and sees its purpose as “setting a standard for good journalism.”

He said his vision is to have the *Daily* continue to be strictly independent and encourage not only its own reporters but other Cambodian newspapers to engage in high-quality journalism.

He said now that Cambodia is working to be a high-functioning democracy, the media must assist in that by holding those with power accountable for following through with their promises and also must have its actions described very thoroughly and objectively, whether they are good or bad.

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## U.S. journalist breaking continued from page 27

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in helping to improve the rights, safety and freedom of reporters on a global level.

Her passion can be summed up in the Reporters Without Borders slogan: “Don’t wait to be deprived of news to stand up and fight for it.”

Jennifer Karchmer, a 15-year veteran in the field of journalism, has done exactly that. She stepped outside the role as a United States’ journalist and wrote an article that binds all reporters in their quest to protect the freedom of information.

# The role of social media and the Internet in Ukraine's fight for independence

By LUKE LECHTENBERG

Ukraine, a country torn by ideological and ethnic differences, gained global attention in 2014 when it ousted President Viktor Yanukovich and was soon thereafter invaded by the Russian Federation.

It is in this conflict-ridden, eastern European country that radio news editor and program author Yuriy Zalizniak resides. Zalizniak works at FM Galychyna, the largest western-Ukrainian regional radio network with an estimated two million listeners.

According to Zalizniak, the radio station aims to preserve the "past and local peculiarities" of western Ukraine through local news, folk and pop music, and educational programs. Zalizniak describes the station's political focus as "patriotic, Ukraine-oriented, [and] pro-western."

Zalizniak published an essay in the Spring 2015 issue of *Grassroots Editor* titled, "Ukraine: Activist communities use social media to circumvent media oligarchies." In it, he discusses the current status of community journalism in Ukraine.

Compared to most democratic nations, Ukraine lags behind in its level of community media with substantially fewer publications.

The main reason for this deficiency is that media in Ukraine is "dominated by local oligarchs with close ties to the presidential families."

The Ukrainian oligarchs prefer to buy media outlets that increase their wealth and power rather than invest in independent community-focused media.

The community publications that do exist are mostly "operated by local activists, and often do not have stable staffing or financial support," usually found in the form of flyers and newsletters.

As a result, they are "situational...often with no regular publication periods" and rarely last over long periods of time. Some examples are student newspapers at the universities and local Catholic Church bulletins.

Zalizniak believes the Internet is the only hope that community media have in Ukraine as it provides Ukrainians with the ability to communicate and publish their ideas in a much cheaper and easier way than print media or TV.

It is this community-Internet-media presence that sparked the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution, also referred to as Euromaidan. As an article in *TechPresident* asserted: "there are few doubts that the Internet and social media played major roles in the revolution."

Since breaking away from the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine has been mired in political and economic trouble.

The demographic and ideological split between native Russians and native, pro-European, Ukrainians has made it difficult for the country to decide which path it should take to begin to mend its economic woes.

Many people in eastern Ukraine favor a political and economic alliance with Russia while many in western Ukraine favor aligning the country with the European Union.

This split was the primary catalyst of the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution.

For some time, the Ukrainian government seemed to be taking steps to establish closer ties with the European Union, as then-President Viktor Yanukovich had been, according to a December 2013 article in *The Boston Globe*, engaged in "years of negotiations with Brussels [the headquarters of the European Commission]" to sign an economic agreement with the EU.

However, in 2013 Yanukovich abruptly ended talks with the EU, citing the deal's "stringent" austerity measures and Russia's threat to stop exporting oil and other resources to Ukraine.

Under this pretext, Yanukovich began economic talks with President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

CNN reported that Putin offered Ukraine a \$15 billion bailout and a nearly 50 percent slash in the price Ukrainians paid for gas imported from Russia.

This deal further spurned pro-European protesters occupying the capital city of Kiev, who were already outraged at Yanukovich's rejection of the economic deal with the European Union.

After Yanukovich's deal with Russia, *TechPresident* reported that people began to use the hashtags "#euromaidan and #євромайдан on Twitter and Facebook" to encourage people to come to Independence Square in Kiev.

"A number of independent video streams" were also started to provide constant footage of Independence Square.

On Feb. 17, 2014, the BBC reported that pro-government police forces "announced over loudspeakers that they were about to begin 'an anti-terror operation.'"

The police's counter-protest operation employed armored vehicles, stun grenades, water cannons, and rubber bullets. Protestors responded by lighting road-blocks ablaze and throwing Molotov cocktails at police.

According to *TechPresident*, they used Facebook to coordinate the protest efforts by "providing logistical and support information...giving tips on how to behave and react to police, and uploading videos of police brutality."

The conflict continued to escalate, and according to Sputnik News on Feb. 20 the Interior Minister of Ukraine authorized the police to use live ammunition in an attempt to disband the protesters.

In just a couple of days, a staggering amount of Ukrainian protesters lost their lives, exceeding 100 according to a Ukrainian publication.

After several days of violent confrontation between police and protesters, the BBC announced that on Feb. 23 Yanukovich had fled the country and the Ukrainian parliament had unanimously voted to impeach him, making the Speaker the interim president.

After the protests ended, *TechPresident* noted that an independent research study conducted by the "National Pedagogical University...in Kiev confirmed the predominance of Facebook in organizing the protests."

As Zalizniak claimed in his essay, the Internet is the future of community media in Ukraine. Looking at the role that the internet played in Euromaidan indicates that, indeed, the Internet is providing Ukrainians who did not originally have a voice a means to express their thoughts and unite around a common goal.

## History of Russian-Ukrainian Relations

While it is undoubtable that the split between Russian and Ukrainian ethnicities played a substantial role in Euromaidan, where does this ethnic and ideological tension come from? To gain a better understanding of the root causes of Euromaidan and the other conflicts between Ukrainians and Russians, here is a brief examination of the history of Russian-Ukrainian relations.

According to Infoplease, an online version of The Columbia Encyclopedia published by Columbia University Press, the area that we consider to be modern-day Ukraine was constantly changing hands, with the emergence of a distinct Ukrainian culture occurring during the 13th century.

Ukraine's first inhabitants (pre-7th century) were called the Scythians, and were later displaced in succession by the Gothic, Hun, and then Avar invaders.

## The Kievan Rus

Through the late 9th on into the mid-13th century, a people called the Kievan Rus inhabited Ukraine. These people were a mixture of Slavic and Scandinavian descent.

According to Serhii Plokhii, a professor of Ukrainian History at Harvard, the present-day peoples of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine all trace their ancestry to the Kievan Rus. But when the Mongols conquered the Kievan Rus in the 13th century, the divergence between Ukrainian and Russian history began.

The Russians, united under the Mongols, formed the Russian state which expanded into the Russian Federation that we are familiar with today.

The Ukrainians fell under the rule of the expanding nation of Lithuania.

## Middle Ages

According to Infoplease, the actual term "Ukraine," which means borderland, was coined in the 16th century when the kingdoms of Poland-Lithuania and Russia were fighting for control of Ukraine.

Under Polish rule, the Ukrainians were persecuted for their

practice of Christian Orthodoxy, and by the 17th century the Ukrainians had formed a group called the Cossacks to resist Polish rule.

Being much weaker than the kingdom of Poland-Lithuania, the Ukrainians made a treaty with Moscow in 1654 to become a Russian protectorate.

This treaty expressly granted Ukrainians great independence and autonomy, but the Russians quickly began to disregard these rights.

As a result, Ukraine aligned itself with its former enemy, Poland, and declared war on Russia in 1658.

The ensuing war lasted for nine years, and at its conclusion Ukraine was divided between Russia and Poland.

Ukraine would try again to wage war against Russia, this time with the help of Sweden, but by 1775 Ukraine had lost all political autonomy and was divided between Russia, Poland, and Austria.

## Modern Era – The Soviet Union

Not until 1917 was Ukraine able to form a new independent government, which was protected by the Central Powers in WWI from Russian invasion.

But as a result of the WWI armistice, the Central Powers were forced to withdraw from Ukraine and the Red Army took control of Kiev, and in 1922 Ukraine became one of the member republics of the USSR.

Under the rule of USSR Premier Vladimir Lenin, the Ukrainians were allowed a certain degree of cultural self-rule and autonomy.

However, when Joseph Stalin assumed control of the Communist Party in 1929, what little autonomy Ukraine had was lost.

Stalin required that all grain produced in Ukraine be exported. In effect, Stalin instituted an extermination-by-hunger policy in Ukraine, and as a result more than seven million Ukrainians died (to put this into perspective, more Ukrainians died under Stalin's starvation policy than Jews died from Nazi extermination).

Ukraine continued under Soviet rule until 1991 when the Soviet Union was dissolved.

# Sveriges (Swedish) Radio: Giving citizens a chance to have their own opinions

By CALI SKARET

To Andreas Miller, local journalism in Sweden is about more than getting information on an issue and reporting it. It's about the citizens themselves. It's about the people who are affected by the decisions of the government.

He has very high expectations for his writers at Swedish Radio, especially since they are reporting for P4 – the local arm of Swedish Radio, where Miller is the channel manager.

“(My reporters) must give the citizens a chance to make their own choice as members of the democratic society,” Miller said in a Skype interview.

Miller said he lives in a culture that supports equal rights, freedom of expression and freedom of speech. Miller wants his reporters to be transparent.

“[They] have to be good listeners,” Andreas said. “[You must] recognize what you need to ask your source. Ask questions but listen to what your source is saying. That is the most important.”

Miller wants to make sure that the citizens are the ones who are being heard. He wants to publish information that is relevant to them and information that will benefit them.

His reporters must have contacts but not personal relationships with their sources.

“[My journalists] must be independent,” Miller said. “They cannot have strong views about certain issues. But they must have a lot of contacts so that they can be relevant.”

## Swedish media landscape

One of the most important things that Scandinavian countries are known for is the government funding of media outlets.

According to the media watchdog organization Freedom House, Sweden has some of the most, if not the most, uncensored media in the world. This is unique because of the amount of government support and funding they have.

Sweden was the first country to have a law abolishing censorship and allowing freedom of the press.

It all started in 1718 when Sweden was experiencing the “Era of Freedom,” known to them as “Frihetstiden.” The Era of Freedom in Sweden stemmed from their government turning from absolutism to more of a parliamentary government. The Swedes realized that if they could gain more freedom from the government, they would be able to have more freedom of speech.

As print journalism became more popular, radio in Sweden was just getting started in 1925. Advertising was banned complete-

ly from radio stations in the early stages. All of the stations were nonprofit organizations, which were later able to create “neighborhood stations” or community stations.

“In 2008, radio reached 74 percent of all Swedes an average day,” according to the European Journalism Center (EJC). “The time spent on radio listening has gradually dropped in recent years, probably because of the expansion of mp3 players, which in 2008 had a daily reach of almost 20 percent, but also because of the Internet.”

## Sveriges (Swedish) Radio

The United States has National Public Radio (NPR) with about 900 stations across the country reaching an audience of about 20.9 million listeners each week.

Swedish Radio is the equivalent of NPR in the United States. It has four main stations and each station has a different purpose. Sveriges Radio (Swedish Radio) has close to 60 percent of the radio audience market, according to a report from the European Journalism Centre.

The station called P1 focuses on topics like political debate and analysis. This is information that can be on a national or international scale. P2 broadcasts music, educational programming, and sometimes broadcasts things in minority languages. P3 is for the younger population of Sweden, playing music to their taste and discussing topics that interest them.

P4 is radio at a more local level; its content looks at issues in surrounding communities. During the week they use 25 different local stations for broadcasting, but on the weekends they lose some listeners so they broadcast on a national level.

The fourth main station focuses on local sports, government, music groups, and educational systems. For example, it discusses the local soccer team and local campaigns in surrounding communities.

Swedish Radio is a huge advocate of social media. According to *Social Media: A Handbook for Journalists*, written together by the staff of Swedish Radio, social media is a huge factor in fact checking and listenership.

The handbook states, “Today most Swedes use social media in one way or another. This means that research in social media offers good opportunities for finding and evaluating news, and for analyzing the audience and their interests.”

Swedish Radio uses social media for its listeners' benefit and also for its own. It is used to connect listeners to other listeners, to gain viewers, and to find and fact-check news.

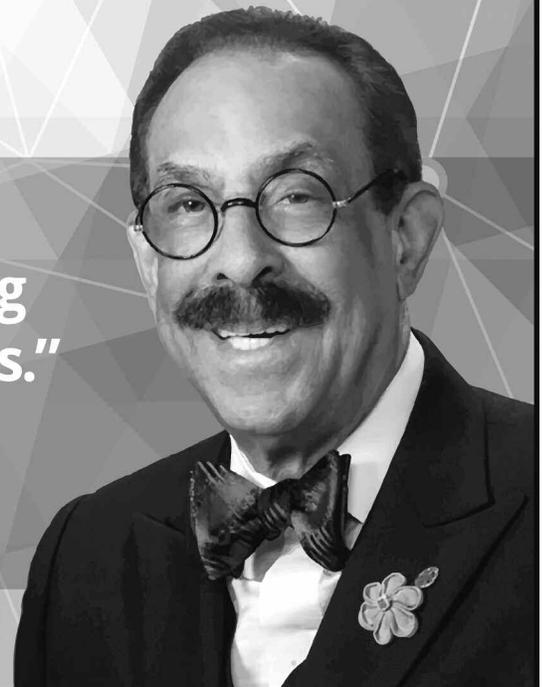
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Published by the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors

**Institute of International Studies  
Missouri Southern State University**

3950 East Newman Road

Joplin, MO 64801-1595

(417) 625-9736