

# MIP MISSOURI PRESS NEWS

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# Newspapers facilitate democracy

For me, two important events happened on March 13. The first was Democracy Day, an event that takes place at Eldon Upper Elementary School every year.

The event started after Dawn Kitchell and I were discussing the disconnect of today's youth with their communities and government at a National Newspaper Association meeting in Oklahoma. Upon returning home I talked with The Advertiser's Newspapers In Education coordinator, Tammy Witherspoon, about the issue and Democracy Day was born.

Every year since its beginning we've had approximately 75 community leaders talk to students about what they do. There is a town forum where student council members "grill" legislators. There is a mini press corps that roams the halls taking photographs and interviewing attendees. After the event, a school newspaper is produced and printed in *The Advertiser*.

My role in Democracy Day is to talk about the importance of newspapers in our community. It goes something like this:

I ask the students what they think a newspaper does and why. The first student who answers gets a gold coin tossed to them (a trick I learned from Ralph Manley during a real estate class at Southwest Missouri State, or Missouri State, or whatever they call it now). Next I ask who has been to a school board meeting. Normally one, maybe two, raise their hands. I ask whose parents have been to a school board meeting. Another one or two hands go up.

By this time I have usually picked out the class clown (we'll call her Suzie), the most talkative (Tommy), and a bored student (Jimmy).

I tell a story that goes something like this: "Since very few of you, and very few of your parents, have been to a school board meeting, what would happen if the school board decided

to enact some new rules? And those rules are- Jimmy is going to be given a sharp stick. He is going to chase the rest of you down the hall. You have to walk backwards. Suzie has two tigers she has trained to chew on students, just a little, we hope. Tiger training is difficult, and Suzie isn't that good at it. She will let them go just before you get to class. If you move fast (backwards) they won't catch you. Tommy has been learning to walk on his hands. All of you will follow Tommy, and walk on your hands, and only your hands, during recess."

At this point I pause, and most of the students laugh.

"Do you think your parents would be happy about these new school rules? Would you be happy? Do you think you and your parents would have wanted to know the school board was talking about these rule changes before they voted to make them effective?"

The story is a bit hokey, but it makes a point. "Newspapers help busy people know what is going on." People who read the newspaper are able to know when government is talking about rule changes, and this allows them to voice concerns about such actions before they are enacted.

Yes, I know we do more than just provide essential information. We entertain, we document history, right social wrongs, protect the weak ... on and on depending on the publication. But I think informing our communities is the most important.

Which leads to the second important event.

Between classes during Democracy Day, a frantic Tammy Witherspoon ran into the room and said, "It is happening. We are now in a state of emergency because of COVID-19". I was really hoping this would just go away, but it hasn't.

As I said earlier, our job as a community newspaper is to inform our readers. The week after the state-of-emergency announcement was

difficult. We would write a story and the situation would change before we could get the information out to the public. The newsroom was stressing out

After all the newspapers were finally printed, I caught my breath and marveled at what we had just accomplished. I was proud of the product we produced. I was thinking this is what we are here for, to bring some sort of order to a world where rumors are just a click away. Over the ensuing weeks, we have dispelled too many rumors to count. We did so on social media, our print product and our website. Accuracy matters. We have an opportunity to solidify the trust our community puts in us, or we could explode the house the people before us built.

My advice is to make plans for the worse, but hope and pray for the best.

The Missouri Press Association started a work from home program. Our newspapers are exploring options to limit our exposure. It is a difficult time, but we have a job to do and our communities are looking to us for the information to keep them going.

Try to make people smile a little, too. We ran an advertisement this past week that included nearly half of page of blank paper. The ad said, "Almost out of TP? We have you covered. *The Advertiser* is printing a special cut out below for those last resort moments. *The Advertiser* ... Helping the community since 1894."

\*\*\*

Oh, and a third important event happened on March 13. It was my parents 44th wedding anniversary. Without them I wouldn't be here, literally.





# Press association events canceled due to coronavirus

By Missouri Press Staff  
*Missouri Press News*

Out of concern for our members' health and well-being regarding the ongoing threat posed by COVID-19 and out of respect to our members' primary commitment to provide news and information to the communities you serve, the following events have been canceled or postponed at this time:

- **Missouri Press Association Past Presidents Dinner**, which was scheduled for Thursday, April 16, in Arrow Rock is postponed with no rescheduled date at this time. Please continue to send in your surveys with what you've been up to this year and we will send out a newsletter when that information is compiled.

- **Ozark Press Association**, which was scheduled for Friday, April 17, in Springfield. If you had already registered to attend Ozark Press Association, your fees will

be credited towards the rescheduled event, with that date announced later.

- **Missouri Press Advertising and Marketing Executives Annual Meeting (MPAME)**, which was scheduled for April 23-24, at Camden on the Lake in Lake Ozark. If you registered for this event, your registration fee should have already been refunded. New arrangements will be announced soon.

If you made travel or hotel reservations for any of these events, please take appropriate measures to cancel those arrangements.

Thank you for your understanding and for your service to your communities during this time

**Please reach out to Missouri Press Association if there is anything we can do to help you in your efforts.**

**Please take care!**

## MPA office has intermittent hours during pandemic *All staff continue working remotely, available to members by email*

By Missouri Press Staff  
*Missouri Press News*

In response to concerns about the coronavirus and recommendations to limit exposure, the Missouri Press Association is planning to have intermittent office hours in the coming weeks.

On March 25, the city of Columbia and Boone County enacted a shelter-in-place order until April 24. This order is similar to those issued in other cities throughout the state.

All Missouri Press employees will be available by email and will continue to work for the benefit of our member newspapers. You will also continue to have access to MPA Legal Hotline Attorney Jean Maneke.

Weekly statewide classified ads will still be distributed by email, and you can access these ads yourself at [mo-ads.com](http://mo-ads.com).

Missouri Press Service will continue to pursue advertising opportunities for you and send insertion orders as they become available.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Missouri Press staff. Email addresses for each staff member are listed below.

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# Coronavirus upends normal for Missouri newspapers, communities

*Information changing daily as newspapers struggle to continue operating and cover the news*

**By Matthew Barba**  
*Missouri Press News*

As March 2020 showed us, it only took a few days for what society considers “normal” to be completely upended as a global pandemic finally found its way to Missouri.

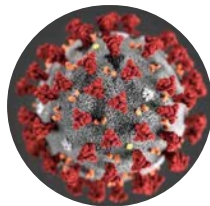
Since late 2019, global media has been giving us regular updates about the novel coronavirus COVID-19's progress around the world. It wasn't until early March, however, that Missourians got their first experience with the new contagion and the ensuing weeks have left many communities reeling from the fallout of closures, cancellations and orders to shelter in place.

Social distancing has become the new buzz word as media outlets, government organizations and community leaders stress the importance of minimizing the potential to spread the virus.

Headlines have read like dominos falling in succession, with schools suspending on-campus classes, which was followed by community events being canceled, and then restaurants being ordered to close their dining rooms to customers.

On March 13, Missouri Gov. Mike Parson issued a state of emergency, the same day Pres. Donald Trump declared a national state of emergency. The main benefit of doing so is to allow governments greater access to funding that can help in the response to the pandemic.

As of this writing, four of the state's largest cities, Kansas City, St. Louis, Springfield and Columbia, had issued varying versions of “shelter-in-place” orders.



**Graphic of COVID-19.**  
(Submitted)



With COVID-19, stores such as this Orscheln in Owensville began marking spaces to ensure shoppers kept their “social distance” as a means of preventing people from infecting each other. (Submitted photo, Dave Marner)



Gov. Mike Parson held a press conference on March 13 to declare a state of emergency in Missouri due to the impending spread of COVID-19, a novel coronavirus that at the time of publication had resulted in more than 900 confirmed cases and 12 deaths in the state. (Submitted photo, Dave Marner, Gasconade County Republican, Owensville)

## **Panic buying and lost revenue**

Missouri's smaller communities, where residents may not have as many resources to draw upon, are being hit just as hard as their larger counterparts. In Willow Springs, population 2,184, the uncertainty of a new disease finding its way there resulted in a scene repeated in communities across the Show-Me State.

*Howell County News* Publisher Amanda Mendez said that in mid-March, less than two weeks after the first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported in Missouri, all the stores where her newspaper has racks were cleaned out of toilet paper. The run on toilet paper quickly became a source of material for jokes on the internet.

What's no joking matter for Mendez is the loss of revenue she expects to see in the time that coronavirus has various organizations shut down or operating in limited scope.

“Just since I've walked in the door this morning, I've lost more than \$400 in ad revenue for next week's edition. Mostly, real estate agents have been canceling their ads,” she said in a March 18 email. “With the courts closing, I am anticipating a sizable dip in revenue over the next month because I will be missing legal publications. With municipal elections postponed, I'm losing revenue from publication of the ballots.”

**Continued on Page 5**



## Continued from Page 4: Keeping newsrooms going



A shopper at the Owensville Walmart looks over what eggs remain to buy after other shoppers all but stripped the shelves bare. Lots of communities experienced panic-buying and hoarding groceries and other household necessities in the early weeks of the coronavirus pandemic. (Submitted photo, Dave Marner, Gasconade County Republican, Owensville)

Jack Miles, editor of the *Richmond News*, responded in mid-March that his newspaper was seeing the panicked reaction of a community unsure about the immediate future in the face of an unknown illness.

"We have had several ads canceled, event and auction ads," Miles wrote. "Worthy of note: no one has advertised having a special on toilet paper or hand sanitizer."

Not that there would be any to sell on special, Miles added, "Panic buying is in full force, though. Some of the store shelves bring to mind the Soviet Union. If I had time, I'd call Branson and interview Yakov Smirnoff about the similarity."

Beth McPherson, co-publisher of *The Weston Chronicle*, described her community's own apocalyptic grocery store scene: "Our grocery store is out of toilet paper, rice and some guy just bought out all their chewing tobacco. We have our priorities here."

McPherson said many stores were planning to close for the remainder of the month of March and the newspaper was using social media to report all the closing updates.

"We're encouraging people to email,

mail or phone in news and ads," she said. "We have a bunch of pens someone gave us as a joke several years ago. They're now on the counter with a note saying they're new pens, feel free to use one and take it with you."

Karin Althoff, advertising manager for *Lewis County Press-News Journal*, said she is seeing a lot of ads being

pulled for events in their coverage area.

"As a community, we have had a lot of events canceled," Althoff said. "Fish fry's, auctions ... and that also means pulling the ads that would advertise these events."

The *Press-News Journal* staff is working from home when able, but Althoff said she is reminded of the global effects of the virus when she reads the news.

"Personally, I watch with prayers in my heart as the situation in Germany worsens. I have family living there," she said. "But I'm optimistically pressing on and moving forward. Let common sense prevail!"

Robin Gregg said *The Monroe County Appeal* in Paris is working remotely with office doors closed until further notice, conducting all article interviews and ad sales via phone and email. The pace of event cancellations and closures was making it hard to keep up with everything.

### Continuing to inform readers

Jim Van Nostrand, executive editor of the *Columbia Daily Tribune* and Missouri state editor for Gannett, reassured readers via column that the Tribune's staff was taking its response to coronavirus very seriously.

**Continued on Page 6**



The Grandview Board of Aldermen practice social distancing during their work session meeting on Tuesday, March 17. Mayor Leonard Jones has since implemented virtual meetings for government to continue while the county is under the stay-at-home directive from Jackson County Executive Frank White, Jr. (Submitted Photo, Mary Wilson, Jackson County Advocate, Grandview)

## Continued from Page 5: MPA continues working for you

"Most of our newsroom staff is telecommuting away from the office for the next few weeks, to do our part to help contain any possible spread. We will reassess the timing of our return based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and other experts," Van Nostrand wrote. "Our reporters will continue to report the news, circulating about town as much as necessary. However, we've asked them to take special precautions, such as avoiding large gatherings and limiting close personal contact."

Miles said the *Richmond News* staff has discussed working remotely but has been hesitant.

We have a small staff in a large office, which allows for lots of space between people," he said. "We are doing all we can to keep the public informed."

Rob Viehman, publisher of the *Cuba Free Press*, *Steelville Star-Crawford Mirror* and *Saint James Press*, said his newspapers were their normal size for the last week of March, but he would be making major cutbacks beginning the first week of April. Lots of stuff that would have made the regular paper will instead be posted online.

"Our education news and sports has basically dried up, so those pages are an easy cut. We normally do an outdoor page in all three papers but will put that online only," Viehman said. "We average 20 to 24 pages when we don't have a special section, but I'm hoping to get all three papers down to about 12 pages next week."

Viehman has been pushing subscription sales, as well, encouraging people to stay home and have the newspaper delivered to them instead of going out to get it from the rack. To that end, he has also cut back on copies going to racks as more people stay home, practice social distance and generally avoid public places for the time being.

Viehman also cut hours, both for his office and his employees. The former is only open Monday, Wednesday and Friday in Cuba and St. James, and Monday and Wednesday in Steelville.



Volunteers are scarce at Grandview Assistance Program, which provides food to clients in Grandview, MO. Executive Director John Maloney said that all of his regular volunteers are senior citizens, and his organization is looking at different ways to provide families the essentials they need during this time. (Submitted Photo, Mary Wilson, Jackson County Advocate, Grandview)

For his employees, they have been reduced to 24 hours a week and he has removed himself from the payroll completely.

"One thing publishers should seriously look at is Missouri's Shared Work program, which I signed up for last week and already received approval," Viehman said in late March. "Rather than laying off some employees, it allows you to reduce hours across the board and let unemployment make up the difference. It does count against your unemployment account with the state, but my claims have been very low over the years."

"I would like to say, my employees have been very understanding and I hope they will continue to be if this goes as far sideways as I fear it might," he said.

### Working with schools

While education news and sports have basically dried up because schools are not in session, at least in traditional classrooms, Viehman has been working with one of the districts he covers to get students subscriptions to the newspaper so they can continue to benefit from reading the news every

week.

"The Steelville superintendent reached out to me about buying subs for all students whose families are not already subscribers while they were out of school, as well as purchasing two full pages every week for the next four weeks to promote in-home education," Viehman said. "Now, I hope I can convince my other districts to do the same."

### A message from MPA Executive Director Mark Maassen

As information seems to change on a daily basis, this story as written, a snapshot representing just a handful of Missouri newspapers coping in the early weeks of the pandemic in the state, could be completely outdated when it finally makes it to print in the pages of the Missouri Press News.

"To all Missouri Press' members, please stay safe in the coming weeks and don't hesitate to contact the Association with questions about how we can help you continue to serve your communities in this trying time. Although we are not physically in the Columbia office at this time, we continue working diligently for you."





# BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

The 2020 Missouri Press Foundation Better Newspaper Contest template is open and members can submit entries through the extended deadline of **Friday, April 17**. Entries **MUST** be uploaded by 11 p.m. **Friday, April 17**.

All categories for Missouri's 2020 Better Newspaper Contest now require digital entries. Missouri's BNC will no longer accept mailed-in entries for any categories.

If you need help entering any category, including those that previously required mailed-in entries, contact Matthew Barba ([mbarba@mopress.com](mailto:mbarba@mopress.com)) or Kristie Fortier ([kfortier@mopress.com](mailto:kfortier@mopress.com)) for assistance. Due to intermittent office hours resulting from the coronavirus epidemic, email will be the preferred method of communication for MPA staff for the foreseeable future.

We encourage members not to wait until the deadline to enter your entries in the template. If a significant number of people attempt to use the template at the same time, it can slow everyone down and could cause you to miss the deadline window.

All the information about the contest — rules, categories, entry instructions — is online at [mopress.com/better-newspaper/](http://mopress.com/better-newspaper/).

Entries to the Missouri Press Foundation's Newspaper Contest will be submitted using BetterBNC Online Journalism Awards Platform: <https://betternewspapercontest.com/login>

**IMPORTANT:** It is important to remember BetterBNC is optimized for Google Chrome. If you do not have Google Chrome, download it at <http://www.google.com/chrome>.

**DEADLINE:** There is no need to wait until the deadline to upload your entries! The contest template will close 11 p.m. **Friday, April 17**, and will not accept entries after that -- no exceptions. You may begin uploading your entries now.

**ALERT:** Please try to keep file sizes under 5mb to aid judges in accessing entry content. For larger files such as Special Sections, options include Dropbox, Google Drive, Scribd or Issuu. Please make sure the file is public or a password is provided and that it can be printed. You cannot upload these large entries directly to the contest template because it has space limitations. If a file cannot be accessed for printing, it will not be displayed with other Better Newspaper Contest entries at the Annual Convention.

## THREE TIPS TO MAKE UPLOADING EASY:

1. If you have entries that consist of more than one piece of content, combine them into one file. This will make uploading and judging much easier. This will apply to Best Columnist, Best Front Page, etc., where an entry is more than one piece. Combine them into one file. Do the same for stories that jump to another page. Combine the pages into one file for uploading.
2. Make the category number the first element in the title of each entry.
3. Put all your entries into a "Contest Entries" folder on your desktop.

**Please read the instructions and category listings carefully!**

# Meet Ruby Bailey, one of Missouri Press' newest board members

*Bailey, Peggy Scott joined the MPA Board of Directors Jan. 1*

**By Matthew Barba**

*Missouri Press News*

While her career has included everything from being a Washington, D.C. correspondent to embedding with the U.S. Navy, it is Ruby Bailey's local news roots that brought her to Columbia as executive editor of the *Missourian* and Missouri School of Journalism's Missouri Community Newspaper Management Chair.

Ruby is one of two new Missouri Press Association Board of Directors for 2020, serving as Secretary of the Board. She and Peggy Scott of Leader Publications, serving a term as treasurer, took office on Jan. 1.

A local news editor at the *Sacramento Bee* before joining the *Missourian* and Missouri School of Journalism in May 2018, Ruby got her start in journalism somewhat by happenstance.

"The year was 1989 and I was a college senior, working a full-time day job in what was then called public relations," Ruby said. "I needed a class that fit my evening class schedule — Reporting 101, it was called, I believe. I took the class, found my calling and never looked back."

Looking back, the assignments Ruby has taken have been quite extensive. After graduating from Detroit, Mich.'s Wayne State University, she spent three years at the *Flint Journal* before joining the *Detroit Free Press*, where she would spend another 16 years.

During her tenure at the "Freep," Ruby was a business and enterprise reporter, as well as a Washington correspondent covering news of interest to Michigan readers. She covered the 9/11 attacks and spent three months embedded with the



**Ruby Bailey**



Ruby Bailey, executive editor of the Columbia Missourian and the Missouri School of Journalism's Missouri Community Newspaper Management Chair, is serving her first year on the Missouri Press Association Board of Directors. Her first meeting was the January 2020 Board meeting held in Jefferson City in conjunction with annual Day at the Capitol activities. Pictured, from left, are Bailey, MPA Legislative Director Doug Crews, MPA Executive Director Mark Maassen and MPA President Trevor Vernon. (Staff Photo/Matthew Barba)

U.S. Navy during Operation Iraqi Freedom. She later became an assistant metro reporter in Detroit, focused on improving the newspaper's online edition.

In 2014, she joined the *Sacramento Bee*, leading a team of reporters focused on improving the newspaper's digital content.

All of Ruby's assignments, however, lead back to her favorite part about working for newspapers: "Every day holds the possibility of an adventure — whether it's a breaking news story or an investigative scoop."

Honored to be representing Missouri's newspaper industry as a member of the MPA Board, Ruby said she hopes to help other newspapers address some of the issues they are facing today and in the future.

"We all are dealing with a lot of things, but I think the greatest challenges right now are the pay

model and the assaults we're seeing on press freedoms," Ruby said.

In her role as Community Newspaper Management Chair, a position formerly held by Jim Sterling and funded through the efforts of Missouri Press members, Ruby is uniquely positioned to help community newspapers throughout the state improve their coverage and operations. The position was established to serve as a liaison between the press association and the School of Journalism.

Next time you see Ruby at an MPA event or just out in the community, don't hesitate to ask her about the future of journalism and specifically, what the journalism school is doing to teach the next generation of journalists.

Just skip asking her anything too personal. "I hate answering questions about myself," she said, "Seriously, it's really bad. I would be a horrible interview."



# OBITUARIES



Columbia

## Duane Dailey

Fred Duane Dailey, 84, of Columbia, died March 10, 2020. A photojournalist and agricultural journalism professor at the University of Missouri, Dailey was the former 4-H editor for MU Extension.

He also wrote a weekly column, "Hometown Boy," for small newspapers throughout the state, with the last being published less than a week before his death. As a Missouri Photo Workshop participant, Dailey was inspired to help create the Agricultural Editor's Photo School at MU, helping editors and



writers covering agriculture learn to shoot documentary-style photographs.

Later, he would help run the workshop and would eventually spend a total of 37 weeks helping other photographers learn the value of rural stories.

Dailey was a longtime supporter of the Missouri Photojournalism Hall of Fame and was inducted into its ranks in 2006. He is survived by two daughters, Janet and Lucinda; a grandson; and many more family and friends.

Columbia

## Mark Hinojosa

Mark Hinojosa, 63, of Columbia, died Feb. 21, 2020, after an eight-year battle with cancer. Before joining the University of Missouri School of Journalism as a convergence journalism professor, Hinojosa had a lengthy career as a journalist with many different publications. He started as a staff photographer with *The Kansas City Star* and was part of the 1982 Pulitzer Prize-winning team that covered the Hyatt Regency hotel walkway collapse. He also spent time working for the *Chicago Tribune* and *Detroit News*. He is survived by a son, John Luke; two daughters, Maria and Isabella; and many more family members and friends.

## Please ensure you are receiving MPA's emails

From Missouri Press Staff  
*Missouri Press News*

Missouri Press Association is constantly putting together information and resources we think will be useful to you in these trying times.

The main method for distributing these resources to members is via email, and we need to make sure that all members are signed up to receive our email distributions.

Some of these addresses may already be in our database, however we need you to mark Missouri Press Association's email addresses as safe so they are not filtered out as "spam."

All Missouri Press office staff use email addresses with the domain "@mopress.com"

If you have any questions about getting signed up to receive Missouri Press' emails or you are concerned that someone on your staff is not receiving them, please contact Matthew Barba at [mbarba@mopress.com](mailto:mbarba@mopress.com)

## MPA is collecting resources you can use at [mopress.com](http://mopress.com)

By Missouri Press Staff  
*Missouri Press News*

With information changing daily, it is difficult to put in print the various resources your newspaper can draw upon to help deal with the effects COVID-19 is having on the state and your communities.

Missouri Press Association is doing its best to help and will be collecting resources on the front page of its website where you can go to find a repository of links, articles and suggestions on things you and your newspaper can do to keep covering your communities and providing an invaluable service to your advertisers.

Of particular interest to Missouri Press' members will be information related to the CARES Act, the federal stimulus bill signed into law in late March and that contains funding for emergency small business loans.

That information can be found at the following link: <https://mopress.com/small-business-resources-for-cares-act/>

You can also find links to free webinars being hosted by America's Newspapers that can give you ideas on how to sell subscriptions, generate new ad revenue and work with members of your community to continue being a reliable source of information for your readers.

Because of the value of these webinars, we are also including the link here: <http://www.newspapers.org/americas-newspapers/conferences-webinars/index.html>

You will also find information such as a legal opinion on public notices printing written by Legal Hotline Attorney Jean Maneke.



**Ste. Genevieve** — Better Newspapers, Inc., based in Mascoutah, Ill., purchased the *Ste. Genevieve Herald* from former publisher Toby Carrig, who will remain with the newspaper as general manager. The *Herald's* new publisher will be Better Newspapers owner Greg Hoskins, who last year purchased the *Ironton Mountain Echo* and in recent years purchased the *Wayne County Banner* and *Reynolds County Courier*.

Carrig owned the *Herald* since June 2013, when his Ste. Genevieve Media purchased the newspaper and the *Shoppers Mailbag* from Ste. Genevieve Newspapers, Inc.

Hoskins said he expects few changes in the *Herald* newspaper but some future streamlining of operations.

**Webster Groves** — In late March and in response to the effect of the coronavirus, the *Webster-Kirkwood Times* announced its March 27 issue would be its last printed edition. The same date would also mark the last printed edition of the *South County Times*, while *West End World* would print its last edition on April 3.

Plans for the newspapers included maintaining an online presence through April, according to owner Dwight Bitikofer, however the future of the print products will continue to be evaluated as the full effects of COVID-19 are realized in the

communities the newspapers serve.

**Cape Girardeau** — In response to the economic impact of the coronavirus, the *Southeast Missourian* announced it would temporarily suspend three print days. Publisher Jon Rust said the newspaper would continue to produce an e-edition of the newspaper for each day of the week but only print a physical newspaper on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

The *Missourian* said the move was necessitated by the steep drop-off in newspaper pre-prints and advertising, caused by store closures due to the coronavirus pandemic. Many more newspapers around the state shared the *Missourian's* concern following the drop-off of advertising and inserts.

Rust added that the newspaper was pushing for people to subscribe because it is only through reader support that newspapers will be able to continue as a business.

**Branson** — Like many other newspapers around the state, the offices of the *Branson Tri-Lakes News* closed to the public indefinitely beginning in late March. The move is intended to help prevent further spread of the coronavirus in the community, as well as keep the newspaper's staff protected so they can continue covering the news in the community.

## How will federal stimulus help publishers?

By Rob Williams

For Publishing Insider

The U.S. government's \$2.2 trillion coronavirus aid package may help some ailing publishers, especially small businesses that face the biggest financial threat from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Their bigger concern will be how quickly the economy bounces back from the public-health crisis that likely has caused a deep recession.

Publishers considering whether to ask for financial assistance will still have to wait as federal agencies establish rules for doling out grants and issuing loans, a process that could take at least a few more weeks. Because the government's biggest priority is preventing unemployment that takes years to reach full recovery, the stimulus plan has incentives for job preservation. As more details emerge, Publishing Insider will aim to cover the most important parts of the plan.

The legislation earmarked \$367 billion in federally guaranteed loans through the Small Business Administration for companies with fewer than 500 employees, a threshold that covers many smaller organizations. Eligible businesses can use those loans for payroll, health care, mortgages and other debts -- and loan forgiveness is possible for companies that use the money to retain workers.

The CARES Act, as the stimulus plan is officially known, raises the limit on SBA-approved loans to \$1 million from the prior limit of \$300,000. Banks are handling the distribution of the loans, but I'm concerned that they will be overwhelmed with applications from ailing businesses seeking bailout funding.

For companies with more than 500 employees, the U.S. Treasury Department has \$454 billion to distribute to companies aside from those in the transportation industry

that has seen plummeting passenger traffic.

The U.S. government isn't going to stop there, with press reports saying that a fourth stimulus package is in the works to extend prior relief efforts -- including checks sent to individuals -- and to fill in the gaps in those plans.

There are limitations to what the stimulus measures can do for ailing publishers and the thousands of people who work in the industry. Ideally, the combination of public health measures and stimulus plans will help to hasten an end to the crisis that is creating enormous hardship for millions of Americans.

*This report was originally published on MediaPost's Publishing Insider website on March 30, 2020. You can find the original post here: <https://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/349156/how-will-federal-stimulus-bill-help-publishers.html>*



# SEEKING NOMINATIONS

## Missouri Photojournalism Hall of Fame



The Missouri Photojournalism Hall of Fame endeavors to recognize those people who have made outstanding contributions to Missouri photojournalism and to provide an exhibit venue to showcase these visual reporting pioneers and the work of current photojournalists. The nomination process is now open.



Dan White: "Protest" A protester works on a sign during the Umbrella Revolution in Hong Kong in 2014.

**Nominations must be received by May 11.**

---

Inductees will be recognized at a ceremony on Oct. 15, 2020, at SHSMO in Columbia, MO, and examples of their work will be displayed at the Missouri Press Photojournalism Hall of Fame exhibit.

**To download the registration form,  
visit [www.photojournalismhalloffame.org](http://www.photojournalismhalloffame.org)**

# Historical prison tour will be one highlight of MPA Convention

By Matthew Barba  
*Missouri Press News*

With all the talk in recent weeks of lockdowns and quarantines, it was not intentional that one of the highlights of this year's Annual Convention and Trade Show will be a tour of the former Missouri State Penitentiary.

Missouri Press Association will meet Sept. 24-26, in Jefferson City, for its 154th Annual Convention and Trade Show. The event will kick-off Thursday, Sept. 24, with a social evening benefitting the Missouri Press Foundation and centered around the former state penitentiary.

Plans to tour the former prison have been in the works for several years, preceding even the May 2019 tornado that damaged one of the housing units and resulted in the prison being closed to tour groups for about four months.

But the facility is an icon in Jefferson City and the state, being one of the oldest continually operating prisons in the country and the oldest west of the Mississippi River, housing inmates from its opening in 1836 until it was decommissioned in 2004.

In its more than 165 years of operations, several notable individuals called the prison home, including James Earl Ray, "Pretty Boy" Floyd and Sonny Liston. The prison also earned a designation from Time Magazine as the "bloodiest 47 acres in America" because of the violence between inmates and the fact that it at one time housed the largest number of convicts in one facility.

2020 MPA President Trevor Vernon is not only excited to share the history that prison represents for the state with Association members attending the Thursday night event, his family has historical connections to it, as well.

"All of the history at the prison is amazing," Trevor said. "My grandfather on my mom's side was a lock smith in the prison for many years. The tour guide, when I went previously, was the warden when my grandfather worked



The front entrance of the Missouri State Penitentiary in Jefferson City. Attendees of this year's Annual Convention can take a historical tour of the former prison. (Submitted Photo/Missouri State Penitentiary)

there. It was great to connect with that part of my family's history."

Kristie Fortier, MPA Member Services Director, organized the Thursday night event, being prompted to do so because of her own experiences touring the prison and because it's an experience not a lot of people have had.

"One of the most exciting things about planning the Convention is choosing activities for our 'fun' Thursday night event. I am super excited about our plans for Jefferson City," Kristie said. "I have personally gone on the Missouri State Penitentiary tour three times so far. Since our group is so interested in history, I chose this as the tour they will conduct with our group, but they also offer paranormal and photography tours. Photography has been encouraged and some paranormal history is also covered on all tours."

Kristie said she can't wait for MPA's members who have never been on a prison tour to get the chance, and she assures those who have been previously, this will almost certainly be a one-of-a-kind experience.

"The most unique thing is that it's not scripted like many other tours,"

she said. "There are certain things that each tour guide covers, like the years the penitentiary was in operation and the 'famous' inmates that were housed there, but, the rest of the tours I've been on have been vastly different from each other and all have been very well-done."

Trevor added, "I hope everyone enjoys the rich history of the prison and learning about everything that happened there. It's an important but somber reminder of lots of different pieces of Missouri's past."

Plans for the evening also include food and drinks at Prison Brews, a microbrewery and restaurant located a few blocks from the prison. Transportation from the Capitol Plaza Hotel, the prison and the restaurant will be provided for attendees by the Jefferson City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Mark your calendars for MPA's 154th Annual Convention and Trade Show, scheduled for Sept. 24-26, in Jefferson City. Registration will open soon.

More information, including attending the Thursday night social event and sponsoring the Convention, is available by contacting Michael Harper at mharper@mopress.com



# Sources and resources for Missouri newspapers



**Every Business Needs an Online Presence.**

Contact Ted Lawrence  
at Missouri Press.  
tlawrence@mopress.com  
573-449-4167



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# Missouri Sunshine Coalition ramping up efforts to protect open meetings law

**For Missouri Press News**

*Missouri Press News*

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- The Missouri Sunshine Coalition is boosting its efforts to support the state's Sunshine Law with the hiring of its first executive director.

The coalition's board of directors has appointed Dennis Ellsworth, former executive editor of the *St. Joseph News-Press*, as part-time executive director. Ellsworth is working to grow the coalition's membership and is pursuing partnerships across the state to support open government through transparency.

The nonprofit Sunshine Coalition, formed in 2008, includes open-government advocates throughout the state and serves as a resource to citizens from all sectors, including business, nonprofit, media and government. Throughout its existence, the organization has focused on educating citizens and raising awareness about the Missouri Sunshine Law.

The organization is counting down to 2023 and the 50th anniversary of the law, which sets out the rights of Missouri citizens to access the records and meetings of public governmental bodies.

"The important understanding is the Sunshine Law works for everyone – young or old, those of all races and incomes, whether your allegiances are with Republicans,

Democrats or another political movement," Ellsworth said.

"Supporting open government is equivalent to supporting fair and impartial elections. We all have a stake in seeing to it that the Sunshine Law is preserved, strengthened as necessary, and broadly embraced by the public."

The group regularly partners with other Sunshine Law advocates such as the Missouri Press Association in monitoring legislation impacting public access to meetings and records. The coalition's outreach efforts will include social media initiatives, a newsletter and other steps to keep the public informed about its rights under the Sunshine Law and about instances when those rights appear threatened.

"We are here for all citizens," said Jonathan Groves, coalition president and chair of the Communication Department at Drury University. "Our role is to serve as a voice for open government. We cannot have a government 'of the people, by the people, for the people' without transparency through access to meetings and documents."

Interested groups and individuals who would like to contact or join the Missouri Sunshine Coalition may reach Ellsworth at (816) 261-5373 or at [dennis11ellsworth@gmail.com](mailto:dennis11ellsworth@gmail.com). The organization also can be found on Facebook @mosunshinecoalition.



Dennis Ellsworth

## ON THE MOVE



**St. Louis** — Liz Irwin, group publisher for Missouri Lawyers Media, including *Missouri Lawyers Weekly*, and vice-president of the Missouri Press Association Board of Directors, was promoted to vice-president of Creative Service for BridgeTower Media, the Gannett subsidiary that oversees MLM.



Irwin became group publisher in 2015 with responsibility for brands in Missouri, Minnesota and Arizona and oversaw a design hub located in St. Louis that handles design, production and public notice for BridgeTower's various brands.

She will also continue in her role as

group publisher.

**Independence** — Julie Moreno, former publisher of the *Independence Examiner* and a director on the Missouri Press Association Board of Directors, tendered her resignation from the Board in late March due to changes to her position at the *Examiner*. Moreno joined the Board in 2017.



**Columbia** — Joseph Leong, a senior group publisher for several Gannett newspapers and specialty publications, including the *Rolla Daily News* and the *Lake Sun*, has been named the

new publisher of the *Columbia Daily Tribune*. Leong plans to move to Columbia from his home in Joplin.

Leong has worked in various management roles in media for 30 years, including advertising sales, marketing and distribution at properties in Texas, Louisiana, Hawaii and New Mexico.

He replaces Terri Lefeiste, who has been with the *Tribune* since 2018. Lefeiste will be moving on to lead a group of privately owned newspapers in California and whose holdings include the *Bakersfield Californian*. Lefeiste previously was also general manager of the Central Missouri Newspapers, Inc.





# Active membership to consider

## From Missouri Press Staff

The Missouri Press Association has received an Active Membership application for the *Maries County Advocate*. It is published by Dennis Warden.

*Maries County Advocate*, 301 Hwy. 63 South, Vienna, MO 65582, dwarden@wardpub.com, MariesCountyAdvocate.com, 573-422-6323. It is published weekly with a circulation of 900.

Membership applications are

considered by the MPA Board of Directors at its first meeting after this notice has been published in at least three issues of the MPA Bulletin, eBulletin or magazine. The next meeting of the MPA Board is scheduled for June 12, 2020, during MPA's summer board meeting at Lodge of Four Seasons in Lake Ozark.

Comments about applications can be sent to MPA Executive Director Mark Maassen at mmaassen@mopress.com

# Pulse of America survey results available to MPA members

## From Missouri Press Staff

The 2019/2020 Pulse Research Survey for Missouri is now available! As always, the survey is full of valuable information, from reader demographics, to comparisons with our electronic competitors, to the ever-popular shopping surveys and "plan-to-purchase" details for just about every category of business you can think of.

Go into your next sales call armed with the answers to vital questions

like: "How many of our readers are planning to buy a house this year?" "How many will buy a vehicle?" "Attend an event, or participate in a certain family activity?" As your prospecting skills improve, and as preparation for sales calls intensifies, your sales will grow. This survey will help you accomplish both.

Please contact Ted Lawrence, (tlawrence@mopress.com), for your free copy of the full survey, courtesy of Missouri Press Service.

**Please send Missouri Press News YOUR news. Send staff changes, business milestones and other news about your publication to mbarba@mopress.com**

## Missouri Press Association / Missouri Press Service

802 Locust St., Columbia, MO 65201-4888  
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Jean Maneke: Legal Hotline Counselor, jmaneke@manekelaw.com

Helen Headrick: NIE & Education Director, hheadrick@mopress.com

Doug Crews: Legislative Director, rdcrews@socket.net

## CALENDAR

### April

17 — 2020 Better Newspaper Contest Deadline Extended

20 — Missouri Press Foundation Summer Internship Application Deadline

30 — Missouri Newspaper Hall of Fame, Outstanding Young Journalist Nomination Deadline

### May

11 — Missouri Photojournalism Hall of Fame Nomination Deadline

### June

11 — First Amendment Golf Classic, Lake Ozark

12 — Show-Me Press Association meeting, Lake Ozark

### September

24-26 — 154th Annual Convention and Trade Show, Jefferson City

### October

15 — Missouri Photojournalism Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Columbia

### CANCELED EVENTS

— MPA Past President Presidents Dinner, Arrow Rock

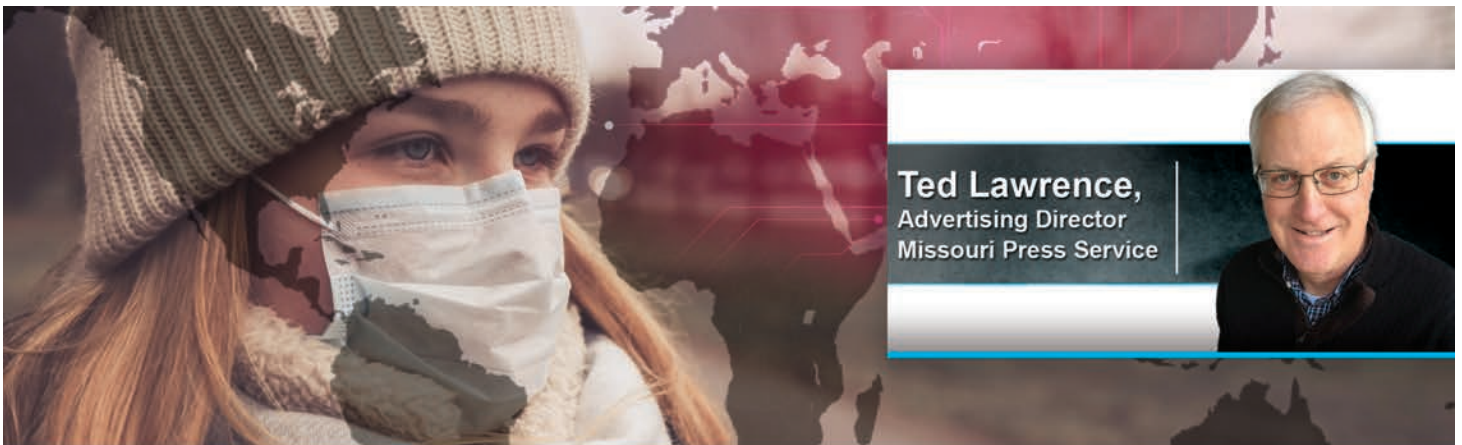
— Missouri Press Advertising and Marketing Executives, Lake Ozark

— Ozark Press Association, Springfield

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## MORE ON ADVERTISING Crisis Management Tips for a Small Business

**ZDnet.com offers crisis management tips for small businesses. To be an effective example to those you are around, stay calm and confident, while taking precautions. I'm hoping one or two of these thoughts will give your ad salespeople some ideas of how they might approach their advertisers in the midst of the unknown.**

### PROVIDE REASSURANCE.

Everybody's life is being disrupted. Some more unfairly than others. In your online and social media presence, spread a message of optimism, about getting through this as a community. Also, equally important, that your place of business is taking extra precautions to maintain a clean environment (and mean it).

### PEOPLE ARE CRAVING FOR SOME NORMALCY TO RETURN.

Help provide some of that for them. Customers' routines are disrupted. Level up your customer service game by having a remote / off-premise service game plan.

### REACH OUT TO YOUR LENDERS TO NEGOTIATE SHORT-TERM RELIEF.

This could either be in the form of deferred payments or extended credit lines. The median small business holds 27 cash buffer days in reserve. Government agencies have announced several relief programs, which make it easier for lenders to have these conversations with small businesses. But as a small business owner, you need to be proactive in reaching out before the situation snowballs into a bigger financial challenge.

### REACH OUT TO YOUR VENDORS TO CONFIRM SUPPLY CONTINUITY.

Some of these could be small businesses as well and could be facing their own hardships. Some of them could offer you deferred payment terms as well. And while you are at it, please consider doing the same for your customers if you happen to be a business-to-business shop.

### DISCOUNTS ARE A WIN-WIN.

While discounts are typically used as an instrument to promote store traffic, remember that several of your customers may have had their employment hours cut and are probably facing a personal cash flow crunch. Any discounts that help customers manage their expenses better, even for a short while, is bound to earn you loyalty in the long run.

### WEAR GLOVES. (For food service businesses.)

While this may seem obvious, it may be tempting to do this only while handling food or any consumables. All employees should wear gloves, especially at the point of sale -- you want your customers to be comfortable with the physical proximity of exchanging cash at the point of transaction. You can also place floor markers to show a minimum separation per social distancing guidelines (6 to 10 feet) while patrons are in your business for pickup and delivery.

### BE EMPATHETIC IN REDUCING EMPLOYEE HOURS.

You may reach a stage where some of your employees' hours will need to be reduced. Talk to your employees about their situation. You may be pleasantly surprised by the solidarity that people display during tough times, by self electing to reduced hours, thereby saving you from cutting down the hours for those who may be more dependent on the income from your business.

### FLOOR MARKERS IN STORES PROVIDE REINFORCEMENT FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES.

As active contributing members of your respective communities, please consider shopping small and local during this time of crisis, while prioritizing your safety and well-being.





# Missouri Newspaper Organizations

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**NORTHWEST MISSOURI PRESS ASSOCIATION:** President, Amy Neal, Liberty; Vice President, ; Secretary, Kathy Conger, Bethany; Treasurer, W.C. Farmer, Rock Port. Directors: Past President, Phil Cobb, Maryville; Mike Farmer, Rock Port; Jim McPherson, Weston; Adam Johnson, Mound City; and Kay Wilson, Maryville.

**SHOW-ME PRESS ASSOCIATION:** President, Hannah Spaar, Odessa; Vice President, vacant; Secretary-Treasurer, vacant. Directors: Roxie Murphy, Maries County Advocate; Mary Wilson, Grandview.

**OZARK PRESS ASSOCIATION:** President, Dan Wehmer, Webster County Citizen; Secretary-Treasurer, Norene Prosski, Ozark County Times, Gainesville. Directors: David Burton, University of Missouri Extension, Springfield; Allison Wilson, West Plains Daily Quill; and Kyle Troutman, Monett Times; Past-President, Jamey Honeycutt, Phillips Media.

**SOUTHEAST MISSOURI PRESS ASSOCIATION:** President, Toby Carrig, Ste. Genevieve; First Vice President, Beth Durreman, Perryville; Second Vice President, Lucas Presson, Cape Girardeau; Secretary-Treasurer, Michelle Friedrich, Poplar Bluff; Historian, Peggy Scott, Festus; Past President, Scott Seal, Portageville. Directors: Kim Combs, Piedmont; Randy Pribble, Iron Mountain; Anne Hayes, Cape Girardeau; Matthew Dollard, Cape Girardeau; and Tamara Buck, Cape Girardeau.

**MISSOURI ADVERTISING MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION:** President Bryan Chester, Columbia; First Vice President, Whitney Livengood, Washington; Secretary-Treasurer, Kristie Williams, Columbia. Directors include: Kevin Jones, St. Louis, Sandy Schnurbusch, Perryville; Brittney Cady, Jefferson City; Gina Langston, Greenfield; Past President, James White, Warsaw.

**MISSOURI PRESS SERVICE:** President, Jeff Schrag, Springfield; Vice President, Dennis Warden, Owensville; Secretary-Treasurer, Jim Robertson, Columbia. Directors: Phil Conger, Bethany; Joe May, Mexico.

**MISSOURI PRESS FOUNDATION, INC.:** President, Vicki Russell, Columbia; First Vice President, Wendell Lenhart, Trenton; Secretary-Treasurer, Doug Crews, Columbia. Directors: James Sterling, Columbia; John Spaar, Odessa; Dane Vernon, Eldon; Bill Miller, Sr., Washington; Jean Snider, Harrisonville; Dave Berry, Bolivar; Brian Brooks, Columbia; Kathy Conger, Bethany; Paul Stevens, Lenexa; Jim Robertson, Columbia; Dalton Wright, Lebanon; Steve Ahrens, Jefferson City; Trevor Vernon, Eldon. Directors Emeritus: Wallace Vernon, Eldon; Rogers Hewitt, Shelbyville.

**MISSOURI COLLEGE MEDIA ASSOCIATION:** President, Zach Tate, Southeast Missouri State University; Vice President, Ryan Pivoney, Truman State University; Secretary, Garrett Fuller, University of Central Missouri; MPA Liaison, Jack Dimond, Missouri State University; Adviser, Tamara Zellars Buck, Southeast Missouri State University.

# 'Public' meetings may be going electronic, but you still have access

**S**o much has changed in the last month for journalists in the state. No need to rehash the virus issues ... all of you know too well. But what happened rather suddenly for many of you was that access to many public meetings was shut down, nearly overnight.

For starters, House Bill 2725, set for hearing on March 16, would have made significant changes to a number of Sunshine Law details, including incorporating into the law the provisions made by internal rule to close records of individual legislators which came after passage of the Clean Missouri constitutional amendment.

Over the prior weekend, it changed from a bill generating a lot of public attention, to a bill that had one primary purpose – to eliminate the need for public bodies to allow members of the public to attend public meetings. The coronavirus had struck. Allowing large groups into a meeting of a public body was simply too risky. It was necessary for government to limit the potential for exposure for all.

All the amendments contained in the original HB 2725 were stripped from the bill and it became a vehicle for a new exception #25 to Section 610.021:

*(25) During the period that an emergency exists or continues, public access to meetings of public governmental bodies may be restricted in the event of an outbreak of contagious illness resulting in the governor or general assembly declaring a state of emergency under the provisions of section 44.100. Meetings restricted*

*under the provisions of this subdivision shall be live streamed online and accessible to the public if reasonably possible. If not, such meetings shall be video and audio recorded and made accessible to the public online within twenty-four hours after such meeting. Members of the public shall be authorized to submit written testimony to the public governmental body, which shall be presented at such meeting, made a part of any official record, and made accessible to the public*

*online within forty-eight hours after such meeting. Bona fide credentialed members of the press shall be allowed to attend any meeting closed under this subdivision.*

Clearly, the important part of this additional exception was the closure to the public of formerly-open meetings in times of contagious illness emergencies. But, this bill did not pass prior to the legislative “spring break” week. And with the likelihood that the Missouri legislature won’t be going back into

session within the next few weeks, if at all before its termination date, more and more public bodies in the state will be resorting to holding solely electronic meetings. So put these notes in a handy place.

Section 610.010 (5) includes in the definition of a “public meeting” one that is conducted “by means of communication equipment, including, but not limited to, conference call, video conference, internet chat, or internet message board.”

Section 610.015 allows a body

of elected members (but not the legislature) to take any roll call vote both of members present and of members who are participating by videoconferencing.

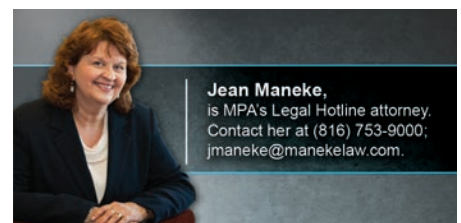
If it is necessary to take votes by roll call in an emergency meeting, if a quorum is physically present and fewer than a quorum participating by telephone, facsimile, internet, or other voice or electronic means, the body needs to put the reason for the emergency in the minutes (just like when an emergency meeting is held without proper notice). Under those circumstances, all members may vote whether or not attending in person.

Section 610.020 says if a meeting is to be held by telephone or other electronic means, the notice needs to indicate the “mode” of the meeting and “the designated location where the public may observe and attend the meeting.” Given that the mode is likely to be a video meeting, the public body is required to “post a notice of the meeting on its website in addition to its principal office and shall notify the public how to access that meeting.”

It will be a challenge for some less-sophisticated public bodies to meet these requirements, but tools like “Facebook meetings” are becoming commonplace, so the technology is there. House Bill 2725 did mandate that public bodies allow the media to attend in person. If a member of the media is having problems getting physical access, I’d mention that to the body.

One final note: The Attorney General’s website under “News and Updates” an announcement giving public bodies guidance in responding to open records requests. It’s worth a read.

*"Section 610.010 (5) includes in the definition of a 'public meeting' one that is conducted 'by means of communication equipment, including, but not limited to, conference call, video conference, internet chat, or internet message board.'"*



Jean Maneke,  
is MPA's Legal Hotline attorney.  
Contact her at (816) 753-9000;  
jmaneke@manekelaw.com.



***TIME IS RUNNING OUT!***

# **DEADLINES APPROACHING**



Nominations are being taken now for the top awards of the  
Missouri Press Association:

**Missouri Newspaper Hall of Fame**

**Outstanding Young Journalist**

*Nominations must be in by April 30*

**DOWNLOAD NOMINATION FORMS AT**  
**[bit.ly/MoPressForms](http://bit.ly/MoPressForms)** *(case sensitive)*

Each of the nomination forms includes the criteria for selection.  
Contact Matthew Barba by email at  
[mbarba@mopress.com](mailto:mbarba@mopress.com) with questions.

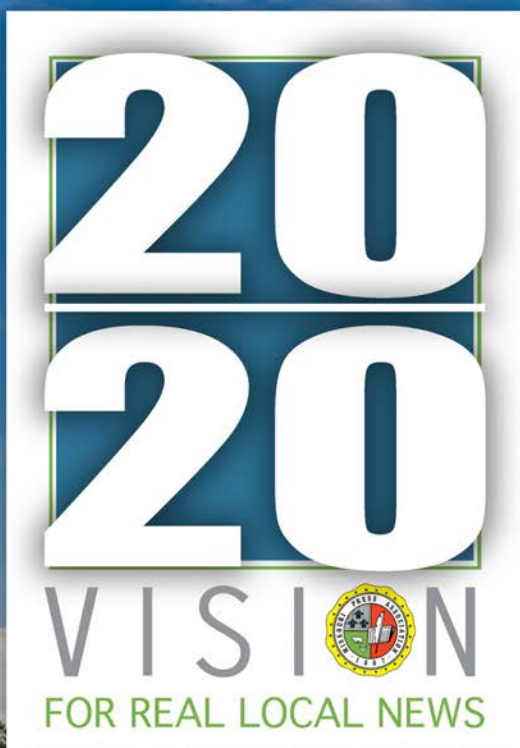
**Applications for the Internship Grants Program  
must be received on or before April 20.**

If your newspaper is interested in applying for an internship grant,  
please go to [mopress.com/missouri-press-foundation-internships](http://mopress.com/missouri-press-foundation-internships)

If you have questions please call  
573-449-4167 ext. 303



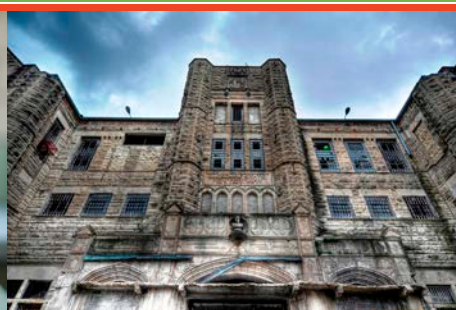
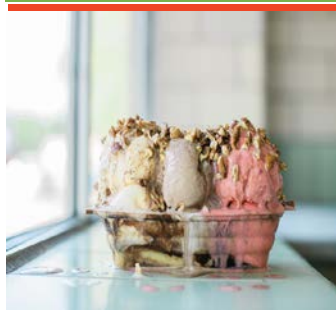




# 154<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MISSOURI PRESS CONVENTION AND TRADE SHOW

Save the Date: September 24-26, 2020

Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City



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- **2020 Legislative Political Forums •**
- **Active shooter training conducted by Missouri State Highway Patrol •**
- **Better Newspaper Contest Awards •**
- **Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony •**
- **Central Dairy Ice Cream •**