

MIP

MISSOURI PRESS
NEWS



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Just how long will recovery take?

And what will the lasting effects of the pandemic be on newspapers

I was thinking the other day ... March is said to be the month for vasectomies. One theory is that guys can lay around the house and watch basketball while they're recuperating and not be bored. That was turned upside down this year because of Covid-19. With no live sports, did guys watch sports reruns, or go back to work earlier than they should have?

The last few months have been anything but normal. So, has the last few months been good for anything? I think so.

The last few months have been great for planning. My staff and I have watched more webinars in the last few months than I probably had watched my entire life. We picked up some great ideas and implemented changes. Nothing we've done has generated much money, but we've have saved some money by improving efficiency. There are opportunities if you look around.

Our billing system was purchased in the 1980s (it was DOS-based, and yes, it still got the job done). The slow down caused by COVID-19 allowed me to study billing options and start the change to new technology. We are jumping about 40 years forward in technology in one month. It hasn't been without its hiccups, but we will go live by the time you read this. The new system will allow us to track better, keep in closer contact with our advertisers, and is more user friendly.

Without this slow-down we would have never attempted the changeover in July. Our salespeople are making fewer face-to-face visits, so they have the time to learn the new system. They are looking forward to being able to call up old ads and account balances among other things, on their cell phones while visiting their accounts.

I do have some concerns about the lasting effects of COVID-19, I worry about sports reporters — the guys and gals who eat, drink, and breath sports — the ones who go to every game and cheer on the local team from the sidelines between taking photos — the ones who work long hours with little pay (and would probably do it for no pay at all.) They are missing the interaction with the one thing they have dedicated their lives to doing. In our area there is still golf, and some baseball/softball, but those seasons are ending.

Football is in jeopardy. Friday nights in small town America won't be complete without stadium lights and a community tailgate. It brings us together — our boys defending our town. That is all up in the air.

Many college football games are being canceled or postponed. It is probably just a matter of time before high school sports follow.

Most local sports reporters write about, and photograph one thing — local sports — and it has been taken from them. Their livelihood depends

on local sports. What does the future hold for them?

By now you know the Missouri Press Association Annual Convention has been canceled.

This was a tough decision, but it was better to keep everyone safe than risk anyone's health. Plans are being made for parts of the Convention to be held virtually. Keep watching for more details.

The cancellation particularly stings because my father was to be inducted into the Newspaper Hall of Fame, joining my grandfather who hoped to be in the audience.

I hope things are back to normal by next year and my father can join my grandfather in the Hall of Fame.

As newly elected mayor of Eldon, I am finding that things take forever to get done. Progress is happening, but decisions take longer than I would like. I haven't been run out of town, and I made it more than a month before the council held a closed session.

Stay safe and keep your communities informed.



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154th Annual Convention canceled due to COVID

Continuing coronavirus pandemic left MPA leaders concerned for safety of attendees

By Matthew Barba
Missouri Press News

Adding to the growing list of events canceled by the coronavirus pandemic, Missouri Press Association regrets to announce that this year's Annual Convention and Trade Show will not be held in the traditional sense.

MPA President Trevor Vernon said the decision to cancel the 154th Convention, which was scheduled for late September at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City, was based on the state's rising number of coronavirus cases and feedback received from members.

"This decision is not one we came to easily, because this event has a significant amount of meaning for so many

Missouri Press members," Vernon said. "As president, I obviously wanted to hold my convention and host as many of my fellow newspaper people as possible, but we also have to consider the health and wellness of people who might attend."

In July, Missouri Press staff distributed a survey to members asking for feedback on their plans to attend this year's Convention. While many respondents indicated they wanted to attend the Convention, as many or more indicated they would not or were undecided about attending.

Several comments left by the survey respondents indicated health concerns for themselves and family members, specifically about being exposed to COVID-19. A few also said that ad revenues being down because of coronavirus pandemic would affect their decision to attend.

The overwhelming majority of respondents said they would like to see some form of online event to replace the Convention.

"Missouri Press staff is currently hard at work figuring out ways we can still hold some of the activities we would have hosted at this year's Convention," Vernon said. "For example, our extremely well attended political forums could find new life via livestream. There is also discussion happening now about how best to recognize this year's contest awards winners."

While no plans have been finalized, Vernon said members can expect to see announcements about what the new form will be for events and the awards ceremonies as soon as decisions are made.

"I want to thank everyone who has continued to support Missouri Press Association during this year. It has been a trying year for all of us, but as I wrote in my June column, as we navigate these challenging times, take advantage of every opportunity to share as much information with your peers as you can," Vernon said. "Even though we're not getting together in person this year, I know that we do better when we share with each other."

Keep watching future Missouri Press publications, including the weekly eBulletin, month Bulletin and Missouri Press News, for more information about how events related to the now-canceled Convention will take place.



Aspects of Annual Convention still being planned

While lots of planning still has to take place, Missouri Press staff are working to continue a few aspects of the Convention.

Chief among these is the political forums, which would have featured gubernatorial candidates appearing on stage in Jefferson City.

How the new forum will be conducted is still being decided. As soon as information is available, Missouri Press staff will make announcements via email, the weekly eBulletin and other methods.

Staff is also working on the details for a special awards presentation. Please see page 6 of this month's Missouri Press News for more information.

Feel free to contact Missouri Press staff if you have any questions. Contact information can be found on page 15 of the magazine.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Support the Local Journalism Sustainability Act

By Leonard Woolsey

The Daily News, Galveston, Texas

In the midst of massive COVID-19 pandemic disruption, U.S. Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D-Ariz.) and U.S. Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-Wash.) brought forth a bi-partisan proposal to offer tax relief to small businesses, residents and local newspapers.

The program is not a check but rather a tax credit for each to work together in support of keeping local journalism sustainable during this damaging business environment.

The program is highly targeted, offers broad benefit and expires in five years.

The Local Journalism Sustainability Act is designed to offer tax credits for subscribers of *The Daily News* (or any other qualifying newspaper) of up to \$250 per year. This would allow a subscriber to earn a tax credit for subscription price to a local newspaper like *The Daily News*. The idea is to help individuals continue their access to local journalism during a time of economic difficulty.

The act also offers small businesses, those with fewer than 1,000 employees, a tax credit to cover up to \$5,000 of advertising costs in the first year and \$2,500 in each of the following four years. This will allow small businesses to drive customers while investing into qualified local journalism.

And finally, the act will offer a payroll credit of up to \$25,000 the first year and \$2,500 in each of the the subsequent years to employ and adequately compensate local journalists.

All elements of the act sunset after five years. Relief is given in the form of tax credits, not direct funding.



Leonard Woolsey



(Submitted cartoon/America's Newspapers)

Local journalism is an important element of American society — and one we feel contributes to a better nation through the sharing of opinions, facts and the invitation for civil conversations.

The Local Journalism Sustainability Act will help local small businesses, consumers of news and smaller local community newspapers much like the newspaper in your hands today.

The *Daily News* is the oldest newspaper in Texas — around longer than statehood itself. We've always worked to provide our citizens and community a newspaper they could proudly call their own. This is our time-honored call and mission.

We are a small business and privately held. No fancy towers in New York City. No, our modest world headquarters sits right off Interstate 45 as you cross onto

the island. And our employees are as local as they get. You see us at the local grocery stores, farmers markets and places of worship.

Our hope is that your support — the action of reaching out to your congressional representatives — will allow us to continue to serve and play a role in our community for years to come.

Please reach out to your local Representative and encourage their support of the Local Journalism Sustainability Act.

Leonard Woolsey is president and publisher, *The Daily News*, Galveston, Texas, and president, *Southern Newspapers, Inc.* A native Missourian and graduate of the University of Central Missouri, he was scheduled to speak at MPA's Annual Convention in Jefferson City prior to it being canceled. This column was adapted from a July 22 post on America's Newspapers' website, newspapers.org

You can find contact information for Missouri Representatives here:
<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Meet the Class of 2020 Newspaper Hall of Fame inductees

*Plan to congratulate them in person at the
2021 Annual Convention in Excelsior Springs*

From Missouri Press Staff

Missouri Press News

A group of three newspaper people, which includes a former Missouri Press Association president, has been announced as the 2020 Hall of Fame class, however their actual induction into the Hall of Fame will be delayed until the 2021 Annual Convention and Trade Show at The Elms Hotel in Excelsior Springs.

Established by MPA in 1991, the 2020 Hall of Fame class will be the 30th group to be inducted, and their induction will take place at the same time as the 31st class, which has yet to be determined.

The Hall of Fame banquet planned for 2020 has been canceled along with the rest of the 154th Annual Convention and Trade Show that was scheduled for September, in Jefferson City.

This year's inductees are the late Laura Rollins Hockaday, longtime society editor for *The Kansas City Star*; Kia Breaux, Midwest regional director for The Associated Press; and Dane Vernon, former publisher of Vernon Publishing and former MPA President.

Hall of Fame inductees or their families receive Pinnacle Awards in honor of the inductees' service to the Missouri newspaper industry and their communities.

Inductees' plaques will join the permanent display of inductees in the MPA office in Columbia and in the student lounge in Lee Hills Hall at the Missouri School of Journalism.



Kia Breaux has been recognized within the Associated Press as a role model and exemplary leader and her commitment to diversity in journalism. She has served as a mentor for many AP interns who have become accomplished journalists.

Kia Breaux

A 24-year journalism professional, Kia Breaux is the Midwest regional director for The Associated Press based in Kansas City. As regional director, she's responsible for business development and managing strategic partnerships.

A 1996 graduate of the Missouri School of Journalism, she worked in Washington, D.C. for Bridge News and Knight-Ridder Financial News before joining AP in 1997 in the Kansas City bureau. She was promoted to correspondent in the AP's Roanoke, Va., bureau and later was named news editor for Nebraska operations, based in Omaha. She

returned to Kansas City in 2005 as assistant chief of bureau for Missouri and Kansas, then interim bureau chief in 2008 and bureau chief in 2010.

Breaux has been recognized as an excellent role model within the AP and exemplary leader who excels in her responsibilities and commitment to diversity in journalism. She has actively sourced students for AP's Global News Internship Program and has served as a mentor for a number of AP's interns who have gone on to become accomplished journalists in their own right.

Her commitment to journalism extends beyond her day job, including having served as a member of the Missourian Publishing Association Board of Directors, the Honors College Advisory Council and the Mizzou Alumni Association. She also served as vice president of the Missouri Sunshine Coalition, and a trustee of the William Allen White Foundation.

Dane Vernon

In his youth, Dane Vernon worked at the family's newspaper, The Advertiser in Eldon, stuffing sections and inserts, and later processing photos in the darkroom. He joined Vernon Publishing full time in 1979, working with his father, Wallace, to at first manage special sections before moving to Versailles two years later to oversee the *Leader-Statesman* there and the *Morgan County Press* in neighboring Stover.

Continued on Page 7

Continued from Page 6: Inductees are often recognized for mentoring other journalists

Vernon took on the *Tipton Times* when the family's publishing company bought it in 1983 and remained there until his father semi-retired in 1992, at which time he began overseeing the entire company's operations. Later joined by his wife Sharene as co-publisher, Vernon oversaw an expansion of the company's printing capabilities and helped usher in many digital publishing advancements.

Serving as MPA President in 2002, Vernon was and remains a strong proponent of the Newspapers in Education program, which continues to benefit MPA member newspapers to this day. He remained publisher of *The Advertiser* until 2007, when his

oldest son, Trevor, became the third generation of the family to helm the business.

Currently a member of the Missouri Press Foundation Board of Directors, Vernon has a long history of volunteering his time, including serving as president or a board member of civic and business organizations and councils for the arts. Professionally, he is a past president of the former Central Missouri Press Association (now Show-Me Press Association) and past regional director for the National Newspaper Association.

Laura Rollins Hockaday

For nearly 40 years, Laura Hockaday worked to add diversity to the pages of *The Kansas City Star*, being considered by many as a trailblazer for putting persons of color in the newspaper's society pages. She began at the newspaper in 1962 as a "Women's News" section writer then became travel editor and, for the last 18 years of her career, was society editor.

In 1982, when editors first asked if Hockaday wanted the society editor job, she did not feel the names and faces reflected Kansas City's diversity. She took the job on the condition that she would define what the society was, desegregating the society pages to be progressive and inclusive of all who call the city home.

Believing society reporting should be a common denominator for the community, Hockaday made that



Laura Rollins Hockaday spent nearly 40 years adding diversity to the pages of *The Kansas City Star*. She believed the newspaper was a medium for bringing people together and worked to ensure the society pages reflected the city's diversity.

section in the newspaper a medium for bringing people together, instead of setting people apart. Her Wednesday columns were known for introducing readers to scores of role models from different parts of the city's society.

Hockaday herself is widely recognized as a role model for journalists of all types in Kansas City and the surrounding area. When she retired in 2000, the city passed a resolution honoring her decades of service, recognizing her as a major force of change to make Kansas City a better place. The Kansas City Association of Black Journalists named the Laura R. Hockaday scholarship in her honor. She died Oct. 24, 2017, at age 79.



Dane Vernon has been a dedicated newspaperman his entire life. He grew up working in the family newspaper and helped grow the publishing business with new newspapers. He represents the second of three generations that have served as Missouri Press Association president.

Please plan to join your fellow Missouri Press Association members and friends for the 155th Annual Convention and Trade Show at The Elms in Excelsior Springs. Dates for the Convention are Sept. 23-25, 2021, with next year's Hall of Fame reception being Friday, Sept. 24. We look forward to seeing you there!

Canceled convention will give new form to awards presentations

By Matthew Barba

Missouri Press News

Missouri Press members may not be getting together in person this year, but that will not stop the Association from celebrating this year's contest awards winners.

The 154th Annual Convention and Trade Show is the latest event to be canceled as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, with the state's total cases of infected and deaths continuing to rise when the decision to cancel was made.

However, members should not think their hard work, reflected in the entries they submitted to take home awards in the Missouri Press Advertising Managers and Executives Best Ad Contest and the Missouri Press Foundation Better Newspaper Contest, will go unnoticed.

Missouri Press staff is currently working on details for two special awards presentations, said Member Services Director Kristie Fortier. While similar to the slideshow normally shown at the MPAME awards dinner and the BNC luncheon, plans for this

year include a few additions to further celebrate the hard work of Missouri's newspapers.

"This has been a tough year for everyone, and we know that our members look forward to receiving their contest awards. When we sent out a survey last month, the Convention event that got the most people saying they would attend was the BNC luncheon," Fortier said. "We want our members to feel like receiving this year's awards is no less special than if they were accepting them in person."

For one of these additions, Fortier said Missouri Press staff needs help from the newspapers who won awards in this year's contests.

"We want to include photos of this year's winners, since we won't be able to take them on stage when you're receiving your awards. Each newspaper should submit a staff group photo of the winners in each of the contests, so one photo for their Best Ad Contest winners and one photo for their Better Newspaper Contest winners," Fortier said.

Group staff photos can be submitted via email to Matthew Barba at mbarba@mopress.com or Fortier at kfortier@mopress.com. If you do not receive a confirmation email from staff, please reach out to either to Barba or Fortier to confirm receipt.

Other details about the plans to recognize this year's awards winners are still being worked out and will be announced as decisions are finalized.

Missouri Press also asks that you refrain from announcing your own contest awards until after the awards presentation is made.

Finally, because winners will not be able to pick up their awards at Convention, Missouri Press plans to ship them. There will also be an option for newspapers who want to pick up their awards from the MPA office in Columbia, with the cost of the shipping being donated to the Missouri Press Foundation.

If you have any questions about this year's contests or the awards presentations, please contact Barba or Fortier at the email addresses listed above.



Following the 2019 Better Newspaper Contest award luncheon, winners gather for group photos on stage at Harrah's Hotel in North Kansas City. Weeklies winners are pictured at top, while non-weeklies are shown at right. The 2020 Convention and contest luncheon has been canceled, but award winners are encouraged to take a group staff photo and submit that to Missouri Press to be included in an upcoming awards presentation slideshow. (Staff file photos/Matthew Barba)



OBITUARIES



San Marcos, Texas

Katherine Snyder

Katherine Snyder, 99, who along with her husband, Joe, operated *The Gallatin North Missourian* for more than four decades, died July 15, 2020. Mrs. Snyder often helped with typesetting and gathering "locals", while Joe handled the award-winning news and opinions pages.

Joe Snyder is a past president of the Missouri Press Association and a member of its Hall of Fame. Joe also was a



recipient of an Honor Medal from the University of Missouri School of Journalism in recognition of his contributions to the profession. The couple remained in the newspaper business until moving to San Marcos, Texas in 2001 to be closer to family.

Katherine is survived by two daughters, Kate and Cindy; three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; and many more family and friends.

Kansas City

Louie Vandenberg

Louis "Louie" Vandenberg, Jr., 96, died peacefully July 4, 2020, in Lenexa, Kan. He began a long career in newspapers as an apprentice stereotyper at Western Newspaper Union.

In 1948, he went to work in the stereotype department at the *Kansas City Times* and eventually joined the production department at *The Kansas City Star*. He worked his way up through the various departments, retiring in 1986 as production manager.

A World War II veteran,



Vandenberg served in the Marines from November 1942 to January 1946. He earned a Purple Heart during fierce combat on the island of Bougainville.

He also served several years as president of the Stereotype Union Local No. 6 and worked part-time at other area newspapers.

He is survived by a sister, Pauline; and three sons, Michael, Keith and Louis; a daughter, Debbie; eight grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren; and many more family and friends.

Largo, Fla.

William Hale

William S. Hale, 79, died April 1, 2020, in Largo, Fla. A descendant of one of Missouri's earliest settling families, he earned his master's of journalism from the University of Missouri. He was a retired newspaper publisher, owning 10 publications in Missouri and Wisconsin, including *The Pleasant Hill Times*. He also served as a director for the Columbia Missourian.



He is survived by his twin daughters, Kathleen and Lilian.

**Help us
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Missouri's
newspaper
people who have
died.
Send obituaries
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'In Memoriam' will still be produced

From Missouri Press Staff

Missouri Press News

Every year for the Annual Convention and Trade Show, Missouri Press Association puts together an "In Memoriam" booklet compiling all the obituaries from the state's recently deceased newspaper people.

While this year's Convention in Jefferson City has been canceled, an In Memoriam will still be produced and made available digitally to anyone who wants it. To that end, we want to make sure all Missouri newspaper people who have died in the last 12 months are included.

If you know of someone who has died and whose

obituary was not included in Missouri Press News, please reach out to Editor Matthew Barba at mbarba@mopress.com to ensure that individual's name and information can be included in the In Memoriam.

Missouri Press staff work diligently to make sure as many names are included in both the magazine and the In Memoriam booklet. We greatly appreciate everyone who has helped us in the past to recognize the state's newspaper people who have died.

We look forward to next year's Convention in Excelsior Springs where we can get together and remember our friends and colleagues no longer with us.



Buffalo — Marilyn Smith, longtime columnist for the *Buffalo Reflex*, recently won three awards for her entries into the Missouri Writers' Guild 2020 President's Contest.

She received two first-place awards, including one for best newspaper article and another for best newspaper column. She received second place for best poem.

Sedalia — The *Democrat* announced late last month all of its subscribers would be moving to mailed delivery effective Aug. 25. The newspaper will continue to be

published Tuesday through Saturday and subscribers will receive same-day delivery via the U.S. Postal Service.

Subscribers also receive free access to the e-edition of the newspaper, as well as the *Democrat's* website. The newspaper also offers digital-only subscriptions.

Publisher Will Weibert said that while the newspaper appreciates the carriers who have delivered the *Democrat* in the past, in recent years there has been a struggle to find and retain consistent carriers, prompting the move to USPS.

Former MPA president publishes true-crime book

For Missouri Press News

The Potato Masher Murder: Death at the Hands of a Jealous Husband, a true-crime book by 2004 MPA president Gary Sosniecki, has been published by The Kent State University Press.

The victim of the horrific 1906 murder in Mishawaka, Ind., was Sosniecki's great-grandmother, Cecilia Ludwig.

Sosniecki began researching the murder in 1996 when he and his wife, Helen, owned the *Webster Citizen County* in Seymour.

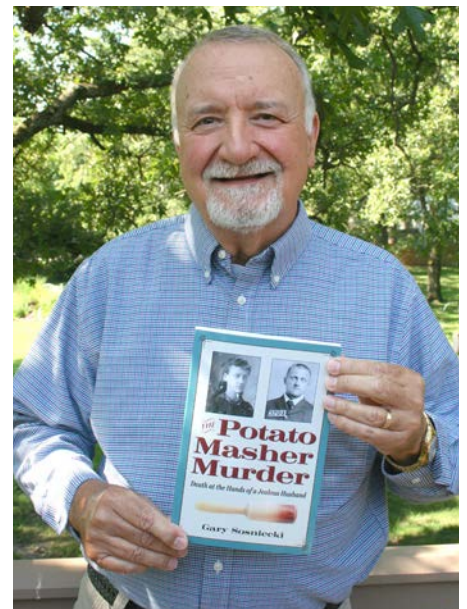
He stepped up his research when he was homebound after breaking his ankle shortly after retiring in 2016. When the trial transcript

was discovered in early 2017 at the Indiana State Archives, Sosniecki knew he had enough material for a book.

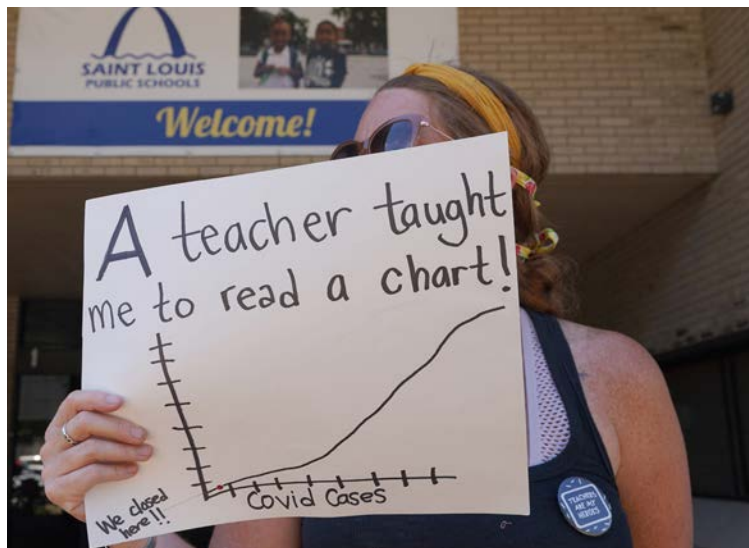
The Potato Masher Murder: Death at the Hands of a Jealous Husband can be ordered from The Kent State University Press or wherever books are sold.

Gary and Helen have been MPA members since 1980 when they bought the *Humansville Star-Leader*. They also have owned the *Vandalia Leader* and were editors and publishers of the *Lebanon Daily Record*. They were inducted into the MPA Hall of Fame in 2014.

The Sosnieckis are retired in Lebanon.



St. Louis teachers protest return to class amid pandemic



At left, St. Louis Public School first grade teacher Cindy Digar, protests outside of the St. Louis Public School headquarters on July 13. Above, teachers take to the shaded areas during the protest outside. Teachers and faculty were concerned what rules would be in place for student and teacher safety as schools are scheduled to begin on August 24. (Submitted photos/ Bill Greenblatt, UPI)

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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Covering up: How newspapers are seeing masks used in their areas

By Matthew Barba
Missouri Press News

Not long before this magazine ends up in your mailbox or inbox, Missouri will have passed a significant anniversary. Aug. 2 marks six months since the first coronavirus case was recorded in the state.

We continue to deal with the fallout of a worldwide pandemic that for many of us has struck far too close to home in the form of lost jobs, shuttered businesses and (at the time of this writing) more than 1,100 deaths.

Getting coronavirus under control has been the top priority of medical professionals in every corner of the state and the world. While guidelines seem to change as more information is learned, all scientific evidence seems to point to masks being the most effective way to cut down on transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

Nationally, Pres. Donald Trump had been resistant to promote mask-wearing as an effective method for controlling the coronavirus. In mid-July, Trump was seen wearing a mask publicly for the first time and continued to do so during various subsequent appearances.

In the last few weeks, as communities throughout

Missouri have tried to reopen for business, some have adopted ordinances requiring masks be worn. Gov. Mike Parson has indicated in previous interviews he does not support implementing a statewide mask requirement, instead promoting a message of personal responsibility for their use.

In mid-July, many national retailers announced that they would require masks be worn in all stores nationwide.

By late July, local ordinances had been passed in the Kansas City area, Columbia, Joplin, Springfield and St. Louis, as well as a few other areas.

The ordinances all vary based on locality, but their intent is the same: get businesses back open and the economy returned to some semblance of normality while keeping people safe and preventing further spread of the virus.

Getting together

Still, most areas of the state do not have any sort of ordinance dictating masks must be worn in public. Some newspapers are even seeing other guidelines, such as social distancing, being ignored as communities make their own moves to reopen following the governor's statewide order to shut down earlier this year.

Publisher Rob Viehman of Three Rivers Publishing, which includes newspapers in Cuba, Steelville and St. James, said masks are largely being ignored in the community.

"We are seeing some mask wearing in retail stores, but overall there is little mask wearing in our coverage area," Viehman said. "No masks being worn by public officials during meetings. No masks or social distancing at our graduations, although most have been held outside."

Natha McAllister of the Tri-County Weekly in Jamesport said the area has been fortunate to have few reported cases of COVID-19.

"We're a town of 500 people, give or take a few, surrounded by around 1,200 Amish people, so there isn't a whole lot going on on a good day, except for the tourists that come to town to shop at the Amish stores and eat at the local restaurants," McAllister said.

As a result of the relatively out of the way location of Jamesport (it's on the opposite side of Daviess County from I-35), few business owners and shoppers feel the need to wear a mask.

Continued on Page 13



Rep. Joe Runions, who was the first Missouri representative to be diagnosed with COVID-19, has recovered from his illness and is back to work. On July 14 he attended the Grandview Board of Aldermen meeting, presenting outgoing Alderman Sandy Kessinger with a proclamation from the Missouri House of Representatives. (Submitted photo/Mary King, Jackson County Advocate)



St. Louis Metropolitan Police Chief John W. Hayden, Jr. talks with reporters as Missouri Governor Mike Parson stands near, following a round table discussion with law enforcement and elected officials about the sharp rise in violent crime in St. Louis on Thursday, July 23, 2020. Violent crime has risen 30 per cent prompting the governor to call a special session of the General Assembly. (Submitted photo/Bill Greenblatt, UPI)

Continued from Page 12: *Mask use remains mixed throughout the state*

"Our big Fourth of July celebration was held as usual with a huge crowd, but people did practice social distancing but very few masks were noticed," McAllister said. "Our local Junior Livestock Show and Fair was canceled this year, but most businesses are reporting very good sales in the past several weeks."

While the city of El Dorado Springs does not have a mask ordinance, the Cedar County Health Department issued a resolution strongly supporting the use of masks in public, according to Kimball Long, publisher of the El Dorado Springs Sun.

"At the June 29 city council meeting, approximately 50 people showed up to discuss whether El Dorado Springs should have their annual celebration, the Picnic," Long said. "There were several people who spoke against having the Picnic this year. More people were in support of 'letting the people police themselves,' as one attendee said."

Long added that when the Picnic started on July 15, Fun Time Shows, a carnival company out of Doniphan, publicized the cleaning regimen for its rides and had also set up hand sanitizer stations.

The day after the Picnic started, Long said she saw a total of two masks that afternoon.

Elsewhere in Cedar County, Stockton gave the green light for the Black Walnut Festival in late September. That event usually includes a carnival, concessions, local crafters and a parade, as well as the Miss Black Walnut Contest.

Back in Cuba and the surrounding areas, Viehman said most of the area's festivals, including the Crawford County Fair and the Grape and Fall Festival in St. James, have been canceled. Neighboring Phelps County is still scheduled to have its fair in August.

"Other public events have been going on, including shows at our local music theater, concerts at a local resort, and music at local wineries with no mask requirements and little mask wearing,"



Following cancellation of the Crawford County Fair, a large youth livestock auction was held to replace the one at the fair. No mask wearing or social distancing were observed during the auction. (Submitted photo/Rob Viehman, Three Rivers Publishing)

Viehman said. "The same week Cuba High School announced its prom was canceled, a large youth livestock auction was held to replace the one that was canceled at the fair."

"There was not a mask in sight or any social distancing," Viehman said.

A dividing issue

Joy Beamer, general manager of the Buffalo Reflex, said she is a "mask cheerleader" because of her own medical conditions, including diabetes and an impending carotid artery surgery. In the community, she is seeing people taking stands both for and against wearing masks, and even within her own family the issue is somewhat divisive.

On one side, a new grandbaby has Beamer's family being extra cautious.

"In my own family I have my daughter — totally being careful and masking up, washing hands and using hand sanitizer. She has a COVID-19 of 2020 baby, three months old," Beamer said. "I was unable to touch her until mom and dad went back to work. We're super careful now not to expose her to the pandemic."

On the other side of the ideological spectrum is Beamer's son.

"My son and his family still think it is blown out of proportion and catching

the virus is the luck of the draw," she said. "Yet, in another breath, he won't let me get groceries or leave the house without a great reason because he wants to keep me safe."

As more businesses adopted requirements for patrons to wear masks, Beamer's son employed her help in making masks for his family.

"He brought material over for me to make him masks. He brought flags and sheep: patriotic and follow the crowd," Beamer said. "So see, his masks are even undecided."

Without family ties to bind, the community-at-large seems to be more divided, Beamer said.

"It's partly a political stance and part sheer misinformation, listening to those who spread information but have no idea what they are talking about without any authority," Beamer said. "I follow local social media. Many feel that COVID-19 is still a hoax."

She added that it seems to her many people have lost the ability to respect others with whom they disagree on issues that affect everyone.

"United We Stand' — that's not a thing anymore. It will take a nationally beloved icon to contract COVID-19 and then die before many will sit up and see the writing on the wall," Beamer said.



Festus — Peggy Bess, former editor of *Leader Publications*, announced in early July she will be joining her husband, Gordon, as an associate editor in part-time capacity at the newspaper company. Her semi-retirement came as a result of several factors, including a desire to spend more time with grandchildren.

Bess has been with the publishing company since it launched in 1994, starting at the *Leader* as a reporter and moved up to news editor, managing editor and finally editor. She told readers the change to associate editor marks her first demotion, but she will continue to write columns and help edit letters to the editor.

Replacing Bess as editor at the *Leader* will be Kim Robertson, with Steve Taylor taking over responsibilities as Editorial Page editor. Both are longtime residents of the *Leader's* coverage areas.

Robertson first joined the *Leader* writing movie reviews and became full-time reporter in 1999. She was promoted to editor of the *Arnold-Imperial Leader* and then *Leader* managing editor, as well as acts as the *Leader's* website editor.



Taylor joined the *Leader* in 2005 after working at the *Suburban Journals* in sports and news editing and then organizing the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch's* voter guide. Prior to his promotion, he was the *Leader's* county beat reporter and news and community editor.

Monett — Murray Bishoff bid goodbye, but not farewell, to readers of *The Monett Times* after 32 years with the newspaper. He retired as news editor but agreed to continue working for the newspaper one day a week as a “senior contributor.”

Bishoff said he will continue to show up at community events but will likely limit it to one per evening, instead of the two or three he sometimes found himself covering for the newspaper. He will continue his duties with the Ozark Festival Orchestra, an independent orchestra of 40 members based in Monett.

Kyle Troutman, editor of *The Times*, will take over writing a weekly column for the newspaper, a role that Bishoff filled for the last 24 years. Troutman said he hopes to take inspiration from Bishoff's approach in writing about positive aspects of the community and using controversial topics to spur conversation, reflection and action within the community.



Louisiana — Jim Hart was named publisher of *The Bowling Green Times*, *The Louisiana Press-Journal*, and *The Vandalia Leader* in mid-July. The three newspapers are owned and operated by Lakeway Publishers.

Prior to joining Lakeway, Hart worked for Paxton Media in Indiana. He has experience working in Illinois, Kansas and Wyoming, as well as serving as publisher and advertising director of *The Minot (N.D.) Daily News*.



Free micro-course teaches writing news for mobile

Reynolds Journalism Institute

A free mobile-microlearning course — The 5 C's of Writing News for Mobile Audiences — has launched on a mobile learning app, EdApp. Think Babel or Duolingo for digital journalism.

Linda Austin created the course as part of her nonresidential Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute fellowship in 2017-18. Thirty-five journalists tested the course, and all said they would recommend it to other journalists. Eighty percent increased their test scores in an efficacy study conducted by the Information

Experience Lab at the University of Missouri in 2019.

When asked what they would tell other journalists about the course, here was a typical response: “That it provided excellent tips and insights for writing for mobile in a fun and non-time-consuming format.”

Now, the course has been tweaked and improved based on feedback from the journalists in the study and is available free to the public.

The idea behind using mobile microlearning for the course was to overcome the biggest obstacle to training for journalists — lack of

time — by providing learning in five-minute chunks. In the past decade, bite-size lessons consumed on the phone while on public transit or waiting in line have taken off in other industries but not yet in journalism.

To complete the self-paced course — six lessons, two reviews and final test — should take about 45 minutes. You can also download a handout that reviews the course, plus lists free, easy digital-storytelling tools and provides tips on further reading.

Find instructions to access the course at the following link: <https://bit.ly/30Xdfag>

Relevance Project partners with Metro Creative for newspaper advertising campaign

From Missouri Press Staff

The Relevance Project has announced an ongoing partnership with Metro Creative Graphics, Inc., the leading source of creative materials for advertising and news content for the newspaper media industry.

The first initiative of this collaboration is the roll-out of the "All Together Now" campaign centered on business recovery and reopening amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the critical role of newspaper journalism during the public health crisis. The ads are available to newspapers free of charge and may be accessed via the following link: <https://bit.ly/3jYYNaj>

The Relevance Project is a strategic

partnership uniting state and provincial press associations to speed the resurgence of community newspapers in North America. It's proud of newspapers and what they represent.

The Relevance Project seeks to convert local expertise into national prominence. And proudly shouts out on behalf of the newspapers in the United States and Canada.

Missouri Press Association Executive Director Mark Maassen, a member of Newspaper Association Managers, was on the committee that helped create the Relevance Project and MPA donated to get the project started.

Find an example of one of the ads on page 3 of this magazine.

Second wave of COVID-19 Impact Shopping Survey is underway

From Pulse Research

Pulse Research has launched a second wave of research to expand on its COVID Impact Shopping Survey.

The goal is to capture an even greater sample than the initial effort launched earlier this year. The survey has been extended to learn about shopping

intent in more categories based upon feedback and requests.

A \$1,000 incentive is available to one respondent who completes the survey and shares their email.

Promotional materials are here: <https://www.pulseresearch.com/covidsurvey>

Please send Missouri Press News YOUR news to mbarba@mopress.com

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CALENDAR

October

1-3 — National Newspaper Association's 134th Annual Convention and Trade Show, Online via Teleconference

15 — Missouri Photojournalism Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Columbia, Tentative

Canceled Events

September

24 — Missouri Press Foundation Social Event and Fundraiser, Jefferson City

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

Rescheduled/Reprogrammed

September

25 — MPA Gubernatorial Political Forum, Format to be determined, More details to come

26 — Best Ad Contest/Better Newspaper Contest Awards Presentations, Special Presentations with Details to be Announced Soon

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Ted Lawrence,
Advertising Director
Missouri Press Service

MORE ON ADVERTISING:

TEN REASONS WHY NEWSPAPERS DELIVER FOR POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Passing this along, from the John Kimball Group, in an effort to capture as many political dollars as possible this year!

1. NEWSPAPER READERS ARE VOTERS: In presidential elections, between 8 and 9 out of 10 newspaper readers cast a ballot. In mid-term elections, when voting is typically much lighter, newspaper readers still deliver the vote, with more than 8 out of 10 newspaper readers going to the polls.

2. NEWSPAPERS ARE CREDIBLE: Voters look to newspapers for the information they need to make up their minds about candidates and issues. Newspaper advertising gives your campaign an aura of credibility and respectability that's unmatched.

3. NEWSPAPERS CONSISTENTLY REACH VOTERS: Voters consistently look to newspapers to help make up their minds about how they'll vote. While the perceived usefulness of other media rises and falls as the campaign progresses, newspapers maintain their strength for influencing voter opinion. Voters count on newspapers to deliver the whole story about the candidates and issues, from the earliest moments of the campaign right up until Election Day.

4. NEWSPAPERS REACH CRUCIAL UNDECIDED VOTERS: The conventional wisdom among consultants says that only 10-15% of the electorate is typically up for grabs at the end of any campaign. But in reality, that number is much higher. That's because while only 10-15% of voters may be truly "undecided," many more are far from certain about their vote. Among those who say they experience some indecision, three out of four are regular newspaper readers. Newspapers can put your message in the hands of this crucial constituency.

5. NEWSPAPERS ARE RELIABLE: Nobody reads the newspaper to escape from reality, as is often the case with television and radio. And unlike annoying telephone calls and tv/radio commercials, people actually enjoy reading newspapers. Newspaper readers seek out in-depth, detailed political information. With newspaper in your media mix, you can be sure your ad dollars have been well spent.

6. NEWSPAPERS MAKE TARGETING EASY: Today's newspapers can deliver your message right to the doorsteps of the voters you need to reach. Most newspapers have established sections based on geographic zones and can target a pre-printed flyer or brochure for insertion and delivery within a specific zip code. Many can target delivery down to the census tract, block, or even house by house. You can have your message delivered in a flyer or brochure, on a "Post-it" note placed on the front page, or even on the poly/delivery bag in which the newspaper arrives.

7. NEWSPAPERS CAN PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION TO VOTERS: Use newspapers to highlight endorsements, issue clarification, and candidate comparisons. Your candidate can also use a compelling newspaper ad to generate interest from the press and garner valuable earned media opportunities.

8. IT'S EASY TO ADVERTISE IN NEWSPAPERS: Placing political ads in newspapers has never been easier. Your local newspaper is just a phone call away. Our service is focused on just what your campaign needs. Fast response; compelling messaging; eye-catching design.

9. ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL: Voters know newspapers are the place to go to find out what's going on in their communities. They know that unlike television or radio news programs, newspapers cover local issues every day of the week. And they know with a newspaper, they'll get real, in-depth coverage of the local issues most important to them. The same issues that often determine how they'll vote on Election Day.

10. NEWSPAPERS ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA MIX: Broadcast, direct mail, and phone calls are all still important, but it's also recommended that you invest in the proven and effective advertising medium: newspaper.

For help in developing a winning package,
please contact me at
tlawrence@mopress.com.



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Paper or digital: An important Sunshine distinction

By the time most of you read this column, you will have already voted in the primary races. That's important because let's look today at a trend that, in part, involves a candidate in a primary race, who may or may not at this point be on the November ballot.

This trend involves civil litigation in our state. For many years, the parties who brought Sunshine Law cases were primarily journalistic entities or maybe corporate entities. Citizens just didn't have the money to pay a lawyer to file a suit to hold a public body accountable. It made public bodies somewhat emboldened when it came to deciding whether to be slipshod in terms of honoring the mandate of Missouri's Sunshine Law.

But in the last couple of years, there have been several entities that have decided to make filing sunshine suits a priority. And a couple of those lawsuits have generated interesting court action this spring.

One involves an appellate opinion regarding Aaron Malin, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union of Eastern Missouri, against ACT Missouri, claiming a violation of the Sunshine Law. There, the appellate court held that the plaintiff was entitled to discovery to determine if the defendant, which claims it is not subject to the Sunshine Law because it is a not-for-profit entity, does indeed fall under the "quasi-public body" portion of the law, and sent the case back down to circuit court for further proceedings.

A second involved John Solomon, represented by The Freedom Center of Missouri, a non-profit organization which says it is involved in public interest litigation. It filed suit on Solomon's behalf in St. Louis City Circuit Court against the St. Louis Circuit Attorney, claiming violation of the Sunshine Law. In late July, the circuit judge held that the defendant had failed to properly answer the lawsuit and therefore granted a default judgment against it. I suspect that case is not final, either.

Finally, Elad Gross, whose name was on the primary ballot in the Attorney General's race, originally filed a suit in 2018 in Cole County against "A New Missouri," a not-for-profit organization, seeking copies of numerous corporate records from them, claiming he was a beneficiary of their bequests. The trial court and then the Western District Missouri Court of Appeals decided that he had not pled facts sufficient to show he was entitled

to these records he sought. Then, this year, he garnered some additional public attention when he filed suit against Gov. Michael Parson, seeking copies of records regarding materials received by the Governor's office from entities he alleged were "dark money" donors. (The petition does not specifically identify what entities he identified in that way, but attached to the petition are copies of his requests, indicating in part he wanted records from "A New Missouri" and various individuals.)

The Governor's office responded requesting additional time for research and indicating the rates to be charged. Additional requests from Mr. Gross followed and eventually the Governor's office told Mr. Gross the cost to produce the records he sought was going to exceed \$3,600. Eventually Mr. Gross filed this lawsuit.

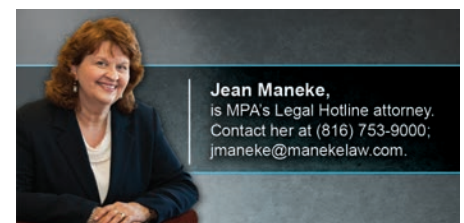
After lengthy proceedings in Cole County, the trial judge held that the Governor's office's response to Mr. Gross was not a violation of the Sunshine Law. Unhappy, Mr. Gross appealed to the Western District Missouri Court of Appeals, citing ten points in his appeal. The appellate court went through all the points and held that four had merit, sending the case back down to the circuit court to consider those four issues.

The case is important to us, even though it is still on appeal, for one major point in the appellate holding. The appellate court distinguished between requests for paper copies of records and requests for electronic copies of records. The court held that the public body CAN charge for attorney search time for paper records but NOT for electronic copies.

That opinion is still subject to change. But in the meantime, if you make a Sunshine Law request, ask for it always to come back to you as electronic copies of electronic records, if available! That will eliminate the claim that the body can charge for attorney review time.

Perhaps having to say that helps make it clear how convoluted that line of reasoning seems to at least one attorney.

"The court held that the public body CAN charge for attorney search time for paper records but NOT for electronic copies."



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

NIE is even more important this year

The pandemic is causing school superintendents a lot of heartache and heartburn; open schools or not, offer virtual classes or offer a hybrid plan. The decisions come down to where your district is located, how many cases does your area have and whether the numbers are going up or down. There are a lot of factors for superintendents to consider.

One thing the superintendents, teachers, students and parents can count on is Newspapers in Education. The calendar for the year will be posted in early August and we will be updating content, offering new material and supporting all stakeholders in any way possible throughout the school year.

The Read All About It series of daily newspaper activities is being updated now and will be available the first week of August. We're working on the features needed to complete the First Ladies series, which is always popular in the Spring, during Women's History Month. The serial story for 2021, which will be available in late December, is about the Negro Baseball League and is really coming together. It will support our Black History Month features quite well. As more content becomes available, NIE will post it so check our Calendar page often.

Publishers, this is going to be a vastly different and difficult school year, so think of it as an opportunity to cultivate new sponsors. Everyone wants to help, so get out and find those sponsors! This could also be a good time to renew your relationship with your schools and districts. Connect with these and find possibilities to help them. If you find they need something that NIE doesn't yet offer, let me know. I'll work with you to provide it.

This is the time for NIE to really make a difference!



Helen Hendrick,
Education Services Director
Missouri Press Foundation

COMMEMORATING MISSOURI'S CONSTITUTION

CONSTITUTION DAY IS SEPTEMBER 17.

On this day in 1787, the delegates at the Philadelphia Convention signed the United States Constitution. Constitution Day also is a good day to celebrate our own Missouri Constitution.

Although both constitutions were created to organize governments, the evolution of these constitutions has been very different. Our federal government has chosen to change its original constitution only through amendments, but Missouri has had four distinct constitutions.

CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

Handwritten report from Missouri's Constitution Committee recommending statehood for Missouri to the United States Government.

Handwritten report from Missouri's Constitution Committee recommending statehood for Missouri to the United States Government.

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The Missouri State Capitol in 1840.

become a state in 1821 if Maine had not wanted to join the union as a free state at the same time. The two states were admitted to the union the same day—August 10, 1821.

Missouri's second constitution was passed in 1865, shortly after the end of the Civil War. It emancipated all slaves and parts of it were aimed at punishing Confederate sympathizers, like the denial of voting rights.

The third constitution, passed in 1875, eliminated these provisions. However, it provided that Supreme Court judges would no longer be appointed but chosen by popular elections. This led to some corrupt judges being elected.

Missouri's current constitution was adopted in 1945 and, among other things, it provided that Supreme Court and other appellate judges would be chosen by what is called Missouri's Non Partisan Court plan, which is based more on the merit selection of judges.

LEARN MORE

- To learn more about the Missouri Constitution, go to the Secretary of State's website at sos.mo.gov.
- Do you think it is good that it is easier to amend the state Constitution than the Constitution of the United States? Why or why not?
- Research how the Missouri Compromise changed Missouri's original constitution.
- Compare and contrast the Bill of Rights in the two constitutions.
 - What rights do they have in common?
 - List the additional rights guaranteed in Missouri's Bill of Rights.
 - Are some of these additional rights contained in some of U.S. Constitution's amendments? Do you think they should be added to the Missouri Constitution? Why or why not?

The most important part of both the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions is contained in the first words of both Preambles: "We the people..." Both our federal and state governments belong to us, the people. We the people have the responsibility of making sure our government protects our rights. That is why we need to continue to learn about both documents not only on Constitution Day but throughout the year.

Read to your kids by Jim Trelease

I earn my living as a writer and motivational speaker for teachers and parents, talking about raising readers. I'm booked one year in advance and have been for the last 20 years. Furthermore, my father got me this job when I was five years old.

To be candid, I don't think my dad really knew what he was doing. He did know he had a fairly mischievous, hyperactive kid who was cooped up with his little brother in a four-room garden apartment in Union, New Jersey. He also knew that if he didn't give his wife a break from this child, she'd have some kind of breakdown.

So each night after dinner, he'd pull me into his lap, pick up The Newark Evening News, and begin reading the comics page, starting with "Nancy (and Sluggo)," and then "Blondie (and Dagwood)," "The Phantom" and "Li'l Abner."

Even though it was just reading the funnies, it wasn't as simple as it appears. Because some of the strips involved humor, and I was still a year removed from school, dad had to explain what was supposed to be funny about Dagwood's relationship with his boss, Mr. Dithers. This was my introduction to the world, that delicate balance between employee and management.

It's also worth noting that in order to understand a joke, one must be able to juggle two thoughts at once: the way it is in the joke/cartoon and the way it's supposed to be. Not everyone understands jokes, especially those who can't sustain the two thoughts simultaneously in their brains. Thus my father was giving me brain exercises without either of us knowing it.

Things got even deeper when we'd read Al Capp's "Li'l Abner." Because it was filled with social commentary about the relationships between men and women or satire on business and government, I had a lot of questions ("What's a bachelor?") that needed thoughtful responses. So the funnies were and still are more than funny.

As I grew, we moved from the funny pages to include the rest of the paper. Dad didn't stop

with the newspaper, though. After we finished the comics, he'd read me the next installment of the serialized novel in that week's Saturday Evening Post.

Of course I didn't understand all of this. But whether he knew it or not, my father was sowing the seeds that would bear fruit years later when my book on reading aloud to

children (The Read-Aloud Handbook) would spend 17 weeks on The New York Times bestseller list. The singular pleasure I was experiencing each night in being held by my father in his big leather chair would sustain me through hours of phonics instruction in school. "This sure is boring," I'd think to myself in class, "but if it's what I need to do in order to work the magic my dad makes with the newspaper and the Post, then I'll put up with it."

What my dad taught me by example was that reading isn't worksheets in class, it's not phonics drills. Reading is fun, it's exciting and funny, and it can be painless. Without that in the back

Jim Trelease's best-selling book, *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, (now in its fifth edition) has sold nearly 2 million copies.

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Of course I didn't understand all of this. But whether he knew it or not, my father was sowing the seeds that would bear fruit years later when my book on reading aloud to

children (The Read-Aloud Handbook) would spend 17 weeks on The New York Times bestseller list. The singular pleasure I was experiencing each night in being held by my father in his big leather chair would sustain me through hours of phonics instruction in school. "This sure is boring," I'd think to myself in class, "but if it's what I need to do in order to work the magic my dad makes with the newspaper and the Post, then I'll put up with it."

What my dad taught me by example was that reading isn't worksheets in class, it's not phonics drills. Reading is fun, it's exciting and funny, and it can be painless. Without that in the back

of my mind, I wonder if that hyper little kid would have stuck with all the drills and skills.

Thirty years later, I'd read the statistics that validated what my parents had done. As Depression products, neither of them had gone to college, but the research out of the U.S. Department of Education shows that the students with the highest reading, writing,

and math scores are the ones who come from the homes with the most printed materials (books, magazines and newspapers). We didn't own a car until I was in fifth grade and didn't own a house until seventh grade, but we owned a whole world of print.

I speak nearly 100 times a year and none of what I say can be found in any of the English or math courses I took in college, but all of it can be found in the lessons I took in the lap of my dad when I was a child. I never had a more effective teacher or a class that was more fun.

A former journalist, Jim Trelease published his best-selling book, *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, in 1979. Now in its fifth U.S. edition (with three international versions), it has sold nearly 2 million copies and is a common text in teacher education. Trelease is one of America's most sought-after educational speakers and has been honored for his contributions to children's literacy.

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