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# Iowa Newspaper Association Bulletin

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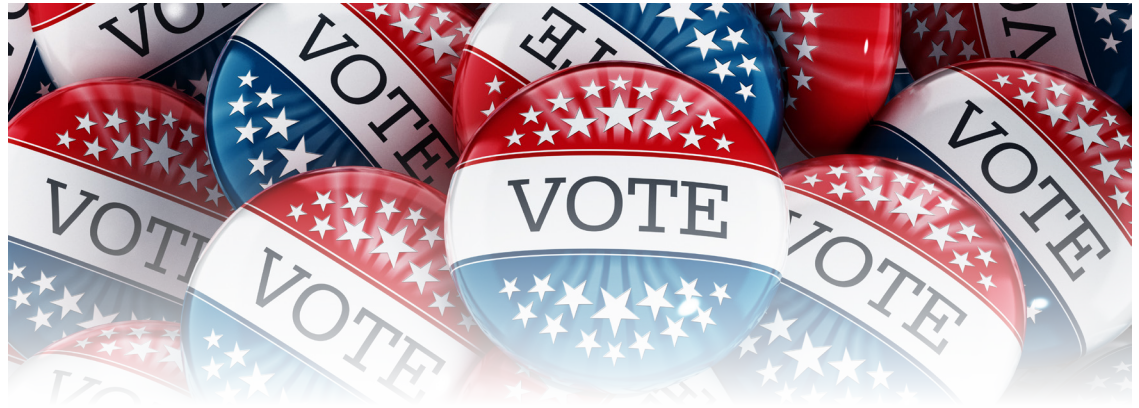
## CALENDAR of EVENTS

### MEETINGS

INA, INF & INA Services  
Co. Boards  
Thursday, October 24  
Des Moines

### EVENTS

Iowa Newspaper  
Association Convention &  
Trade Show  
February 5-7, 2020  
Des Moines



## BALLOT INSTRUCTIONS GENERATE CONFUSION

**SUSAN PATTERSON PLANK**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IOWA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

**D**uring the Iowa Legislative session in 2017, then Governor Terry Branstad signed House File 566 into law a bill requiring joint school and city elections. According to the Secretary of State's Office the last four school elections, the voter turnout average was 6.5% and the average voter turnout for city elections was 21.3%.

Combining elections seemed like a no brainer—the intention was to increase voter participation and to save taxpayers' costs.

**It's worth noting that the district boundaries for city councils and school boards are often different in many places in the state of Iowa.** Some lawmakers at the time expressed concern about possible confusion.

An informed public is critical—as is voting. We are a democracy because we elect a government by voting. Voting is the most important way that we express our opinions for what we believe in. As part of preparing to vote many people review the ballot they will see on election day. They can do that because ballots are published in newspapers.

**Iowa code 49.53 requires that a facsimile of the portion of the ballot containing the first rotation showing the names of all candidates or nominees and the office each seeks.**

So, what does that mean? It means the public gets to see what the ballot will actually look like, who is running and for what office. If the ballots rotate the names—only one version needs to be provided. Put another way—if there are three candidates, they may

appear on the sample ballot in alphabetical order—but the actual ballot may rotate the names. Sally Adams may be at the top of the ballot for you, but when your neighbor votes, Sally Adams by be the second name. That's what "first rotation" means.

That all makes perfect sense. Combining elections hopefully increases voter turnout and engagement. Preparing to vote by reviewing the ballot does too. Whatever can be done to increase the public's awareness and increase the likelihood of voting is good for everyone.

**NOTE TO PUBLISHERS:** The Iowa Newspaper Association is working to resolve this issue. In the meantime, please understand that all newspapers should print the ballot(s) that is provided to them.

But this week—my phone started ringing. And it started ringing because the Secretary of the State's office is instructing auditors that they may run only one ballot even though there are multiple races that a voter will be voting in and then just listing the remaining candidates.

We do not believe this is a correct reading of Iowa law and accordingly, instructs auditors to provide the public with insufficient notice of the upcoming elections in violation of Iowa law. Nothing in House File 566 amended the notice and publication requirements of Iowa Code 49.53 and to encourage a practice that potentially makes voting more confusing, when we want more people to be informed and more people to vote may put our elections in jeopardy.

I hope there aren't any close races.

*The Iowa Newspaper Association's mission is to advocate the continued importance of thriving newspaper enterprises in Iowa dedicated to the First Amendment and to provide guidance to members and direction to the association's two related boards.*

# meeting minutes

## Iowa Newspaper Association Government Relations Committee October 10, 2019



### INA Government Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

The Iowa Newspaper Association Government Relations Committee met at 10:00 a.m. at the INA offices with the following members present: Sarah Lefeber, Ames Iowa State Daily; Jared Strong, Carroll Times Herald; Zack Kucharski, Cedar Rapids Gazette; Ron Gutierrez, Clinton Herald; Rox Laird, Des Moines; Carol Hunter, Des Moines Register; Amy Gilligan, Dubuque Telegraph Herald; Lyle Muller, Iowa Center for Public Affairs Journalism; Sara Konrad Baranowski, Iowa Falls Times Citizen; Randy Evans, Iowa Freedom of Information Council; Trevis Mayfield, Maquoketa Sentinel-Press; and Mike Hodges, Wapello Republican. Bill Tubbs, Eldridge North Scott Press attended via phone. Also, in attendance were Brad Epperly, Nyemaster; Susan Patterson Plank, Iowa Newspaper Association and Geof Fischer, Iowa Newspaper Foundation.

#### Votes taken:

- A. On a motion by Hodges, seconded by Evans, the Committee approved the minutes of the June 7, 2019 meeting.
- B. On a motion by Hunter, seconded by Laird, the Committee recommends to the INA Board that Association actively work to pass legislation to provide addition clarification to chapter 21.4.

Section 21.4, subsection 1, paragraph a, Code 2019, is amended to read as follows:

a. Except as provided in subsection 3, a governmental body shall give notice of the time, date, and place of each meeting including a reconvened meeting of the governmental body, and the tentative agenda of the meeting, in a manner reasonably calculated to apprise the public of that information. Reasonable notice shall include advising the news media any person who have has filed a request for notice with the governmental body and posting the notice on a bulletin board or other prominent place which is easily accessible to the public and clearly designated for that purpose at the principal office of the body holding the meeting, or if no such office exists, at the building in which the meeting is to be held.

Sec. 4. Section 21.4, subsection 2, paragraph a, Code 2019, is amended to read as follows:

a. Except as otherwise provided in paragraph "c", notice conforming with all of the requirements of subsection 1 shall be given at least twenty-four hours prior to the commencement of any meeting of a governmental body, excluding weekend days and paid holidays as specified in section 1C.2, unless for good cause such notice is impossible or impractical, in which case as much notice as is reasonably possible shall be given.

- C. On a motion by Hodges, seconded by Hunter, the Committee recommends to the INA Board that Association actively work to pass legislation to provide addition clarification to chapter 22.3.
  2. All expenses of the examination and copying shall be paid by the person desiring to examine or copy. The lawful

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### U.S. MAIL

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319 East 5th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50309

**INA LEGAL HOTLINE**  
515-283-3100 (paid service)

## Free political content available at USANewsIowa.com

John Gaps III, formerly of The Associated Press and The Des Moines Register, is now editor/publisher of USANewsIowa.com, a news & photo agency devoted to coverage of the Iowa Caucus race and issues surrounding it. As a grateful participant in many INA activities in the past, Gaps offers all INA members free use of all content on the site. No strings attached.

Gaps says he understands that almost every INA member deals with the Caucus and that keeping up with content outside of their area, especially use of photographs, can be expensive or copyright hazardous. The site attempts to be political neutral but will also comment on the state of campaigns drawing on Gaps'

40+ years covering the Caucuses in Iowa. The only agenda is the free flow of quality news content.

The content is set up for easy copy and paste of articles and the photos posted can be captured with a screen shot or swiped off the page to your desktop.

For attribution, "via USANewsIowa.com" or "USANI".

It's free use through the end of the Caucus, and a few days after, for all INA members. USANewsIowa.com is providing this resource to support and promote quality journalism in Iowa.

For any questions, email John at [usaneysiowa@gmail.com](mailto:usaneysiowa@gmail.com).

## Colbert's remarks spur standing ovation

### IOWA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COUNCIL

*Gina Colbert of Columbus, Ga., was honored Thursday, September 26, 2019 by the Iowa Freedom of Information Council with its Friend of the First Amendment Award. The award has been given annually since 2001 to people who have been effective advocates for open and accountable government.*

*Colbert began her advocacy on the morning of Jan. 6, 2015, when her daughter, Autumn Steele, 34, was shot to death by a Burlington police officer outside the home she shared with her husband and young son.*

*The officer said he was trying to shoot the Steeles' dog as it came at the group. But Steele was struck, instead.*

*The officer was cleared of any criminal charges, but the city paid \$2 million to settle a wrongful-death lawsuit. The city continues to fight the broad issue of whether the public should be able to see the body camera video from law officers' cameras.*

*Here are remarks Colbert made Thursday in accepting the FOI award:*

**T**hank you for this recognition. We got this far thanks to the hard work of so many people, and for that I will always be grateful.

My daughter Autumn was shot and killed in her front yard by a Burlington police officer named Jesse Hill almost five years ago.

Every day since then has been a bitter fight to bring the truth about her death to light. As I look back over those years, it strikes me that the biggest constant has been fear.

Jesse Hill was afraid --- afraid of a barking dog. Instead of relying on his oath or his training, he succumbed to that fear. He drew his gun, pointed it at the source of his fear, and started shooting. He paid no mind to the three people, including my 3-year-old grandson, who were in his line of fire. He pulled the trigger because he was afraid, and he killed my daughter.

The Burlington Police Department was afraid --- afraid of what might happen to one of their own,

and afraid of what the truth would reveal about them. After all, they had hired Jesse Hill and trained him, put a badge on his chest and a gun in his hand. They were afraid that the public they had sworn to protect would learn that one of their officers would put innocent lives in danger without a second thought --- because he was afraid of a dog.

They succumbed to their fear. When another officer arrived on the scene, the first words out of his mouth were, "It was an accident." Which is a strange thing to say, since he didn't see the shooting. He wasn't there yet. "It was an accident" was not what he saw --- it was the story they needed to tell.

As it turns out, when you control all the evidence and the police narrative, it's actually not all that hard to tell whatever kind of story you want. A barking dog becomes a vicious attack. Jesse Hill wasn't just afraid --- he was bitten. He was defending his life. Yet Hill was never bitten. And you give the public just enough to support your story and lock the rest away. And as your story is retold, and retold, and retold, it hardens in the public's mind. But the time the whole truth comes out, if it ever does, it's too late to make much difference.

The Des Moines County Attorney Amy Beavers was afraid. Afraid to prosecute one of her own officers, but also afraid to explain why she wouldn't. Iowa law says that a person commits manslaughter when he "unintentionally causes the death of another person by the commission of an act in a manner likely to cause death or serious injury."

I don't know how anyone could argue that pulling a trigger with three people in your line of fire is not "likely to cause death or serious injury." I do know that Amy Beavers didn't even try. Instead, when she released her decision not to prosecute Jesse Hill, she just cut that sentence right out of the law.

And so it goes. The Iowa Public Information Board was afraid to rock the boat. The attorney general's office was afraid to stand up for Iowans instead of the police. Afraid of the truth. Afraid of the consequences

COLBERT - cont. on page 6

custodian may charge a reasonable fee for the services of the lawful custodian or the custodian's authorized designee in supervising the examination and copying of the records. If copy equipment is available at the office of the lawful custodian of any public records, the lawful custodian shall provide any person a reasonable number of copies of any public record in the custody of the office upon the payment of a fee. The fee for the copying service as determined by the lawful custodian shall not exceed the actual cost of providing the service. Actual costs shall include only those expenses directly attributable to supervising the examination of and making and providing copies of public records. Actual costs shall not include charges for legal services for redaction or review, ordinary expenses or costs such as employment benefits, depreciation, maintenance, electricity, or insurance associated with the administration of the office of the lawful custodian.

- D. On a motion by Strong, seconded by Muller, the Committee recommended to the INA board that it approve the following INA legislative priorities for the 2020 legislative session:
1. To support transparency in government through strong open meetings and open records laws and to resist any effort to weaken these laws.
  2. To preserve publication of public notice advertising in newspapers where it is seen by the greatest number of Iowans.
  3. To support and assist the National Newspaper Association and the News Media Alliance in their efforts to work with the postal service to provide efficient and timely mail delivery of newspapers and to protect newspapers from further expense and regulation by the USPS.
  4. To support the funding request of the Iowa Public Information Board.
  5. To encourage the Iowa Public Information Board and others' efforts to support legislation to...
    - a. Expand the number of days an open records complaint may be filed with the Iowa Public Information Board from sixty to ninety days.
    - b. Clarifying language regarding peace officer's investigative reports.
  6. To encourage and support legislation to establish a reasonable and consistent fees structure statewide for examining and copying public records.
  7. To encourage and support legislation providing consistency, transparency and public accountability regarding public release of law enforcement body camera videos.

#### Action agreed upon:

- A. The Committee directed staff to work with the INA lobbyists to continue to monitor and as appropriate support the Iowa Public Information Board and bills it is amending.
- B. The Committee agreed to an ad hoc committee to review and discuss the Association's stand on broadband legislation. The committee will include Baranowski, Gilligan and Lefebvre.

#### Items discussed:

- A. The Committee heard an update from Fischer regarding the Local Legal Initiative by the Reporter's Committee for the Freedom of the Press.
- B. The Committee heard a preview from Epperly, on the 2020 legislative session including the House Speaker change.
- C. The Committee heard an update from Evans on the FOI vs. Polk County Sheriff's Department.
- D. The Committee discussed the potential for an open records audit.
- E. The Legislative Reception is again planned for 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Patterson Plank



And  
Finally

Collywobbles means "butterflies in your stomach," that feeling you get when you're nervous or anxious about something.

# FREE MEMBER EXCHANGE

## ▼ HELP WANTED

**ADVERTISING DIRECTOR.** The Times-Republican, a seven-day daily newspaper located in central Iowa, is looking for a results-driven advertising director to lead our team of sales professionals.

Applicants should have previous experience in newspaper advertising sales management for print and digital platforms. Good presentation skills, written and verbal communication skills and team motivation ability will be a deciding factor for the successful candidate. Knowledge of Microsoft Office and other software programs will be helpful.

Our newspaper is part of a family-owned newspaper group with 47 daily newspapers and more than 100 weekly newspapers in 17 states. We offer a competitive salary and fringe benefit package as well as excellent opportunities for advancement within the company. Please send a letter of application, resume and references by email to [apelzer@timesrepublican.com](mailto:apelzer@timesrepublican.com). 1106

**ASSISTANT EDITOR.** Enterprise Media Group, a progressive regional publishing company headquartered in Blair, Neb., is looking for someone with news writing and photography experience, as well as online and social media skills, to help spearhead our online movement and to also handle traditional newspaper duties. Candidates must have previous newspaper experience and have a desire to think outside the box. Duties would include assisting the managing editor for a twice-weekly newspaper and two weekly newspapers, as well as serve as our online editor for several regional publications. If you have the desire to bring new ideas to the table, and are tired of the same old newsroom, we'd love to hear from you! Please email your resume and cover letter to Associate Publisher Chris Rhoades at [crhoades@enterprisepub.com](mailto:crhoades@enterprisepub.com). 1106

**REPORTER.** The Marshalltown Times-Republican has an immediate opening for a news reporter to join its community newspaper staff. The ideal candidate will thrive in a fast-paced newsroom and be disciplined with meeting short and long-term deadlines. Strong photography skills, solid knowledge of AP Style and the ability to write clear, concise copy is required. The reporter will be expected to cover stories on government, education, breaking news and other community news and events. The position requires the reporter to generate their own story ideas, field assignments from editors and turn out stories on a daily basis.

This is a full-time, hourly position, Monday-Friday with some weekend work. It offers health benefits and a 401(k). To apply, send a cover letter and resume to Publisher Abigail Pelzer at [apelzer@timesrepublican.com](mailto:apelzer@timesrepublican.com). 1106

**STAFF WRITER. RARE OPENING** - The Spencer Daily Reporter, located at the entry to the Iowa Great Lakes, is looking for an energetic staff writer to join our award winning editorial department. The ideal individual will have strong writing and story telling skills, a nose for news, bring considerable people skills, have some photography experience and be willing to be part of fun and dedicated news and feature team. Social media and video skills a plus. Looking to fill immediately. Experience preferred but willing to consider the right candidate with a desire to grow in the job. Benefits include health and dental insurance, paid days off, holiday pay, 401K, flexible spending account. Please send cover letter, resume and any writing or photography samples to Randy Cauthron, Spencer Daily Reporter, PO Box 197, Spencer, IA 51301 or email: [rcauthron@spencerdailyreporter.com](mailto:rcauthron@spencerdailyreporter.com). TBD

**STAFF WRITER.** The Daily lowegian is searching for a full-time news writer to join its award-winning staff.

Our next reporter must be a self-starter with a passion to learn and report important stories to our community. The Daily lowegian offers great opportunity for reporters to grow in a variety of subjects and mediums.

This reporter will go from reporting feature stories on local people to producing important watchdog packages that either hold governments accountable or further educate readers on trends and happenings in their community. Our newsroom gives the freedom to be able to pursue projects you're interested in that go beyond the day-to-day responsibilities.

The lowegian has a marked history in creating important, award-winning journalism despite its status as a small southern Iowa newspaper. We are a 21st century newsroom that seeks to break news that matters to our community. Our journalism has won awards on a state and national stage, even competing against the likes of the Boston Globe and ESPN in the past year.

A college-degree is not required. On-the-job experience is preferred but we'll train the person who is eager to learn and succeed in the field.

Interested candidates should email their resume and writing samples to Daily lowegian editor Kyle Ocker by email at [kocker@dailyiowegian.com](mailto:kocker@dailyiowegian.com). 1106

## ▼ FOR SALE

**Considering a sale of your newspaper but not sure where to start?** Iowa's newest media broker, Scenic Trail Media Brokers, LLC, is here to help you. Scenic Trail Media Brokers will work with you in every step of the process to properly market your newspaper to help you attract the right buyer for your property. We'll work with you until the final closing to make sure you get top dollar. Call Ryan Harvey today at 515-689-1151 or reach him by email at [scenictrailmediabrokers@gmail.com](mailto:scenictrailmediabrokers@gmail.com) for more information.

**Iowa weekly newspaper for sale;** excellent community; city, school, county legals, gross around \$200K. 40 year owner seeking to slow down. Contact Northeast Iowa, Iowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309. Contact: Iowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, Iowa.

**Two weekly newspapers,** including one in county seat community. Progressive communities. City, county, school legals. Located in southwest Iowa. Contact: Weekly Newspapers, Iowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, Iowa.

**Profitable group of three small weekly newspapers** for sale in South Dakota, two in Black Hills. If interested write to: S.D. Newspapers c/o Iowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, IA 50309.

**IN NEED OF NEW LISTINGS.** This could be the right time to sell! \*Appraisals-Consultations-Brokerage services\* Your full service broker, News Brokerage of Iowa, [dtappnewsbrokerageofiowa@gmail.com](mailto:dtappnewsbrokerageofiowa@gmail.com), 319-350-2770.

**Two Weekly Newspapers:** Great opportunity for first-time owner or company seeking to expand to West Central Iowa. Can be purchased individually or as a pair. Great community support; city, county, school legals. Contact WCIA, Iowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, Iowa.

**County seat weeklies** with top line revenues at \$1.4M. Over \$200k in cash flow. This listing won't last long. Please call today--Edward Anderson, Broker--National Media Associates--417-338-6397 or email: [brokered1@gmail.com](mailto:brokered1@gmail.com)

**Client looking to purchase a small weekly Iowa newspaper.** Sellers contact Dave Tapp of News Brokerage of Iowa,

MEMBER EXCHANGE - cont. on page 6



## Iowa Newspaper Association Bulletin

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### ▶ IN THIS ISSUE...

- 50 Year Club nomination form

## CONTEST TIMELINE

**November 2019** - Contest entries judged by Virginia Press Association members

**December 2019** - Winners notified by INF

**February 7, 2020** - Winners announced during Convention Awards Banquet

Entries must have been published between **Oct. 1, 2018** and **Sept. 30, 2019**, to be eligible.

### Questions?

Contact INA/INF at 515-244-2145 or [ina@inanews.com](mailto:ina@inanews.com).

### COLBERT - cont. from page 3

of their actions.

Again and against and again, we have hoped and prayed for those in power to confront their fears instead of bending to them. Again and again they have failed us. And they will continue to fail us so long as we let them. Because they are afraid.

Which is why it is so important that we are here together today. We must remind them every day that we are not afraid. And we're not done, either.

Fear can only conquer truth if we let it.

### MEMBER EXCHANGE - cont. from page 5

[dtappnewsbrokerageofiowa@gmail.com](mailto:dtappnewsbrokerageofiowa@gmail.com), 319-350-2770.

**Three great properties now available! Just listed:** Small but mighty! Perennial award-winning eastern Iowa community weekly is now available. Aside from newspaper, the business has a strong social media and on-line presence. Book of digital printing business also available for extra cost. Perfect opportunity for an add-on to existing business or hands-on, stand alone business. **Just listed:** Profitable northwest Iowa weekly newspaper available for sale with or without real estate. **Just listed:** Owner looking to retire making this highly profitable, privately held group of Iowa weekly newspapers available for the first time in decades. The group features a strong staff with a centralized graphics department. Perfect add-on for a current group, or great opportunity for a hands-on owner. All inquiries are strictly confidential. While a cash purchase is preferred, contract terms are available under the right circumstances. For more information on these properties, or to list yours contact: Ryan Harvey, Broker, Scenic Trail Media Brokers, LLC, at 515-689-1151 or by email at [sce-nictrailmediabrokers@gmail.com](mailto:sce-nictrailmediabrokers@gmail.com)

**Former editor/reporter (now retired) seeks part-time work** involving reporting, editing, or proofreading (or combination thereof) for your fine publication. I have extensive experience covering city council, school boards, sports of all types, county board, and/or any type of hard news. I can also write features on any subject. I would work from home via my cell phone, internet and computer and I've had many years of experience doing my job this way. I would be an independent contractor and I would be very flexible. I would be able to work nights and weekends since some contacts wouldn't be available during day-time hours. Advertising sales: I also have extensive experience in advertising sales for newspapers, shoppers, TMC products, and websites. I actually enjoy a combination of writing and sales. Full-time possible: My wife also has experience in sales and writing. If you wanted the equivalent of full-time (remote) we could become a full-time team for you. The Best Movie of all time was His Girl Friday, a great comedy about the newspaper business. And the best business of all time (in my prejudiced view) is the newspaper business. Please call Glenn Schreiber, 515-570-5709 (cell) or e-mail me at [schreiberglenn@gmail.com](mailto:schreiberglenn@gmail.com).

*View and submit ads on the Internet at [www.INAnews.com](http://www.INAnews.com). Students and professionals may also submit their resumes for online viewing.*

*There is no charge for most of these ads. They are a free service to INA active (newspaper) members only. The name of the newspaper in the ad must be the same as published in the current INA Directory.*

*If you are trying to help an employee relocate, please send us the ad information on your letterhead, rather than having the employee write us. We will not run ads for persons living in a member's town without first clearing the ad with the publisher.*

*Please have copy to the INA office no later than noon on Monday. The INA will make the determination of whether an ad qualifies for free or paid publication. If payment for an ad is not enclosed with the ad, the INA will require payment in advance before the ad will be published.*

*Ads for products or services which could be marketed for a profit may be published for a fee of \$10 per insertion, paid in advance, with a 40-word maximum.*

*Recruitment (help wanted) ads for positions in states other than Iowa may be published for a fee of \$25 per insertion, with a 100-word maximum.*

*For more information, contact Cicely Gordon at [cgordon@inanews.com](mailto:cgordon@inanews.com).*

## ? question of the week

### Can a bar advertise Ladies Night where women get in free or get free drinks?

According to INA Legal Hotline attorney Joe Quinn, using Ladies Night or free drinks or admission to ladies is in violation of the Iowa Civil Rights Statute. The newspaper running such an ad would have no legal responsibility but may wish to advise the advertiser to check with its attorney before placing such an ad. In any case, newspapers are cautioned to not give advertisers any legal advice on this or any other matter.

# 50 *Year Club* **Nomination Form**

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*“I submit the name of the following person,  
certifying that to the best of my knowledge  
he or she has completed 50 years of service  
to the newspaper industry.”*

---

Name: *(Please print)*

---

Entered Newspaper Service At: *(Location)*

---

Now Living At:

---

This Nomination Submitted By:

Newspaper:

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Please complete and return to  
Iowa Newspaper Association, 319 E. 5th St., Des Moines, IA 50309 or  
fax to 1-866-593-7406 by Jan. 3, 2020



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NEWSPAPER  
ASSOCIATION