

October 28, 2020



Volume 37  
Issue 42

# Iowa Newspaper Association Bulletin

www.INAnews.com

## CALENDAR of EVENTS

### WEBINARS

Live Streaming Video and  
Live Video

Thursday, October 29

### MEETINGS

INA, INF & INA Services  
Board Meeting

Thursday, November 12



## New report studies newspaper resiliency in Iowa

**W**hy are some dailies, weeklies, and news organizations in Iowa more resilient than others – particularly in this time of financial distress brought on by the coronavirus pandemic? That's the question Christopher R. Martin, a digital journalism professor at the University of Northern Iowa, sought to answer in a new report, "What Makes Iowa Newspapers Resilient?," released by the Washington-based Center for Journalism & Liberty, where he is a contributing scholar.

The findings are based on profiles of eight news organizations in Iowa, including the Des Moines Register, the Waterloo Courier, the Cedar Rapids Gazette, the Southeast Iowa Union, IowaWatch, the Iowa Capital Dispatch, the Storm Lake Times, and the Iowa Falls Times-Citizen. The study finds that 10 dimensions contribute most to resiliency: local

ownership, centrality of journalism to the business, nonprofit status, nonprofit funding support, diversified business, commitment to community, the health of the local economy, little/no reduction of newsroom staff, historic reputation and civic institution status, and the lack of competing local media. The study considers additional factors that may help struggling newspapers, including employee stock ownership plan structures (such as the ones at the Gazette and the Dubuque Telegraph-Herald) to maintain local ownership, and postal subsidies to reduce expenses for small newspapers that use the postal service almost exclusively for distribution.

Visit <https://www.journalismliberty.org/publications/what-makes-iowa-newspapers-resilient> to read the full report.

*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.*

# Tell your printer to ‘sack’ the sacks!

**MAX HEATH**

**NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION**

**F**or a boost in handling efficiency in postal processing plants, it is essential to use Flats Trays — white plastic tubs — rather than sacks for distant copies. As controversy swirls about changes in truck trips and overtime at USPS, this reminder is more needed than ever.

Some postmasters still tell newspapers that sacks must be used. DMM 207.22.7 and 207.25.5 can be cited to prove the case for trays, which have been allowed as a mailer option since 2006. Distant trays can go on automated tray sorting equipment used in many plants.

The Postal Service also granted Periodical newspapers the option of preparing some flats trays without lids and strapping as of January 2018.

Customer Support Ruling PS-347 limits preparation without lids to pieces “that will be worked or processed at the entry facility or associated Sectional Center Facility (SCF).” That would include all the 3-digit ZIP codes covered by the SCF distribution territory, starting with the first three digits of your own ZIP code. Often the SCF and ADC are the same territory.

That would also include any Hub plants handing off “Direct” trays of 5-digit or carrier-route sorted copies flowing to other offices within former small SCFs consolidated into larger ones. This should cover most trays in a mailing, with only OMX (Origin Mixed ADC), Mixed ADC (MADC) trays to distant plants, and perhaps a few others for distant ADCs requiring lids.

CSR PS-347 came after three years of efforts by the NNA Postal Committee.

No problems were found by SCFs receiving test mail. In fact, postal employees and supervisors reported the lack of tops (green lids) provided quicker identification of the contents as time-sensitive newspapers. Plus, time was saved in cutting the straps and removing the lids to start sorting the contents, usually manually, inside plants.

Of course, there is a related savings for newspapers and their printers in reduced time to prepare mail by eliminating the requirement to lid and strap trays for most of the copies in a mailing.

The unlidded flats trays could also be nested one inside the other when not overly full. This saves space not only on postal trucks operated by contract haulers, increasingly full of packages, but on delivery trucks from printers back to newspapers and post offices.

## **CENTRAL PLANTS’ OBJECTION FOR FULL TRUCKS ELIMINATED**

One of the main reasons NNA sought this change was to help central printing plants that mail, and then make delivery to post offices for multiple newspapers, often on the same truckload. The lid requirement more quickly filled up those trucks due to “air” in less-than-full trays. Sacks collapse, but trays take up as much as double the space on a load. The inability to “cube out” the same space on a truck made it a deterrent for use by central printers.

This should remove any objection from printers to adopt the practice of using flats trays instead of sacks to help delivery for their printing customers. Newspapers should make sure their printers, especially if not NNA members, get the word and encourage flats tray adoption.

Pallets of flats trays, nested upside down, are available through SCFs or by order from Mail Transport Equipment through their MTEOR website. Mailers who send postage statements electronically to their post office can register online for MTEOR through the Business Customer Gateway by adding MTEOR as a service.

## **DISCOUNT FOR FLATS TRAY USE EXPECTED IN FUTURE**

NNA also has repeatedly asked for a discount that recognizes the improved efficiency of tubs versus sacks. A new section for “Flats Trays” was added to Periodicals Postage Statement 3541 in 2018. Lack of governors

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# The governor has to follow the law, too

**RANDY EVANS**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
IOWA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COUNCIL

**W**hen the Iowa Legislature wrote the state's public records law 50 years ago, lawmakers wanted to guarantee that anyone could obtain copies of state and local government records that are not designated by statute to be kept confidential.

There is no asterisk in the law. There is no exemption saying the governor can ignore the statute.

But there is evidence Gov. Kim Reynolds believes otherwise.

Lawyers representing the governor made a troubling admission this month in a Polk County District Court lawsuit. They acknowledged that a member of Reynolds' staff directed the Iowa Department of Public Health on more than one occasion to disregard a request for public records about coronavirus testing.

The admission confirms what the Iowa Freedom of Information Council has heard from journalists this year --- that requests for public records often go unanswered, and unfilled, when they reach Reynolds' office. That's regrettable, because Iowans should be able to expect their governor to comply with state laws, even if she doesn't agree with their purpose.

The troubling acknowledgement came in the state's official response to a lawsuit filed against the governor and her communications director, Pat Garrett, by Polly Carver-Kimm, who was the public information officer for the Iowa Department of Public Health for 13 years.

She was fired in July as tensions grew between her and her superiors and the governor's staff. They were concerned about her quick compliance with requests filed by journalists under the public records laws.

Her lawsuit challenges the legality of her dismissal and alleges the reasons she was given were merely a pretext.

The true reasons were more political, she believes: The governor and health department administrators were embarrassed by news articles that included information from public records Carver-Kimm had provided to journalists in response to their requests under Iowa's public records law.

That law comes down squarely on the side of public access, not confidentiality, unless there are specific sections of the law that allow such secrecy. The public records statute says "free and open examination of public records is generally in the public interest even though such examination may cause inconvenience or embarrassment to public officials or others."

The law allows government officials to delay the release of public records only for specific reasons --- to seek an injunction blocking release of the records being sought, or to ask government lawyers whether certain

records are public or not.

Those delays shall not exceed 20 calendar days and ordinarily should not exceed 10 business days, the law says. The Iowa Supreme Court has said longer delays are permitted if the volume of records in a request is so large it would take longer to gather the documents.

Those reasons were not involved in the records requests that put Carver-Kimm at odds with her superiors and the governor's staff.

Government officials are not allowed to simply ignore the law to avoid news articles that might embarrass the governor or her administration. But allegations in Carver-Kimm's lawsuit suggest that embarrassment was, indeed, the big concern for the governor and public health administrators as coronavirus moved across the United States.

When a journalist asked for the list of Test Iowa screening questions used to determine whether someone needed a coronavirus test, Carver-Kimm asked the health department's lawyer for legal clearance to release the document. After the legal go-ahead was given, Garrett, the governor's communications aide, stepped in and ordered Carver-Kimm to hold onto the record and not release it.

She checked back for weeks, but Garrett's "Hold" directive did not change.

Carver-Kimm's lawsuit describes other incidents in which her superiors criticized her for providing public records that reporters requested. In May, she released records to Iowa Public Radio. Later, when the New Yorker magazine and USA Today asked for and received similar records, her bosses asked why she had released the documents.

The news article that finally cost Carver-Kimm her job appeared in the Des Moines Register three days before her dismissal. The article reported that Department of Public Health statistics show that abortions in Iowa climbed 25 percent in 2019 after declining for decades. The article attributed the increase to the governor's decision to support expelling Planned Parenthood from the state's family planning programs.

The public certainly understands that the governor's staff has been up its eyeballs dealing with the coronavirus pandemic. No one quarrels with her aides wanting to know what public records are ready to be sent out.

But that does not excuse the failure to return emails or phone messages about requests for records. Otherwise, someone might conclude the governor has decided to avoid embarrassing newspaper articles and TV reports by disregarding her office's obligations under the public records law.

*Randy Evans is executive director of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council. He can be reached at [IowaFOICouncil@gmail.com](mailto:IowaFOICouncil@gmail.com).*

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Randy Evans



# FREE MEMBER EXCHANGE

## ▼ HELP WANTED

**NEWS REPORTER.** The Oskaloosa Herald 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 for reporting important stories to our community. The Oskaloosa Herald offers a great opportunity for reporters to grow in a variety of subjects and mediums. This reporter will primarily report on Mahaska County and the city of Oskaloosa, writing about local government, business, education and people. Experience and degree preferred, but not required: We'll train the right person. To apply, send a cover letter describing qualifications for the position, a resume, and 3-4 writing samples to Kyle Ocker, Group Editor of the Oskaloosa Herald and Ottumwa Courier, by email at [kocker@oskyherald.com](mailto:kocker@oskyherald.com).

**PART-TIME ADVERTISING SALES REPRESENTATIVE.** The Northwood Anchor and Manly Junction Signal, newspapers in Worth County, are seeking a part time advertising sales representative, with potential for other opportunities. We offer a job with a flexible schedule, working with a small team to support several local communities, their businesses and their newspapers. Questions or resumes may be emailed to [kris@nwdanchor.com](mailto:kris@nwdanchor.com).

**SPORTS EDITOR.** The Spencer Daily Reporter, located at the entry to the Iowa Great Lakes, is looking for an energetic Sports Editor to join our award winning editorial department. The ideal individual will have strong writing and story telling skills, a nose for sports features, people skills, photography experience and be willing to be part of fun, dedicated team. Social media and video skills a plus. Individual will be writing previews, covering two local high school teams and one college team. 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).

## ▼ FOR SALE

**NEW LISTING! For sale:** Northwest Iowa weekly newspaper with supplement and printing shop. County legal plus legal for four towns. Newly remodeled brick/block building, equipment, large inventory included. Selling because of age/health. Phone 712/230/1405 or e-mail [rouse@nethtc.net](mailto:rouse@nethtc.net)

**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.

**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 North 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.

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

**If you are considering a purchase,** look no further! I have strong, profitable properties available across the state just waiting for owner operators or corporations. **Just listed:** Looking to be your own boss? Look no further! This small, profitable southern Iowa weekly is just waiting for you. Aggressively priced to move. **Just listed:** Rare opportunity to buy this profitable eastern Iowa weekly as current long-time owner ready to slow down. Located in a progressive community near larger communities. Perfect opportunity for an add-on to existing business or as a hands-on, stand alone business. **Motivated seller:** 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 as a hands-on, stand alone business. **Retirement awaits:** Profitable northwest Iowa weekly newspaper available for sale with or without real estate. **Weekly newspaper group:** 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 to any property are strictly confidential. For more information contact: Ryan Harvey, Broker, Scenic Trail Media Brokers, LLC, at 515-689-1151 or by email at [scenictrailmediabrokers@gmail.com](mailto:scenictrailmediabrokers@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@inaews.com](mailto:cgordon@inaews.com).*

to oversee postal management was blamed for the lack of a lower price in 2018-19. But a new page to Part E, “Outside-County—Tray Prices” was added as page 7 of PS Form 3541. (There are no container charges assessed on In-County Mail, thus there’s no reason for change there.)

Sacks are on a separate page 6, Part E. Most software vendors offer the option to set up trays, and PAVE-certified software should show the containers on the proper page.

#### **BUNDLES-ONLY PREP ALLOWED AT DELIVERY UNIT POST OFFICES**

Newspapers are reminded that a rule change (DMM 207.23.4.2) granted on NNA’s request more than 15 years ago allows you to enter Periodical bundles without any container (sack or tray) at post offices of delivery. This includes copies dropped by your own transportation for delivery at your origin-entry post office, and at Exceptional Dispatch offices (approved via simple letter request and delivered without payment or documentation required, as found at DMM 207.28.3).

Some post offices ask newspapers to place mail for their local carrier routes in flats trays. It is not a good use of tubs, but most newspapers like to go along with the local office.

*Max Heath is a postal consultant for NNA members and Landmark Community Newspapers. He is former postal chair of the NNA Postal Committee. Email [maxheath@lcni.com](mailto:maxheath@lcni.com).*

## **CONTEST TIMELINE**

**November 2020** - Contest entries judged by MDCC Press Association members

**December 2020** - Winners notified by INF

**February 2021** - Winners announced during Convention Awards Banquet

Entries must have been published between **Oct. 1, 2019 and Sept. 30, 2020**, to be eligible.

#### **Questions?**

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



Iowa Newspaper Association

## **Bulletin**

[www.INAnews.com](http://www.INAnews.com)

### **IN THIS ISSUE...**

- Live Streaming Video and Live Video



*An Iowa Newspaper Foundation webinar...*

# LIVE STREAMING VIDEO AND SOCIAL VIDEO

Iowa New Member  
Benefit: **FREE!**  
Use Discount  
Code: **IAWebinars**

**Thursday, October 29 · 1-2 p.m.**

**Registration fee: FREE · Deadline: October 26**

## IN THIS WEBINAR...

Live streaming video is being used for breaking news, election programming, music and arts programming and more. Mobile apps like Facebook Live, IGTV, Periscope, Livestream and StreamYard make streaming live video easy and accessible. Learn to use the best apps, shoot the best video, get quality audio and how to interact with viewers during your broadcast.

## THE PRESENTERS...

### Val Hoepfner



Val Hoepfner is a digital journalist, training and media strategist. She has worked in digital, mobile and multi-platform journalism for more than 15 years. As CEO of Val Hoepfner Media and Consulting, LLC, Hoepfner travels to newsrooms, universities and media conferences where she creates and leads training for journalists in engagement, change management and developing digital and mobile workflow. Hoepfner is a member of the Native American Journalist Association, Online News Association, Association Press Photo Managers, American Society of News Editors, the Recording Academy and Public Radio in Mid America.

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