

November 11, 2020



Volume 37
Issue 44

Iowa Newspaper Association Bulletin

www.INAnews.com

CALENDAR of EVENTS

WEBINARS

Digital Storytelling for the
Inept
Thursday, November 19

MEETINGS

INA, INF & INA Services
Board Meeting
Thursday, November 12



Execute your strength: Put names and faces behind the stories

JIM PUMARLO
NEWSPAPER CONSULTANT

Nothing is more satisfying than looking at your product – whether it's the print or digital edition – and smiling in approval, "We've got it covered. We're connecting with our readers."

Developing relationships with subscribers and advertisers is imperative to success in today's fractured media landscape. The stakes are even higher as many newspapers navigate the economic impact of the pandemic.

So play to your strengths. Connect the names and faces of those involved in and affected by items in your everyday news report. Tell their stories.

As a first step, collect a half-dozen copies of your newspaper and sit down for a brainstorming session. Go beyond your newsroom. Your entire newspaper family often represents a great cross-section of your community and can contribute valuable insights. Review the editions,



Jim Pumarlo

and pay particular attention to the names and faces of the newsmakers. Circle them in red, and make a list.

The exercise is especially helpful when examining coverage of local government meetings. Do many of the same names appear over and over? As an editor friend points out: Are you giving more attention to the folks in the front of the room versus those in the back of the room? Are you writing for the sources or for those affected by government decisions?

Circumstances and deadlines may well dictate that you report just the facts in the next edition. Then, take the next steps.

Consider these examples. A school board raises extracurricular fees to help close the gap between expenses and revenues. A city council imposes plastic bag fees on local merchants, maybe even adopts an outright ban. A county board establishes a grant program for businesses impacted by the coronavirus.

Each action presents possibilities for second-day stories and substantive content that can distinguish you from your competitors. The follow-up reports inevitably will include individuals not normally appearing in your newspaper.

NAMES AND FACES - cont. on page 3

meeting minutes

Iowa Newspaper Association | Compensation Committee November 5, 2020 Minutes

The committee met via Zoom at 9:00 a.m. with the following members present: Becky Maxwell, Albia Monroe County News; Karen Spurgeon, Bloomfield Democrat; Deb Anslem, Davenport Quad-City Times; Terry Christensen, Ft. Dodge Messenger;. Susan Patterson Plank, INA, was also present.

Votes taken:

- A. On a motion by Christensen and seconded by Maxwell, the Compensation Committee recommends to the INA, INF and INA Services Co. Board of Directors the approval of the proposed 2021 compensation plan.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Patterson Plank

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.

Reports the monthly sales activity of Customized Newspaper Advertising. Figures compare each month to the year before and 2020 sales with budgeted projections.



2020	2019	OCTOBER SALES	Difference	% Increase
\$1,427,463	\$360,495		\$1,066,968	87%
2020	2019	Year-to-Date Sales	Difference	% Increase
\$5,544,893	\$4,788,390		\$756,503	-16%
Actual	Budget	Actual-vs.-Budget	Difference	% of Budget
\$6,048,000	\$4,788,390		\$1,259,610	-8%

Sales Summary: In October, CNA sold **\$998,124** in display advertising into Iowa Newspapers.

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INA LEGAL HOTLINE

515-283-3100 (paid service)

RATE INFORMATION FORMS DUE NOVEMBER 25, 2020

It's that time of year to update rates on file!

Customized Newspaper Advertising (CNA) is the sales and marketing affiliate of the Iowa Newspaper Association, which includes more than 250 newspapers. CNA is an extension of your newspaper's local sales staff and has a mission to drive new revenue to your newspaper!

The CNA staff is your partner in making newspapers and their print and digital solutions an even more attractive and easy advertising option for advertisers. Information for updating your Rate Information Forms was distributed November 10, 2020. If you have not yet submitted your rate changes/updates, please do so by November 25, 2020. All rates should be updated online for CNA placement purposes.

Please provide updated rates, deadlines, and production details. CNA then uses this information for the next year to quickly develop proposals and estimates for current and potential clients. Rates provided will be valid January 1-December 31, 2021. If new rates are not received, CNA will use rates on file from 2020.

For questions regarding the Rate Information Form access, or if you did not receive your email access for updating, please contact the CNA Media Department 515-244-2145 ext. 152, media@cnaads.com.

NAMES AND FACES - cont. from page 1

There are opportunities beyond government meetings to broaden your portfolio of newsmakers. For example:

Chambers of commerce have their annual awards banquet recognizing excellence in a variety of categories. At least a half-dozen businesses are often recognized. The list is ready-made news for the next edition. Don't stop there. Profile each of the honorees in successive editions, giving attention to additional names and faces.

Election season is past us, but here's an idea for the next cycle. Coverage, for good reason, focuses on the candidates. How about profiling the chair of a campaign committee, the person who really drives the push for votes? Highlight someone in his or her first campaign; highlight a veteran of several campaigns.

High school sports are the heart of many communities, and head coaches naturally receive a great deal of attention. What drives assistant coaches? How are they selected, and why do they cherish their supportive roles? You'll probably find interesting stories and new faces to highlight.

Police blotters are another opportunity to link local residents to events. Consider this report. A bank foreclosed on a house, and a court order was issued to evict the family. Police surrounded the home for two hours, and all ended peacefully. It was the 35th eviction ordered that day. That fact prompts all sorts of questions and potential follow-up stories. Did the evicted families

have a common profile? Where did they spend the next night, week, month? Are there community resources to assist these families? It's a sensitive story and one that will require extra effort to pursue. It also will result in a host of new voices on your pages.

Collecting and publishing the news is an imperfect endeavor at best. Connecting with individuals outside of the normal network of sources often demands more work. And everything is more challenging during the pandemic due to the combination of greater isolation among individuals and diminished newsroom resources.

All newspapers strive to consistently produce a report that reflects a living history of their communities. That necessarily should drive you to expand the catalog of newsmakers used to tell your stories.

News reports also don't want to be predictable. Broadening the menu of names and faces that appear in your products reflects journalism at its best and generates solid content. It's a win-win for your newspaper and your community.

Jim Pumarlo writes, speaks and provides training on community newsroom success strategies. He is author of "Journalism Primer: A Guide to Community News Coverage," "Votes and Quotes: A Guide to Outstanding Election Coverage" and "Bad News and Good Judgment: A Guide to Reporting on Sensitive Issues in Small-Town Newspapers." He can be reached at www.pumarlo.com and welcomes comments and questions at jim@pumarlo.com.

Q&A from the Iowa Public Information Board

Did you know that the Iowa Public Information Board staff is available to assist you with questions or problems involving open meetings and public records in Iowa? During the month of October 2020, 58 contacts were made with the Iowa Public Information Board office.

QUESTION: What should a newly elected government official know about open meetings and public records?

ANSWER: Congratulations on being elected to a position in Iowa government. Now, it is time to fulfill your duties as a government official.

Iowa Code section 21.10 requires that you be provided with information about open meetings and public records laws. Failure to follow chapter 21 (open meetings) or chapter 22 (public records) can result in personal, individual liability for an offending public official.

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The Iowa Public Information Board has a helpful training powerpoint available on the IPIB website at www.ipib.iowa.gov. The IPIB urges all government officials, elected or appointed, to seek appropriate training. Here is an overview of Iowa transparency laws:

OPEN MEETINGS

Iowa Code chapter 21 outlines the requirements of open meetings. The purpose of the Chapter is clearly stated in the first section: "Intent — declaration of policy. This chapter seeks to assure, through a requirement of open meetings of governmental bodies, that the basis and rationale of governmental decisions, as well as those decisions themselves, are easily accessible to the people. Ambiguity in the construction or application of this chapter should be resolved in favor of openness."

An open meeting is not an option. It is required by Iowa law. Governmental bodies are mandated to provide at least 24 hour notice of meetings. No matter what the gathering is called (regular, special, work session, electronic, etc.), if there is deliberation or action upon any matter within the scope of the body's policy-making duties by a majority of the members, it is considered a meeting and must be open.

The public must also have notice of the agenda for the meeting. This agenda shall be worded in a way that the public is reasonably apprised of the business to be conducted at the meeting. Voting must be conducted in open session. Closed sessions are strictly limited to the few exceptions outlined in Chapter 21 and must follow the rules outlined by Iowa law.

BOARD MEMBERS Joan Corbin, E. J. Giovannetti, Keith Luchtel, Monica McHugh

Frederick Morain, Julie Pottorff, Suzan Stewart, Stan Thompson

Minutes shall be kept of all meetings. The minutes must include the date, time and place, the members present, and the action taken at

the meeting. The vote of each member present must be made public at the meeting and in the minutes. These minutes are public records.

PUBLIC RECORDS

Iowa Code chapter 22 addresses public records laws in Iowa. Each government body is required to delegate the responsibility of responding to public record requests and to "publicly announce" the lawful custodian of its public records. Government cannot avoid the requirements of public records law by storing the record 'off-site' or by contracting with a third party to collect and store records.

Government officials also cannot avoid the public records laws by conducting government business on a privately owned cell phone, laptop, computer, or other electronic device. The government body is responsible for retrieving public records that are stored 'off-site' or by a third party.

Fees can be charged by a government body to retrieve, review, and release a government record. Such fees must be based upon the actual cost incurred by the government body. It is not required that a government body charge fees for public records. It is recommended by the Iowa Public Information Board that a government body develop a policy concerning fees and review it frequently for compliance with Iowa law.

Under Iowa law, some records may be confidential. The government body is not required under Chapter 22 to withhold a record that could be confidential. However, if a record is withheld, the government body will be responsible for showing why the record is confidential. Public records should be released promptly. If a delay is anticipated, it is recommended that the lawful custodian explain the reason for the delay.

Government settlements are public records. Iowa law sets forth the procedure a government body must follow to provide public access to a settlement agreement and the summary required by Iowa law.

All elected and appointed members of a governmental body are required to be trained about open meetings and public records laws. Failure to follow public records laws can result in court sanctions or review by the Iowa Public Information Board.

Specific information about Iowa transparency laws and training guidance is available at the Iowa Public Information Board website: www.ipib.iowa.gov or by calling the IPIB at 515-725-1781.

WHO CAN CONTACT THE IPIB AND HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE? Any person can contact the IPIB for assistance by telephone (515-725-1781), by email, or on the IPIB website. In 2020, 643 identifiable people have contacted the IPIB. Of these, 306 were private citizens, 257 were government officials or employees, and 80 were members of the media. In 2020, 69% of the incoming contacts were resolved the first day, 12% were resolved in one to five days, and 19% were resolved in six or more days. Opinions, rulings, FAQs, reports, and training documents are available on the IPIB website – www.ipib.iowa.gov.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS	ADVISORY OPINIONS	DECLARATORY ORDERS	INFORMAL COMPLAINTS	INFORMAL REQUESTS	MISCELLANEOUS	OCTOBER TOTALS
13	0	0	8	25	12	58

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.

NEWS REPORTER/WRITER. The Avoca Journal-Herald is searching for a news writer/reporter to join its staff. We are seeking someone who is a self-starter that is passionate about reporting on important stories to our community. This individual will report on feature stories on local people and to further educate readers on trends and happenings in their community. In this role you will have the freedom to pursue stories that interest you as well. This is a great opportunity for a reporter to gain experience in the field of journalism.

The reporter will attend various events such as city council meetings, high school sporting and fine arts events, school board meetings, local events and celebrations, and any other newsworthy happenings that may be of interest to the local community.

This position does not require a degree or extensive experience. The successful candidate will possess creative writing skills, as well as be able to shoot photos. We're looking for a self-starter that is organized, able to meet deadlines, and able to juggle multiple stories at the same time.

The Avoca Journal-Herald publishes a weekly print edition every Thursday. The Journal-Herald reports on news in Avoca, IA, and the surrounding communities. Based in Avoca, Iowa, the newspaper is located a short drive from Council Bluffs, IA and Omaha, NE.

While this position will require after hours events attendance, the regular hours and scheduling are flexible.

To apply, please send resume and any related credentials to: nielsonjh@windstream.net. 1202

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.

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.

▼ 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

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 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 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, 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

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

MEMBER EXCHANGE - cont. on page 5



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MEMBER EXCHANGE - cont. from page 4

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

View and submit ads on the Internet at www.INAnews.com. Students and professionals may also submit their resumés 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@ina-news.com.



An Iowa Newspaper Foundation webinar...

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

DIGITAL STORYTELLING FOR THE INEPT

Thursday, November 19 · 1-2 p.m.

Registration fee: FREE · Deadline: November 16

IN THIS WEBINAR...

You're a good writer but being told to make your story digital-friendly confounds you. Learn a few storytelling tricks the most tech-deficient person can use. Not for high-tech wizards.

THE PRESENTERS...

Lyle Muller



Lyle Muller is a long-time Iowa journalist who has worked in newspapers, digital news and broadcasting. He is the retired former executive director-editor of the Iowa Center for Public Affairs Journalism who spends his time now as PolitiFact's Iowa editor and as an adviser/coach for The Daily Iowan newspaper and Grinnell College Scarlet & Black.

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