

CONFIDENTIAL

Bulletin

Published weekly by the Nebraska Press Association / 845 "S" Street / Lincoln, NE 68508-1226

Calendar of Events

Events:

February 2, 2018
NPA/NPAS Board Meetings
by conference call

March 14-15, 2018
NNA Community Newspaper
Leadership Summit
Washington, D.C.

April 20-21, 2018
NPA Annual Convention
Cornhusker Marriott Hotel
Lincoln, NE

Webinars:

January 25, 2018
Tim Smith - First Steps to Gain
New Advertisers
10:00am CST
www.newspaperacademy.com

January 25, 2018
Steve Learn - Steps to Grow
Circulation With Minimal
Exposure
2:00pm CST
www.newspaperacademy.com

February 2, 2018
Mike Blinder - Leveraging Digital
to Support Print Advertising
10:00am CST
www.newspaperacademy.com

February 2, 2018
Kevin Slimp - Everything You
Need to Know About InDesign
Styles
12:00 Noon CST
www.newspaperacademy.com

CONTACT INFO:

Telephone: 800-369-2850 or
402-476-2851
FAX: 402-476-2942
Legal Hotline: 402-474-6900
E-mail: nebpress@nebpress.com
Web Site: <http://www.nebpress.com>

It's contest time!

**2018 NPA Better Newspaper Contest entry deadline is
January 31, 2018.**

Questions? Contact Carolyn Bowman, cb@nebpress.com.

NPA Foundation scholarships

The NPA Foundation 2018 scholarship guidelines and application forms have been distributed to all Nebraska colleges, universities and high schools. The Foundation will offer up to four total scholarships of \$2,000 each. Preference will be given to students who will be pursuing newspaper journalism education at a Nebraska college or university. Guidelines and application forms are available on the NPA website. (On home page, scroll down to middle of page under NPA NEWS at www.nebpress.com).



\$2,000 Scholarships

Nebraska Press Association Foundation

Selection based on:

- Scholastic Ability
- Good Citizenship in School
- Good Citizenship in Community
- Preference will be given to students who will be pursuing newspaper journalism education at Nebraska colleges.

Applications must be post-marked by February 16, 2018

For more information and application form, go to:
www.nebpress.com or call 402-476-2851/800-369-2850

**Application deadline is
February 16, 2018. Print and**

online house ads are available to help promote scholarships. (For house ads, log in to MEMBER AREA, click on SPECIAL SECTIONS).

NPA awards nomination deadline **Feb. 9, 2018** for:

- Master-Editor Publisher
- Outstanding Young Nebraska Journalist
- Leadership Nebraska (Harpst)
- Golden Pica Pole

NPA award nomination deadline **Feb. 23, 2018** for:

- Journalism Hall of Fame*

For nomination forms, go to:

<http://www.nebpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/NPA-Awards-Nomination-Forms-2018-REV.pdf>

All awards except Hall of Fame will be presented at the NPA Annual Convention, April 20-21, at the Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln, NE.

(*Hall of Fame recipients will be announced late April/early May.)

NPA/NPAS Staff

Allen Beermann

Executive Director
email: abeermann@nebpress.com

Jenelle Plachy

Office Manager/Bookkeeper
email: jp@nebpress.com

Violet Spader Kirk

Sales Manager
email: vk@nebpress.com

Carolyn Bowman

Advertising Manager
email: cb@nebpress.com

Susan Watson

Admin. Asst./Press Release Coordinator
email: nebpress@nebpress.com

Christian Cardona

Advertising Sales Assistant
email: cc@nebpress.com



Reminder: Dues Payments

- Please pay your NPA/NNA dues together on one check

- Please pay your digital and CapView payments together on a check separate from the NPA/NNA dues

- Both go to different corporations, different banks

Save the dates!

NPA Convention

April 20 -21, 2018
Cornhusker
Marriott
Lincoln, NE

Vetick joins Newman Grove Reporter as writer

Abigail Vetick has joined the writing staff at the Newman Grove Reporter.

Vetick, who previously worked at the Columbus Telegram and the David City Banner-Press, received a Journalism degree from the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

In addition to her work at the Newman Grove Reporter, Vetick works full-time in marketing. She and her family live in Genoa.

Cozad Tri-City Tribune sold to Platte Valley Media, LLC

Effective January 5, 2018, Scott Wesner and Scott Wood, owners of Platte Valley Media, have purchased the Cozad Tri-City Tribune from previous owner Nancy Dorsey.

Platte Valley Media also owns the Gothenburg Times newspaper.

Scott Wesner and Scott Wood graduated from high school together in Cordell, OK. They both believe in the importance of print media and the benefits that communities gain from weekly newspapers.

Wesner, who lives in Austin, TX, has been in the newspaper publishing business for over 23 years. Wood got his start in the newspaper business in 1997 in West Texas and in 2003, moved to Muenster, TX, where he acquired three area newspapers.

Prior to the sale, the Dorsey family had been the sole owners of the Tri-City Tribune. In 1965, Dean Dorsey founded the Tribune, one of Central Nebraska's first offset-produced newspapers.

Restrictions apply to unauthorized use of the words "Super Bowl"



Running promotions or ads designed to create the appearance of a relationship between the newspaper and/or its advertisers and the NFL or Super Bowl is risky and possibly illegal. The NFL controls all marketing and proprietary rights with respect to the Super Bowl. Without the express permission of the NFL, marketers and advertisers may not use the terms below in their promotions:

Ads cannot contain:

- "Super Bowl"
- "Super Sunday"
- "National Football League" (NFL)
- "National Football Conference" (NFC)
- "American Football Conference" (AFC)
- Any NFL logo or uniform
- Any specific team name or nickname

Ads can contain:

- "The Big Game"
- "The Football Championship Game"
- The date of the game
- The names of the team's home cities
- A generic football picture or graphic

Longtime Nebraska publisher, Marlin Waechter, dies at 96



Marlin Waechter, formerly of Stanton, NE, died January 15, 2018, in Lincoln at the age of 96.

A graduate of Red Cloud High School, he joined the Navy as an aviation radioman in Squadron VPB-102, and served in the Pacific during World War II.

Waechter was the owner, editor and publisher of the Stanton Register for 38 years. He served as NPAS president in 1979.

Waechter is survived by three daughters - Nancy Stava of Lincoln; Carolyn (Jim) Gladem, Parker, CO; and Jane Loofe, Ft. Worth, TX, and their families. He was preceded in death by his wife, Linde.

A memorial service/Celebration of Life will be held February 10, 2018, at the VFW Club in Stanton, NE, from 1-4 p.m. Inurnment will take place at a later date in the East Lawn Cemetery near Bladen, NE. In lieu of flowers, memorials can be directed to the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired, in Nebraska City. Online condolences can be left at www.bmlfh.com. Butherus, Maser & Love Funeral Home in Lincoln, NE, is in charge of arrangements.

Memorial details for Jack Cooper, former publisher, Humboldt Standard

Jack Cooper, publisher of the Humboldt Standard for 42 years, died January 6, 2018, at age 85.

Memorial contributions may be given to the family's choice. Online condolences may be sent to www.wherrymortuary.com. Wherry Mortuary, Humboldt, is in charge of arrangements.

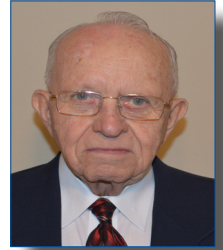
Memorial Eucharist services were held January 23 at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Falls City, NE, with private inurnment in the Humboldt Cemetery.

Longtime UNL editor/professor and 2015 Journalism Hall of Fame inductee, Richard Fleming dies

Richard L. Fleming of Lincoln passed away January 17, 2018, at age 86. Born in Ipswich, MA, Fleming received his Bachelors of Science degree from Kansas State University in 1953, Masters Degree from the University of Nebraska in 1962 and his Doctorate from University of Nebraska in 1972.

Fleming began his professional career as the Assistant Extension Editor in charge of Press Section, Assistant to

Associate Professor, Department of Information, College of Agriculture and Home Economics at the University of Nebraska, 1956-1963. He was the Director of University Information at the University of Nebraska, 1973-1976, assistant to the Chancellor, Director of University Information and Professor, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Nebraska, 1976-1980.

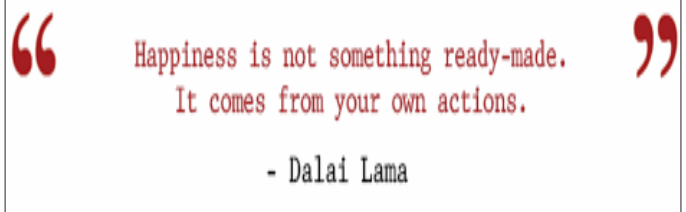


He received many awards during his career, including his induction into the Nebraska Journalism Hall of Fame in 2015.

He is survived by his son Greg (Becky) Fleming of Eagle, NE, and daughter, Julie Chieffo of Lincoln. He was preceded in death by his wife, Connie.

Memorial services will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 27, 2018, at Wyuka Funeral Home in Lincoln. University of Nebraska attire is requested and appropriate. Inurnment will be at Wyuka Cemetery.

Family requests memorials in lieu of flowers to the Dick and Connie Fleming Scholarship Fund in care of the University of Nebraska Foundation, 1010 Lincoln Mall Ste. 300, Lincoln, NE 68508, or the Lancaster County 4-H Council.



UNL College of Journalism dean resigns

Omaha World-Herald, January 17, 2018

On January 16, Dean Maria Marron announced her resignation as head of the UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications. Her resignation was effective January 19. Marron had been dean since July, 2014, and was the school's fifth dean since 2009.

Prior to coming to UNL, Marron had been chair of Central Michigan University's journalism department.

Amy Struthers, an advertising professor and the graduate chair of the college, will take over as interim dean. Marron will return to teaching at UNL in the fall term.

Nearly simultaneous to Marron's resignation, a letter being circulated by "Friends of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications" voiced concerns about lack of funding and institutional support for the school, and whether the faculty was getting enough direction on how to prepare students for a rapidly changing media landscape. Before 2009, the journalism program saw little turnover in its deans.

How small publishers can adapt to Facebook's News Feed update

By Ned Berke, LION Publishers

Facebook announced on January 11 that it's rolling out changes to the News Feed over the coming weeks to deprioritize posts from publishers, organizations, and businesses in favor of those from family and friends. In Facebook parlance, the News Feed will "prioritize posts that spark conversations and meaningful interactions between people."

In newsrooms large and small, the change immediately aroused angst—and anger—among social media managers who depend on the platform to reach and engage audiences, and those feelings are deepened by competing, confusing interpretations of Facebook-speak into real world strategies.

I spend a lot of time working with small publishers — especially niche and community publications with editorial teams of less than 15 people (and usually closer to one), and with audiences of less than 500,000. They're scrambling, amid mounting frustration and a dash of despair, to figure out what this means for their day-to-day.

Here's the good news: The planned changes will have less of an impact on the strategies of small publishers, and significant payoff awaits those embracing the fundamentals of engagement.

So if you're a small publisher, here's my advice: Don't panic. You'll adapt to the new algorithm. Here are a few tips on how to make the most of it.

Know why you're posting

Publishers of all sizes have to justify their time on the platform, now more than ever. In years past, the fast and relatively easy traffic was enough. But as their time spent on the platform increased, their returns diminish with every algorithm update.

In response to this update, I've read reactions from small publishers that suggest they'll be turning their backs on the platform. They intend to grow their newsletter lists, or are just fed up and will focus on creating great reporting for their websites. My friend Simon Galperin wrote a great post about how to meet the challenge of a post-Facebook world, and you should do everything he says.

But let's be clear. No one, as more than one has flip-pantly suggested to me, is going to abandon Facebook because of this change. Facebook matters—a lot.

Ask yourself, how are you going to get new readers to that newsletter sign-up form, or to read your awesome

reporting? Diversifying your distribution to other social media channels is one idea, as is partnerships or relying solely on search optimization. But the numbers just don't bear out. If you give up on Facebook, you give up one of your most effective tools for finding new readers.

Facebook has two billion users—the largest social network by far. Facebook's nearest competitor for audience is Youtube, which is three quarters its size, and not of much immediate use for those trying to build audiences for text-based content. Instagram is a third of Facebook's size and doesn't facilitate referral traffic for smaller accounts. Tumblr, Twitter, Snapchat, Pinterest, LinkedIn—are all a fraction of Facebook's size, and with very specialized audiences.

So it follows that Facebook is currently the second largest source of referral traffic to content publishers, accounting for 24% of all such traffic even after a year of steep declines. Twitter, by comparison, accounts for just 3% of all referral traffic.

Even if the amount of traffic Facebook sends to websites next month is halved from where it is now—or even quartered—it would remain, by far, the second largest source of referral traffic to content publishers. Facebook and Google are the most effective engines of new audience growth for media companies that the world has ever seen, and this algorithm update doesn't change that.

What it does mean is it's time to stop caring about driving page views for your stories.

Instead, ask yourself what you want to get out of your time on Facebook. If it's newsletter sign-ups, make sure they see a sign-up box when they arrive. If it's to bring in new readers, emphasize sharing. If tightening up your relationship is important, and you want to foster more loyalty, then entice readers to comment and contribute. If it's to improve your journalism, use Facebook to involve readers in the process.

Chances are, you want to do all of these things—and you should. A comment or a share can be just as valuable as a newsletter sign-up; maybe more so. Incremental signs of engagement can build a much more meaningful relationship over time than, say, getting a first-time visitor to subscribe to your newsletter.

Regardless of what you prioritize, Facebook's time as an easy source of page views is over. But for small publishers, its value in building a community of readers that can support your journalism remains quite strong.

cont. on pg. 5

Facebook - from pg. 4

Now some tips on how to get there...

Emphasize sharing

- **On-site share buttons:** Organic sharing between users is going to be the most valuable way your content gets to new readers. You should have share buttons on your posts. But moreover, are they clear and visible, especially on mobile? Do they appear when a user is most likely to share, such as when they finish the article? Are they surrounded by a bunch of clutter, or do they stand out? If share buttons are placed at the end of the post, they'll be where readers are most likely to use them.

- **Remind readers to share.** This can be on-site and on Facebook, though saying "Share this" on Facebook could get flagged as engagement bait. Use custom language that reinforces why users would want to share: to help get the word out about things important to them; to be known in their friends circle as the best-informed person, etc.

- **Embrace novel sharing features.** Use in-post widgets that enhance sharing. If you use Wordpress, there are plugins like this one that make pull quotes shareable (Note: I'm not recommending any specific plugin, and don't vouch for any particular one. This is just an example; search the plugin repository and read reviews before installing.). You can also seek to meme-ify your news—for important stories, try including an image that has a gripping visual and some bullet points that summarize the story.

- **Create an influencer circle.** I'm immediately suspicious of the term "influencer," but it's a useful shorthand here. If you're a small publisher, you probably know a few people in your audience who lots of other people in your audience are connected to, and who have some sway over community conversations. If you're a local news publisher, they could be the heads of civic associations, business owners, or Little League dads. When you're working on a story you think will have impact, use Facebook messenger or e-mail and ask them to share it. You can go a step further and create a sub-community for them via a group chat, and reward them with small get togethers and free pizza. If they don't know each other already, they'll likely appreciate meeting other people involved in their community, and value your publication for making the connection.

Conversation is key

Conversation is definitely the harder part of this formula, but it also stands to be the most rewarding—on Facebook, and in your journalism.

- **Recognize the value of comments.** First and foremost, you need to recognize the value of conversation. When the new Facebook changes were announced, one publisher I know said something along the lines of "Great, so they want us to spend

more time gabbing and less time reporting." And as someone who has managed some toxic discussions online, I definitely understand the instinct to run in the opposite direction. But investing the time and effort into creating healthy dialog with your community will help you in the new Facebook algorithm, and will surface new stories and additional insights that bring more context and meaning to your work. It's much easier said than done, and you do have to balance it with your need to report other news—but what's the point of publishing news if you're not ensuring the news you publish makes an impact?

- **Learn best practices for civil discussions.** The hardest part of managing conversations online is preventing it from becoming a dumpster fire. Fostering a quality comment section on Facebook, your website, or anywhere else online is a blog post in itself (or many), but here are a few things to get you started. Read up on Facebook's moderation tools, including how to blacklist words. Understand how trolls work, and how to frame conversations in a way that discourages trolling.

Here are a few tips on how to create conversations specifically for Facebook, and what signals the platform is looking to promote.

- **Get readers involved before you report.** If you're working on a story, or even just thinking about a topic area, use Facebook to get your community involved before you begin writing. Ask them for expertise and insight. It's a good way to gauge interest, and it's an important way to bring transparency to your work. If you get a good conversation going, it also ensures a healthy audience once you finally do publish the story.

You can drop the final link into the comment thread, and one of Facebook's highly addictive notifications will go out to users.

- **Reward commenters.** In addition to citing commenters in your articles if they've helped you report the story, think about featuring thoughtful comments with a "Comment of the day/week" post and let them brag. Bring thoughtful commenters into your influencer circle, or create a special community for highly engaged commenters, notifying them as soon as posts go up and asking them to get the discussion going.

- **Put a premium on long comments.** Facebook's new algorithm update won't just weight the volume of comments, it's going to try and determine the quality of the comment. For better or worse, it's using comment length as a signal of high quality. We'll save discussion of the flaws in that approach for another day. Still, keep in mind that probing your readers for longer, more thoughtful comments—and replies to them—is going to help expand your organic reach.

cont. on pg. 6

Facebook - from pg. 5

- **Use the status text responsibly.** The easiest way to get a conversation going is to post text that reacts to the content, and stokes emotions. That will work, but will likely lead to a dumpster fire. Instead, frame the conversation you want to have by asking questions.

- **Post the first comment.** It's not clear yet if Facebook is going to count the publisher's comments any differently from other user's when ranking it for the algorithm. But regardless, this could be a great tool for steering the conversation to quality. If you use your status text to ask a question, try using the first comment to add more context from the article so the conversation is better informed. Speak respectfully and thoughtfully to set the tone of the conversation.

- **Respond promptly, and ask follow ups.** The speed of your response matters. It shows you're an engaged presence, which both Facebook and your audience will reward. If you have a very active comment thread you don't need to respond to everything—especially those spewing craziness; just hide those—but you do want to reward those who are contributing constructively by thanking them and asking follow ups. Always be thinking of this as a tool to generate story ideas.

Post only your best stuff

The small publishers that could be most affected by the algorithm change are those that simply post links to Facebook, usually using a service to automate the process. This minimalist strategy worked very well for a number of years. Even for bare links, the Facebook faucet was on and traffic flowed freely.

Since at least 2014, that tactic has had declining returns. It has still worked to some degree because local and niche communities are highly engaged. Posts that resonated were widely shared; posts that didn't would sit without engagement. There was no real relationship between the two.

That's changing. In his post about the announcement, Facebook's head of News Feed Adam Mosseri said, "Pages making posts that people generally don't react to or comment on could see the biggest decreases in distribution."

It's not immediately clear, but it seems Facebook will take into account a Page's level of engagement across all posts when determining a post's priority in the news feed. That means posts that don't get any interactions, like those meeting announcements or calendar roundups, will begin dragging down distribution of your important investigation into the county's finances.

Post only your best stuff, and put the time into making them successful discussions.

Beware the Facebook Groups dilemma

A lot of people have responded to the announcement by suggesting that Facebook Groups will be the new focus of publishers. I've also told publishers that they should start a group. But there are caveats here for the small publisher.

Groups will not replace your Page. If you think you're going to create a group around your publication and all of your Facebook followers will go there to begin getting your links, you're wrong.

Groups take a lot of work to build membership and get people involved. You can't simply post links to your site; their purpose has to be a little more altruistic than that.

Moreover, the best groups are highly specific. If you're a local publisher in GreatTown, USA, you might need groups like GreatTown Parents, GreatTown Cat Lovers, GreatTown GreatIdeas... and then invest time to manage all of those in ways that speak to them authentically. It will be a slog.

And then there's another important caveat: One day when there's too many groups with too many notices annoying too many readers... well, Facebook will be Facebook and will deprioritize Groups.

Groups are a great strategy for publishers who love spending time interacting on Facebook, and who also want to break up their audiences into specific, interest-based segments. But it's not for everybody, and you should have a plan going into it.

There are a lot of reasons to be concerned by Facebook's recent moves, and plenty of reasons to doubt the motives behind this announcement. But the algorithm's shift towards "meaningful interaction" has been happening for years.

Small publishers that have placed a premium on community building, rather than traffic driving, can rest easy. Last week's announcement is an affirmation of their strategy, and while referral traffic from Facebook may continue to decline, the numbers you're shedding were the least engaged visitors; they were never really your audience to begin with, and now you're free to build a stronger community without them.

Ned Berke is currently an audience development consultant for LION Publishers through a program being coordinated by the Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University; the program, supported by the Knight Foundation, is designed to help small, independent and nonprofit news organizations better use social platforms to grow audience. Ned is also an entrepreneur-in-residence at the Tow Knight Center at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, where he manages a News Audience Development Community of Practice to facilitate discussions of best practices at leading media companies. You can apply to join the Community of Practice here.

Do you have a great idea for sparking organic conversations and sharing around your Facebook content? Do you want me to go into deeper detail about anything in this post? What about Facebook and online community building would you like me to look into? Comment here, tweet at me, or send me an email at NedBerke@gmail.com.

Classified Advertising Exchange

Jan. 22, 2018

ATTACHED TO THIS WEEK'S BULLETIN:

Classified Advertising Exchange.

Available through NPA:

**Reporter's Guide to Media Law
and Nebraska Courts (2005)**
\$3.00 ea.

Nebraska Open Meetings Act Booklet (2012)
\$1.00 ea.

(plus postage)

To purchase copies, contact the NPA office, 402-476-2851/(NE) 800-369-2850, or nebpress@nebpress.com

ORDER SAFETY VESTS THROUGH NNA

U.S. Dept. of Transportation regulation requires media representatives who work within the rights-of-way of federal-aid highways to wear a specific type of high-visibility safety vest. This applies to all newspaper employees - not just reporters & photographers. **NNA offers ANSI Class II-2004-107 safety vests with reflective markings and Velcro closure. In large letters on the back is the word PRESS. Sizes S-XL, \$19.50 ea.; sizes 2XL-4XL, \$21.50 ea. (plus S/H). To order, call NNA at 573-777-4980.**

Advertising in the Classified Advertising Exchange is no charge for NPA members and \$10 per week for non-members (approximately 25 words). It's a great way to sell or find equipment, hire a new employee, advertise a service which you provide, sell or buy a newspaper. Only Nebraska member newspapers may advertise for help wanted for Nebraska newspapers. No out-of-state help wanted advertisements accepted. Just mail, email or fax us your ad copy by noon Friday for the following weeks' Bulletin. For questions or additional information, contact the NPA office: (402)476-2851, NE: 800-369-2850, FAX: (402)476-2942 or email: nebpress@nebpress.com.