

# SCPA Bulletin

South Carolina Press Association  
P.O. Box 11429, Columbia, S.C. 29211 • (803) 750-9561

www.scpres.org  
jbarclay@scpress.org

FEBRUARY 2008

## Bill sealing gun permit info moves on

A House bill that would keep secret the list of holders of concealed weapons permits has passed out of a Senate subcommittee.

If it goes on to become law, this would be the first time a list of state license holders has been kept from the public.

"This is an emotional issue and the questions and comments made by senators at the hearing showed that privacy concerns clearly trumped public access to records," said Bill Rogers, SCPA executive director, following his testimony.

Rep. Mike Pitts, R-Laurens, testified that he had put forth the bill because a Roanoke, Va., newspaper had published the Virginia permit list on a Web site and he did not want to see that happen in South Carolina. He said he had concerns that the list could be used to target houses for break-ins.

Rogers said he had offered Pitts and the subcommittee compromise wording for the bill that would prohibit putting the list on the Internet and would allow SLED to withhold giving the list to anyone if they had any concerns about their identity or how the

Please See WEAPONS page 13

## Get hyper local with Lauterer at the SCPA Winter Meeting

Jock Lauterer's Winter Meeting presentation, "Relentlessly Local" will take you to the heart of community journalism in the 21st century.

"Community newspapers are more important and vital than ever in this era of major newspaper churn and fallout," Lauterer said. "Community newspapers are like no other medium because they are relentlessly local."

He said they seem to be thriving not just in South Carolina but nationwide.

Lauterer is the director of the Carolina Community Media Project, which is dedi-

cated to building, strengthening and nurturing communities through great community media. He is also a journalism professor at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Lauterer, along with Scott Hunter, publisher of the *Aiken Standard*, will lead sessions on the importance of community journalism at this year's SCPA

Winter Meeting, which will be held March 6-7 at the Marriott Renaissance Park hotel in Spartanburg.

To register and find out more details, see pages 6-7.

March  
6-7



## Deadline for ethics seminar is Feb. 22

Journalists are often faced with ethical decisions such as whether to name rape victims or use unnamed sources.

Kelly McBride, ethics leader at the Poynter Institute, will take you through such issues at an informative seminar on ethics in the newsroom. McBride will also talk about how the Internet affects newspaper ethics

and she'll teach participants how to use a decision-making model using S.C.-specific examples.

This workshop will be held in Columbia on Friday, Feb. 29, from 1-4 p.m. The cost to attend is only \$25 and the deadline to register is Feb. 22. See page 4 for more details and registration form.



March 16 - 22  
See pages 2,14  
Ads available

Ad Contest entries must be submitted by March 14

Find your entry forms & tags on [www.scpres.org](http://www.scpres.org).

### Calendar

Feb. 29  
Kelly McBride  
newsroom ethics  
workshop

March 6-7  
Winter Meeting,  
Spartanburg  
Marriott

March 14  
Advertising Contest  
Entry Deadline

March 28  
Collegiate Meeting  
and Awards,  
Columbia

April 17  
Ad Sales Basics  
Workshop,  
SCPA, Columbia

# Sunshine Week promotional ads available March 1

The S.C. Press Association is preparing a series of six ads for Sunshine Week. The ads highlight the importance of the Freedom of Information Act to the average person. They highlight past FOIA award winners and explain the benefits of open government. They will be available on the SCPA Web site, [www.scpa.org](http://www.scpa.org), by March 1.

These ads are to be run during Sunshine Week, which will take place March 16 – 22.

Also, the national Sunshine Week campaign's Web site, [www.sunshineweek.org](http://www.sunshineweek.org), has a myriad of resources available for use during Sunshine Week. Some are geared towards the national theme, "Vote for Sunshine," while others are general logos, political cartoons and opinion columns.

Sunshine Week will kick off with "Sunshine Sunday" on March 16.

A resolution was recently passed in the General Assembly designating March 16, 2008, as "Sunshine Sunday" and March

16-22, 2008, as "Open Government Week in South Carolina." This resolution, introduced by Sen. Jake Knotts, R-Lexington, is meant to reaffirm the General Assembly's commitment to open government in South Carolina, to recognize the role played by the FOIA and to express appreciation to SCPA for its role in promoting open government. This passed Jan. 31, and is the first year Sunshine Week has been recognized in this manner by S.C. government officials.

"Sunshine Week," a statewide campaign started by SCPA in 2004, is a great opportunity to emphasize and reinforce the importance of open government in South Carolina. We encourage you to write an applicable editorial about FOI's importance in your community.

If you need ideas or support on how your newspaper can get involved with Sunshine Week, contact the SCPA at (803) 750-9561 or e-mail [jbarclay@scpa.org](mailto:jbarclay@scpa.org).

## Sunshine

Continued from page 14

their government:

Be careful about executive sessions. State their specific purpose and avoid other topics once behind closed doors.

Make agendas and council packets available to reporters prior to a meeting. As a former government reporter, I know first-hand how hard it is to cover a governmental meeting accurately. Without packets, that task is even harder.

Make police reports and other documents available in a timely manner, not days or weeks later.

So when a reporter calls or you get one of those pesky FOI requests from the press, remember they have a tough and important role in making your city better. And thank you for your public service.

# Finally, the economy of black & white and the impact of color.

Trust your copier needs to the same company trusted by the S.C. Press Association.

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## FOI Briefs

### Post and Courier seeks nonprofit financials

Heritage Community Services, a well-connected North Charleston nonprofit that teaches students to abstain from sex until marriage, has received or been allocated more than \$23 million in state and federal money since 1997, including a \$1.4 million infusion of state funds last year, tax documents and other records show.

Despite its dependence on tax dollars, Heritage has hidden behind its nonprofit status when state officials and reporters asked for basic information about its operations in South Carolina.

When *The (Charleston) Post and Courier* requested information under the state Freedom of Information Act about its income from government sources, Heritage's president, Dick Pruet, wrote back that Heritage "is not considered a 'public body' for FOIA purposes" and "we will not be providing the information you request."

Jay Bender, SCPA lawyer, said that nonprofit groups supported in part or in whole by public funds are considered a public body under the FOIA. "If they're getting funds from the state budget, that clearly makes them subject to the law," he said. *The Post and Courier* is pursuing the issue.

### Anderson council inflamed over public records

The battle over public records continued in the Anderson County Council chambers Feb. 5. County Council member Cindy Wilson told the council that she still has not been allowed to see more than 27 pages of credit card statements, even though members of the media already have been provided full access to the county's credit card expenditures.

Wilson filed a FOIA request in September 2007, but was only recently notified

that she would be allowed to see the files.

Wilson also voiced concerns about the county's financial reporting. She claims that budget numbers have been changed to reflect the spending in several departments, including the administrator's office, the economic development office and the park police.

"How reliable are the numbers that we're given? It's hard to know, since it varies from document to document," she said.

Council member Bob Waldrep proposed an ordinance that he hoped would make it easier for council members to obtain public records. Waldrep's ordinance would have required county employees, division heads, the county administrator or county attorney to submit requested records within 24 hours. Under the ordinance, council members would be allowed to request any reports, documents, letters, interoffice notes or e-mails, even if the information could be considered privileged or confidential. It was voted down.

### Emergency meetings still must be public

The Mayesville Town Clerk Bill Rhodes and Council member Linwood Turner said they were either not made aware of a Nov. 29 meeting reportedly called by Town Council or were notified of the session in an untimely manner.

The mayor said that the Nov. 29 meeting was called under an emergency classification, the only meeting that by state law does not require 24 hours notice to the public. The law states that the public must be notified as soon as possible about the emergency meeting and that there must be an actual emergency.

Mayor Jereleen Hollimon-Miller refused to elaborate on what the emergency was or allow the public to view the minutes of that meeting.

She also refused to comply with an FOIA request for those minutes, saying the documents had not been approved and therefore were not subject to the law.

This is a direct violation of state law, according to Howard Duvall, executive director of the Municipal Association of South Carolina.

"All of the minutes fall under Freedom of Information Act laws, including an emergency session," he told *The (Sumter) Item*. "As soon as they are drafted, they should be made available."

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During an Horry County Humane Society meeting, the board voted to reconsider and reaffirm all votes taken during the Dec. 5, 2007, meeting. George Redman, the board's president, said another vote was needed because proper 24-hour public notice wasn't given for the Dec. 5 meeting, something the *Carolina Forest Chronicle* in Myrtle Beach first called attention to in a story.

The S.C. Freedom of Information Act requires public bodies to provide 24-hour notice of meetings and post that notice at the meeting location. FOIA defines a public body as any agency supported in whole or in part by public funds.

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*The Loris Scene* has filed a pair of public records requests seeking more information about the shooting death of a Longs man.

The paper has filed the FOIA requests with the Horry County and the State Law Enforcement Division seeking copies of tapes recounting the shooting to 911 dispatchers.

The requests were filed Jan. 25. Though the law says public bodies have 15 business days to respond, Horry County spokeswoman Lisa Bourcier said SLED has directed the county to not release the tapes.

SCPA attorney Jay Bender said the public has a right to judge whether county police acted appropriately in the shooting.

"If the tapes are in the possession of the county, it's not up to SLED what has to be done," Bender said. "It's the county's obligation under the law."

"There's no reason that a 911 tape should not be disclosed unless the disclosure would interfere with a prospective law enforcement action," Bender continued. "The public is as entitled to make a judgment as much as SLED is entitled to make a judgment."

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The Greenville County School District

# newsroom ethics workshop



Friday, Feb. 29 • 1 – 4 p.m. • SCPA Office • Columbia

Join us for an afternoon seminar on ethics in the newsroom, where we will discuss a variety of issues related to ethics and the Internet, including business pressures, citizen content and dialogue v. diatribe. McBride will instruct participants on how to use a decision-making model using S.C.-specific ethical newsroom cases. You don't want to miss this informative workshop!

## Kelly McBride

Kelly is the ethics group leader at the Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Fla., where she helps journalists strengthen their ethical decision-making skills and improve their writing, reporting and editing skills. She has been on the Poynter faculty since 2002. In addition to running the Ethics Department, Kelly directs both of Poynter's annual fellowship programs.

Twice Kelly has traveled to South Africa to lead advanced reporting and writing seminars geared toward reporters working in a young democracy.

Before coming to Poynter, Kelly worked as a reporter for 15 years, spending most of that time at *The Spokesman-Review* in Spokane, Wash. She covered crime and courts for six years and faith and ethics for eight years. She gained national attention for a package of stories on gay Christians and a series on the consequences of infertility treatments, as well as several stories on the clergy scandals of the Catholic Church.

Kelly has a Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Missouri and an MA in religious studies from Gonzaga University.



Newspaper: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendees** Print names as to appear on name badges.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Payment - The cost is \$25 per person.**

Check enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Bill my:  Visa  Mastercard

Name as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing address with city, state and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_

V-code: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Deadline to register is Feb. 22.  
Fax back to (803) 551-0903.**

Questions? Call Jen at (803) 750-9561 or e-mail [jbardclay@scpress.org](mailto:jbardclay@scpress.org).

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## People and Papers

### Bone is named Georgetown GM

**Dianne Bone** has been named general manager of *The Georgetown Times*.

Bone began work at the paper in 1976 as a typesetter. She has worked in classified and legal advertising, the circulation department, bookkeeping, and most recently, as business manager.



Bone

She will work with all divisions of Georgetown Communications including two newspapers, Web sites, a marina, a commercial print operation and specialty printing divisions.

### Fletcher called to lead Jasper Sun

**Becky Fletcher** has been named editor of the *Jasper County Sun* in Ridgeland.

She holds a BA in Journalism from Brigham Young University. Raised in California, Fletcher previously worked as a feature designer and columnist for the *San Francisco (Calif.) Examiner*. She most recently worked as a designer at *Bluffton Today* before joining *The Sun*.

### NAA fellowship awarded to Reid

**Michelle Reid**, circulation manager of *The Herald* in Rock Hill, has been chosen as one of 10 newspaper-industry professionals to participate in the Newspaper Association of America's 2008 Marketing Fellowship program. The fellowships are presented once a year and are designed to broaden opportunities for minority professionals and help advance their careers in newspaper management. The program began in 2002, and more than 50 newspaper professionals have participated since the launch.

Fellowship participants attend The Future Leaders program hosted by the NAA Market Development and Promotions Federation in Orlando Feb. 23-24. Following Future Leaders, the fellows will attend NAA's annual Marketing Conference at the Orlando World Center Marriott Resort & Convention Center, Feb. 24-27.

The fellows will also participate in conference calls throughout the year, where they will have the opportunity to hear NAA leaders discuss the latest industry trends and issues in marketing.

**Doug Dickerson** has left the *Berkeley Independent* in Moncks Corner, where he was editor, to join Charleston Southern University as director of university relations. He holds a bachelor's degree from Southeastern University.

**Jeanne Malmgren**, lifestyle editor of the *Anderson Independent-Mail*, has been named senior editor/content at the paper.

She will oversee the development of story packages, help with daily editing and assist with online news development. She will continue to oversee all features sections of the paper. Her reassignment is part of a reorganization of the newsroom reporting staff into a "content desk" which merged lifestyle and city desk reporters into one group.

Malmgren joined the *Independent-Mail* in 2007 after working as a features writer at the *St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times*.

**Melissa Blanton** has been promoted to assistant editor of the Community Journals newspapers in Greenville, Spartanburg and Anderson. She is a graduate of Bob Jones University with a degree in print journalism. She worked as an intern at the *Greenville Journal* as a student and was hired as a reporter in 2004 after graduation, covering health, crime and courts.

**Betsy Finklea**, editor of *The Dillon Herald*, has been selected for one of five 2007 Lt. Governor's Office on Aging media awards. In an announcement from the Office on Aging, it states that she "has a firm commitment to keeping readers informed about the issues impacting their daily lives." *The Dillon Herald* also encourages

seniors to serve as guest columnists.

**C. Grant Jackson**, business editor and columnist for *The State*, has been named Senior Vice President for Community Development of The Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce.

Jackson was named business editor and columnist in 2002, having served as executive business editor from 1996 until 2002. During his tenure, his business section was twice named Best In Business for its circulation category by the Society of American Business Editors and Writers.

*The Berkeley Independent* in Moncks Corner has plans to improve local coverage in their community. **Frank Johnson**, editor of sister paper, *The Goose Creek Gazette*, has been named editor of *The Berkeley Independent*. Johnson's move will allow more time for the writing staff of both the *Berkeley Independent* and *The Goose Creek Gazette* to focus on their respective local beats.

*The Independent* has also hired veteran newsman **Dan Brown**, who will cover town government, county council and local events. Brown most recently covered sports, city and education beats for the *Dawsonville (Ga.) News & Advertiser*.

**Joshua Lee Thorp** has been named graphic designer at the *Lexington County Chronicle*. Thorp, a native of Manning, moved to Columbia to attend the University of South Carolina's School of Journalism.

## Leads

Continued from page 12

ple need to know. Want to make it more reader-friendly? Instead of a mushy lead, move higher the information 10 grafs down that, despite rising jewelry prices, dealers do not see a run of people seeking to sell gold. Your reader is more likely to identify with this than with the Old West or Olympic medals.

When our readers' time is more valuable than ever, wasting it may be the bigger crime than to be a little bland in getting to the point. Let's resolve to do better.



2008 WINTER MEETING  
AND AWARDS PRESENTATION  
MARCH 6 - 7 • SPARTANBURG, SC

*Registration Form*

NEWSPAPER NAME

PHONE NUMBER AND EXT.

ADDRESS

FAX NUMBER

CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE

E-MAIL ADDRESS

CHECK ENCLOSED

BILL MY CREDIT CARD AS FOLLOWS:  VISA

MASTERCARD TOTAL AMOUNT \$\_\_\_\_\_

NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CARD

CARD BILLING ADDRESS WITH CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE

CARD NUMBER

CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE

V-NUMBER (3 DIGIT CODE ON BACK)

EXP. DATE

Print Name <i>(As it will appear on name badge)</i>	Check here if Spouse	Opening Reception \$15	Publishers' Breakfast*	Morning Session Included	Weekly Awards Luncheon \$50	Afternoon Session Included	AP Members Meeting	Daily Awards Dinner/Dance \$95	Total per person

Total Amount Due \$\_\_\_\_\_

FEES FOR MORNING AND AFTERNOON SESSIONS ARE INCLUDED WITH LUNCHEON OR DINNER REGISTRATION.

\*THE COST OF BREAKFAST IS INCLUDED WITH YOUR THURSDAY NIGHT HOTEL FEE. IF YOU ARE NOT STAYING AT THE HOTEL THURSDAY NIGHT AND WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE BREAKFAST, THE COST WILL BE \$12.95 PLUS TAX AT THE RESTAURANT.

*Hotel Information*

This year's event will be held at the Marriott Renaissance Park in Spartanburg. SCPA has secured a limited number of rooms at a group rate of \$99 per night plus tax for March 6 and 7. Room rates include breakfast for two. To ensure you receive this contracted room rate, **you must reserve your room by Thurs., Feb. 20, 2008. For reservations, call 1-800-327-6465 and tell them you would like the SCPA group rate.**

FAX THIS COMPLETED FORM BACK TO SCPA AT (803) 551-0903

TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM, REGISTRATION INFORMATION MUST BE RETURNED BY FRIDAY, FEB. 29, 2008.

# New SCPA applications for membership

The following have applied for membership in the SCPA to be voted on by the Executive Committee on March 6:

**Free Distribution Newspaper Membership:**

- *The Aynor Journal*
- *The Carolina Forest Chronicle*
- *Fort Jackson Leader*

**Individual Membership:**

- Clinton B. Campbell, freelance writer/photographer
- Brian T. Fulkerson, Spartanburg Methodist College

**Associate Membership:**

- Advantage Marketing Newspaper Consultants, Fayetteville, N.C.

Please contact Bill Rogers if you have any questions or comments.

## Internet

Continued from page 9

ideas for an effective online rate card:

1. Have competitive CPMs that make your site a better value than the competition, both traditional and pure online competition.
2. Offer introductory packages at reduced rates to a client who has never advertised with you online before.
3. Provide discounts for volume, length of contract or both.
4. Drive up your local revenue by selling more and larger contracts, not by driving up rate.
5. Offer the three standard Internet Advertising Bureau positions of 728x90, 160x600 and 300x250 and float their rates according to market demand and the amount of available inventory.

More Information  
 Scott Bateman is the new media consultant for the Virginia Press Association. He can be reached at scottb@vpa.net or (804) 521-7577.

# Deadlines this week for Winter Meeting ads, hotel

SCPA is once again offering space in the Winter Meeting Program to be used by member newspapers to congratulate their winners. The program will be distributed to all Winter Meeting attendees.

The deadline to reserve ad space has been extended to Friday, Feb. 22.

"An ad in the program is a great way to recognize your staff's hard work and efforts throughout the year," said Michelle Kerscher, SCPA Director of Marketing and Programs. "Space is limited so I encourage members to place their orders as soon as possible.

To place your ad, call Michelle at (803)

Make sure to reserve your room by Wednesday, Feb. 20 to receive the SCPA contracted rate at the Marriott Renaissance Park in Spartanburg. The SCPA has secured rooms at a group rate of \$99 per night plus tax for March 6-7, which includes breakfast for two. To make a reservation, call 1-800-327-6465 and specify you would like the SCPA Group rate.

750-9561 or e-mail michelle@scpress.org. Only two ads may be purchased per paper. All artwork must be received by Feb. 27.



## Plaque Order Form

**RESERVE YOUR PLAQUES FOR PICKUP AT THE SCPA WINTER MEETING**

To make sure we have enough plaques for 2nd and 3rd place winners, please order your plaques now to be picked up at the SCPA Winter Meeting in Spartanburg March 7. These are nice plaques and the cost is \$15. The insert size is now 6" x 8." First place plaques will be engraved as usual, but this is the first year 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners will not get a mounted certificate unless they order a plaque. This change was made to lower the news contest entry fee. Plaques ordered after the Winter Meeting will be \$20, including shipping.

Newspaper	Number of Plaques	Price (\$15; \$20 after Winter Meeting)	Total

**PAYMENT**

Check enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Bill my:  Visa  Mastercard

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Credit card billing address with city, state and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ V-code \_\_\_\_\_

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Cardholder Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with payment to: SCPA • P.O. Box 11429 • Columbia, SC 29211 • Fax: (803) 551-0903

# FOI

Continued from page 3

has spent nearly \$325,000 in legal fees to address a wide range of data security issues since *The Greenville News* reported the district accidentally sold computers containing Social Security numbers of thousands of students. According to the district's response to questions from *The Greenville News* filed under the state's FOIA, the district paid Nelson Mullins law firm \$311,003 and the Tollison law firm, \$13,780, for a total of \$324,783.

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The Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission may have violated the state's FOIA law. Chairman Kevin Hollinshead is being investigated by the State Ethics Commission after using a county credit card for personal charges during a September trip to Indiana.

At its November board meeting, the commissioners didn't publicly discuss Hollinshead's travel expenses, but they later debated whether to hold a new election for chairman. The commission may have violated the Freedom of Information Act by discussing Hollinshead's travel in closed session, said Jay Bender, SCPA lawyer.

"If they were, in fact, in there asking a commissioner about expenditures, that's not appropriate for executive session in the first place," Bender said. *The Post and Courier* had to file a Freedom of Information Act request to obtain the documents showing all commissioners' recent travel expenses.

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Kit Smith, a Richland County Councilwoman, stood up for FOI when staff and other council members tried to slip items on a December meeting agenda that were not posted 24 hours in advance for the public to see. Not providing 24-hour notice of the revised, complete agenda violates the Freedom of Information Act.

"It's time to clean up our act," Smith said, adding that this infringement of the FOIA had been occurring more and more frequently and urging the council to be more conscientious about giving proper notification to the public.

"If you allow the government to amend the agenda at a meeting and not give notice, you have foreclosed the possibility that the public can attend the debate," SCPA attorney Jay Bender said. "You have also

foreclosed the opportunity for a citizen to call a representative to express their view about the topic."

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*The Pageland Progressive Journal* filed a FOI request to inspect the expense reports filed for a trip taken by Councilman Jimmie Baker, Mayor Carroll Faile and Councilwoman Martha Hamilton. The records show the three filed identical expenses reports for the trip to Greenville, each receiving \$124.60 for 280 miles driven and \$95 for meals.

Baker did not drive to Greenville, but was a passenger in a car driven by Faile. During a Dec. 19 council meeting, Baker said he filed an expense report for mileage for the trip, even though he did not drive. The day after the meeting, though, Baker said his wife drove his car to Greenville, following behind him and Faile. His wife also drove the car back to Pageland from Greenville, and he believes the town is allowed to reimburse him for his wife's expenses on the trip.

"Since (Baker) wasn't riding in that vehicle, he doesn't have any right to file that reimbursement," said Jay Bender, SCPA attorney.

Elected officials may only file reimbursements for expenses directly related to public duty, Bender said. These expenses do not extend to family members unless the town has a policy allowing that kind of behavior, he said. According to Town Clerk Linda Long, Pageland does not have a policy to reimburse family members for expenses when accompanying elected officials on trips.

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The Aiken judge presiding over legal challenges to James Brown's estate refused to step down from the case last month, denying a request by two former trustees that he recuse himself. He almost made that statement behind closed doors, at first ordering the hearing on whether he acted improperly to be in his chambers and away from the public. But he changed his mind without explanation after reporters for the Associated Press and *The Augusta Chronicle* questioned whether closing the hearing was in violation of the state's Sunshine Law. Documents about the recusal hearing has also been filed under seal.

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Lisa Rolan, former chief financial officer for the City of Columbia, will stay on the city's payroll until August and receive \$1,600 to cover the lease on her apartment, according to the terms of her settle-

ment agreement with the city. Rolan will receive \$58,092 over 13 pay periods. The sum includes her unused sick and vacation days. She will receive full insurance benefits. Her last payment will be Aug. 8.

City Manager Charles Austin did not immediately release this agreement to *The State* newspaper because of its confidentiality clause and because of a letter Rolan sent to the city objecting its release. Austin said he waited to get clarification from the city's legal staff on an FOIA request from *The State* for that information.

"An agreement doesn't supersede state law," SCPA Executive Director Bill Rogers said. "The FOIA says all financial dealings are public. A severance package certainly is a financial dealing, and the public has a right to know what is in it. They're paying it."

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Mauldin released the name of its new economic development coordinator and the final applicants for the position, in response to a FOIA request by the *Tribune-Times* in Simpsonville.

This is a "slap in the face to the public," SCPA executive director Bill Rogers said.

"The whole idea is that the public know who is under consideration before they're named," Rogers said. "(Mauldin is) violating the spirit of the law, if not the letter."

Releasing the top three finalists for public inspection before naming Gardner as the city's choice would've increased the public's confidence in their elected officials, Rogers said.

**FOIA**  
Letting the light shine  
on government

The 2008 edition of *The Public Official's Guide to Compliance with South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act* is available as a free download in PDF format from SCPA's Web site: [www.scpa.org](http://www.scpa.org). A printed version is also available for \$1.50 per copy. To order, call (803) 750-9561.

## Industry Briefs

# Vests required for reporters

Beginning on Nov. 24 this year, reporters working on federal highway rights of way will have to wear high-visibility safety apparel.

This new regulation is part of a U.S. Department of Transportation rule that will require all people working within highway rights of way to wear high-visibility apparel.

Newspapers need to be aware of this coming requirement and provide their reporters and photographers with vests or other acceptable apparel.

## McClatchy ousts outsourcing

The McClatchy Co., which announced in December it would experiment with outsourcing some production of *The Miami Herald's* Broward Neighbors sections to an India firm, has canceled that project.

"We've decided this would not be an appropriate use of this service so it won't be tested, nor will other newsroom and editing design like it," wrote *Miami Herald* Executive Editor Anders Gyllenhaal in a staff memo Jan. 14.

"The more we looked at the prospects of editing and layout from outside the newsroom, the more it was clear these skills involving news judgment and experience are not likely to work well from afar."

...

*The Easley Progress* has undergone a redesign. The makeover features a new masthead and a new overall look.

...

The deadline for the National Newspaper Association's 2008 Better Newspaper Contest and Better Newspaper Advertising Contest is March 1.

Participation is limited to NNA member newspapers in good standing published Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2007, Rules and forms are available at: [www.nna.org/Contests/bncmain.html](http://www.nna.org/Contests/bncmain.html).

# Make your online rate card better

By Scott Bateman

The average cost per thousand (CPM) impressions for Internet advertising is only \$2.50, which is much lower than the comparable CPMs for newspaper advertising, according to a recent Merrill Lynch report.

That number can be disconcerting for some media people, but it also is misleading.

As part of my consulting work for the Virginia Press Association, I went looking for online rate cards at newspaper sites around the country. I found rates ranging from the high single digits to \$25 or more. Classified products such as Top Jobs can generate up to \$25 as well.

So why does Merrill Lynch say that the average is only \$2.50 when the newspaper rate cards are showing numbers far above it?

One answer lies in remnant rates. Most sites have an overabundance of inventory. That excess inventory is being filled with national remnant campaigns (ads that fill unused inventory with no guarantee on the total number of impressions). These campaigns typically come from agencies such as Advertising.com, Tribal Fusion and Ca-sale Media.

Advertisers who take advantage of these rates are going for the largest possible audience. Because they buy huge quantities

of impressions, they pay the lowest CPMs, often less than \$1. Therefore, they drive down the average CPMs on newspaper sites.

The online audience growth rate at newspaper sites has slowed to less than 10 percent a year, according to the Newspaper Association of America and other sources. Yet media companies are reporting the growth of local online revenue in some cases at 40 and 50 percent or higher. It is not because their rate cards are growing that fast; it's because they are signing more and larger contracts. Again, these contracts have CPMs ranging from \$5 to \$25, depending on discounts.

In comparison, one report I found, and other sources back it up, showed \$5.61 CPMs for outdoor rotary bulletins, \$11.95 for a 30-second radio spot, \$10.85 for prime-time cable and \$25.65 for newspapers.

In truth, the local rate cards of newspaper sites are comparable in CPMs to their traditional counterparts. They need to sell more of their inventory. These sales will dramatically drive up their average CPMs.

So in conclusion here are five simple

Please See INTERNET page 7

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# Just because you can doesn't mean you should

In a frustrating way, it's amusing. Occasionally, I'll review a page with a designer and ask: "Hmmm. Why did you do that?"

"Well," comes the response, "It's a neat trick and I thought I'd give it a try."

"In other words, because you can."

"Huh?"

"The reason you did it is because you can. It's a 'cuzican.'"

"A what?"

"A 'cuzican' – a design trick you use only because you've discovered you can do it."

"Well...uh...yeah."

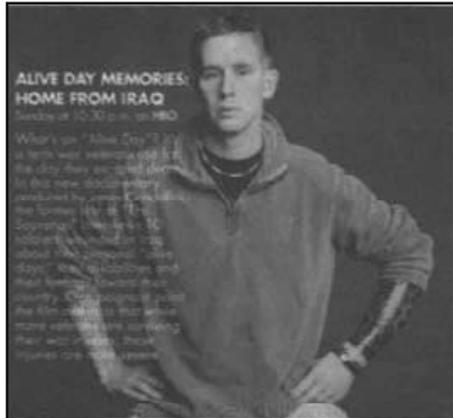
As design software becomes more powerful – and presses more capable – cuzicans have become more numerous. Some have been around for some time, some are not-so-recent arrivals, some still fresh (but there are those who will use-them-to-death in only a few months).

Examples of cuzicans:

**OVALS:** Not as popular now as they were in the early 90s. And they were popu-



By Ed Henninger  
Henninger is an independent newspaper consultant and director of Henninger Consulting in Rock Hill



Go ahead—try to read this caption.

lar in the early 90s why? Because – for the first time – QuarkXPress made it easy to create ovals.

**GRADIENT SCREENS:** On some pages, the use of a gradient screen can add a touch of elegance, raising the design level of a package from good to magnificent. Unfortunately, those packages are the exception rather than the rule.

**FUNKY FONTS:** Looking for Dom Casual? University Roman? Benguiat? Mistral? You'll find them – and many of their cousins – in newspapers large and small across the U.S. It's ugly but true.

**TYPE OVER PHOTOS:** This is a technique that can be used well – or poorly.

Most newspapers seem to prefer the latter. Doubt that? Check the illustration with this column.

**DROP SHADOWS:** Now very popular – because InDesign CS3 has perfected the application of the "soft shadow." Already, this technique is beginning to suffer from overuse, abuse, disuse, misuse...well, you get the idea.

**COLOR:** "If color is good, lots of color is better." Yes? Nope – too much color is just, well, too much color.

**TEXT WRAPS:** These are always popular – and often done poorly. Sometimes the type is too tight to the artwork. Sometimes the type suffers from poor word spacing. A text wrap can help a package – but ya gotta pay attention to the details and do it correctly.

**OUTLINED TYPE:** Gag!

**EXAGGERATED QUOTE MARKS:** Can you say "leisure suit"?

**REVERSES:** Can you say "leisure suit and gold chains"?

---

More Information  
ED HENNINGER is an independent newspaper consultant and the Director of Henninger Consulting, offering comprehensive newspaper design services, including redesigns, staff training, workshops and evaluations. You can reach him at: 803-327-3322. E-mail: edh@henningerconsulting.com. On the web: www.henningerconsulting.com

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And a donation to the Foundation in the name of a departed colleague is an excellent remembrance that lasts far longer than flowers.

# Newspapers flip over pocket camcorder

I asked a couple of buddies – one at a large metro paper, the other at a mid-size daily – what camcorder they were sending with their reporters these days. I got the same answer from both, which led me to shell out a few dollars (yes, out of my own pocket!) for a Flip Ultra. The Flip Ultra is the latest version of Pure Digital's best-selling video camera.



**By Kevin Slimp**  
Institute of Newspaper Technology

requires no tapes or additional memory cards to shoot up to 60 minutes of TV-quality video. And now for my favorite part: the Flip is equipped with a convenient USB arm that plugs directly into your computer, Mac or PC. The files are saved in AVI format, which easily opens in QuickTime thanks to the provided software. I was able to download the files to my computer and import them into iMovie in a matter of seconds.

The Flip Ultra runs on two AA batteries and is ready to use out of the box. I dispensed of the manual and was shooting videos within seconds. System requirements (to download and edit the videos) are Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later or Pentium 4, 2.0 GHz or faster. That's it. Just about any computer purchased in the past two years should handle the Flip Ultra just fine.

For more information and to

see videos recorded on Flip, visit [www.theflip.com](http://www.theflip.com).

More Information  
Kevin Slimp is the director of the Institute of Newspaper Technology. He can be reached at [kslimp@newspaperinstitute.com](mailto:kslimp@newspaperinstitute.com)



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# Getting a good start

The year is young, so it's worth getting a good start by looking at some of the issues that keep arising at the start of our stories.

For instance, the "tin ear" lead resurfaced in several papers as I was on the road when 2008 began. Here's one:

Tornado Bus Co. Inc. driver Felix Badillo Tapia took a sip of his soft drink and began choking on something as his westbound bus crossed the Interstate 40 median near Forrest City and entered the eastbound lanes on Nov. 25, Tapia told authorities.

When we hear a name in third person – "Tapia took" – we expect a different narrator. Violating that produces the old "Bob Dole says Bob Dole" construction comics love to ridicule.

(The awkward headline reflected the lead: "He choked on drink, bus driver told police" instead of "Bus driver told police he choked on drink.")

We also can delete the stilted cop-speak and process-oriented "entered the eastbound lanes" (it can be assumed when a westbound vehicle crosses a median and is hit by oncoming traffic, as the story explained). We can also simplify to "sipped":

Tornado Bus Co. Inc. driver Felix Badillo Tapia told authorities he sipped his soft drink and then began choking on something as his westbound bus crossed the Interstate 40 median near Forrest City on Nov. 25.

A 43-word lead is now 36 words and less grating on the ear.

The same crash led to an earlier "plugged" 45-word lead with too much detail:

The driver of a commercial bus in a Nov. 25 crash on Interstate 40 near Forrest City that killed four was under the influence of amphetamines at the time of the accident and is now charged with four counts of negligent homicide, authorities said Thursday.

Some questions:

• Is Nov. 25 needed? The exact date probably makes you, if only briefly, turn a



By Doug Fisher  
USC School  
of Mass  
Communication

## COMMON SENSE JOURNALISM

mental calendar. "November" is easier to grasp, and here the exact date was repeated in the fourth paragraph. (Contrast this with the first example, where the date made sense in the lead).

• Is "commercial" needed? We're not likely to mistake this for a school bus (because of the emotional interest, we'd probably specify that if it were one). If the distinction with, say, a charter bus is important, it probably can be explained later. And then we can shorten it further to "bus driver."

• Does "at the time of the accident" do any work?

Recast to 35 words: The bus driver in a November crash that killed four on Interstate 40 near Forrest City was under the influence of amphetamines and is now charged with four counts of negligent homicide, authorities said Thursday.

Finally, there is the classic space and time waster masquerading as a way to make a story more readable, like this wire-service lead:

It's the Holy Grail of rugged men in western dramas. It's the glittery metal used in fancy jewelry. It's the highest honor in the Olympics. And these days, gold's appeal as a safe-haven investment has carried it to record prices.

Forty words produce just a fuzzy idea of what the story is about. But there is hard news here, in the next paragraph:

Gold futures surged above \$880 yesterday to the highest level ever, not accounting for inflation, propelled by rising oil prices and a weak U.S. dollar.

Making readers sort through several sentences of "What's My Line?" wastes their time without noticeably greater understanding. Get to the news using the second paragraph, slightly recast, as the lead:

Gold futures surged above \$880 yesterday to the highest level ever, not accounting for inflation, propelled by rising oil prices, a weak U.S. dollar and the metal's appeal as a safe-haven investment.

In 33 words you have all that most peo-

Please See LEADS page 5

# The Gamecock hits century mark

## 100 years in the MAKING



After accepting advertisements in order to stay financially afloat, cigarette and alcohol ads, like the Palm Beach Exhibition at shown below, were commonplace in the newspaper.

The first staff of The Gamecock started printing the newspaper in 1908. Robert Gonzales, heir to The State newspaper, founded the student newspaper.

The Gamecock staff traveled to the Gulf Coast to cover the devastation and destruction of Hurricane Katrina first hand.

In the 1960s and 1970s, students protested the Vietnam War and discrimination. The Gamecock's coverage led to outrage and almost shut it down.

One hundred years is a long time. Not many things last 100 years. Laws are overturned in less. Most people don't make it to 100 years old. A century is an immense span of time, packed with memories and events. But for 100 years today, The Gamecock has been here at USC, covering the inner workings of our administration and the school spirit that reverberates on our campus. In printing the news, we have commemorated and stored it. And with it, our own history.

The University of South Carolina's student newspaper, The Daily Gamecock, turned 100 years old last month. Above is the front page of a special section published commemorating the anniversary. The Daily Gamecock is the only collegiate member of SCPA to publish five days a week. About 12,000 copies are printed daily and an additional 12,850 registered users receive an online e-mail edition.

## Obituaries

### William Stracener

*Managing Editor, Beaufort Gazette  
Reporter, Associated Press*

HILTON HEAD

William Hollis Stracener, Jr., 63, of Hilton Head Island died January 21, in a car accident. He is the former *Beaufort Gazette* managing editor.

Stracener was also a reporter for United Press International in 1980s before joining the Columbia bureau of *The Associated Press* in the mid-1980s.

"He was probably one of the best spot news reporters I've ever encountered," said former AP bureau chief John Shurr. "Kept a lot of politicians on their toes, which was a noble calling."

His reputation persisted when he joined

*The Gazette* staff in 1988. Jim Cato, the *Gazette's* editor during Stracener's tenure, described him as a "tenacious newsman."

"He always wanted to get the story, and he worked really diligently to get that story," Cato said. "With his years at the AP, he could rewrite a story in the blink of an eye. He worked pretty well under deadline pressure."

In 1995, Stracener left *The Gazette* to become a public relations counselor with the Anderson Communications Group on Hilton Head Island.

### Stephen M. Biondo

*Writer, Laurens County Advertiser,  
Anderson Independent-Mail*

GREENVILLE

Stephen M. Biondo, 57, died on Jan. 22, after a brief illness.

Biondo received a Bachelor of Science in Journalism from Ohio University and earned a Master of Arts in English at Virginia Tech.

His journalism career began in the Hampton Roads, Virginia area. In 1980 he became a reporter, and later a popular columnist, at the *Anderson Independent-Mail* for more than a decade. He worked for the

*Laurens County Advertiser* from 1996 to 2006 as a feature writer.

Throughout his career Steve received numerous Virginia and South Carolina Press Association Awards.

In 2002 his novel "The True Story of Manse Jolly, Part I," was published, followed in 2004 by Part II.

### Blanche W. Floyd

*Columnist, The Sun News*

MYRTLE BEACH

Blanche W. Floyd, 87, died Jan. 24. She was a columnist for *The (Myrtle Beach) Sun News' Neighbors* section, where she wrote about the history of the Grand Strand.

She was also the author of six books. She graduated from Columbia College and received her Masters from USC. In addition to being a freelance writer, she was a teacher in Myrtle Beach schools for 30 years.

### Howard McCandlish

*Reporter, AP, The Sun News,  
Greenville News*

COLUMBIA

Howard Shield McCandlish, 82, formerly of Marion, died Dec. 20, 2007 in Columbia.

McCandlish was a retired reporter and writer for the Associated Press in Columbia, covering North and South Carolina. He was also a reporter for *The Sun News* in Myrtle Beach and *The Greenville News*.

He graduated from the University of Virginia in 1948 and served in the Navy during WWII.

### Ruth S. Ross

*Writer, Easley Progress*

EASLEY

Effie Ruth Simmons Ross, 92, died Jan. 11. She was preceded in death by her husband Lester.

Though she spent most of her career at Alice Manufacturing, Ross also wrote the *Arial Community News* for *The Easley Progress*.

## Weapons

Continued from page 1

list would be used. The compromise would have then set up a three-member review committee to uphold or change SLED's decision on releasing the list.

Rogers testified at the Feb. 6 hearing that government license information has always been public record, in part so that "there is an assurance that the license granting process is fair and that licenses are legitimately issued." He pointed out that some years ago there was abuse of auto dealer licenses in South Carolina, which only came to light because there was public and media oversight.

Subcommittee Chairman John Hawkins, R-Spartanburg, said he saw no reason for the press or public to have the names and addresses of those having permits to carry concealed weapons and challenged Rogers that there would be any public good from keeping the list open.

Rogers testified that a check with SLED showed that only seven FOI requests for the permit list were made last year. He also told senators that a poll of daily and weekly editors across South Carolina came up with no known examples of criminals using the FOI to get the list and target homes for break-ins.

"The subcommittee has started our state down a slippery slope toward secret licenses," Rogers said. "I hope we regain our balance and don't go any further. What's next – secret business licenses?"

Other subcommittee members were Sens. Joel Lourie, D-Columbia, and Vincent Sheheen, D-Camden.

The bill, H. 3528, will now go to the full Senate Judiciary Committee.

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# Serving your community through FOI

*Editor's note: This column was written for the Municipal Association's March newsletter to be distributed to town and city leaders across South Carolina in recognition of Sunshine Week. It was written for public officials to help them understand why journalists care about open government.*



By Bill Rogers  
SCPA Executive Director

Municipal leaders and the press of South Carolina share a common goal – to serve their communities and make them better.

That is important to remember as we approach the annual Sunshine Week celebration in our state.

Sunshine Week promotes open government, and this openness is something most journalists take very seriously. But why do reporters care if a meeting is closed or if a record is sealed?

I think the primary reason is that good reporters consider themselves to be watchdogs on behalf of the citizens of their community. They take seriously their role as members of the Fourth Estate.

In case you have forgotten, that term came from Edmund Burke, an 18th century philosopher, who looking up at the Press Gallery of the British House of Commons, said, 'Yonder sits the Fourth Estate, and they are more important than them all.'

You can certainly debate which is the most important estate, but it is hard to argue with the idea that an informed citizenry is the foundation of the democracy we are fortunate to have here in America and the Palmetto State.

And reporters and editors have the task of informing the public. So do public officials.

As a former reporter and later journalism professor, I did a great deal of thinking about the relationship between reporters and government officials.

In an ideal world, there is mutual respect.

Not antagonism. Not a tight friendship.

- Journalists would respect the time and energy council members put into governing our cities and towns. Journalists would work hard to achieve the almost impossible goal of objectivity. They would be fair and accurate. They would question actions, not motives.

- City officials would respect the job journalists do, and through them get information about the public's business to the public. Officials would realize that openness improves the public's confidence in the system...decisions aren't being made in back rooms.

The Municipal Association does an excellent job educating town and city councils and staff members about the Freedom of Information Act here in South Carolina. From a journalist's point of view, here are some things to help you let the sun shine in on your city and improve city-press relations... and the public's knowledge of

Please See SUNSHINE page 2

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