Best Feature Photo
Division 2
2016 Better Newspaper Contest
By Jeremy Weber, West Yellowstone News

Titled: Yellowstone Lightning

Taken on Hwy. 191 just north of the Yellowstone National Park boundary on June 12, 2015.

My girlfriend (Katie) and I were on our way back to West Yellowstone from the MNA Conference in Big Sky when we came upon a thunderstorm being lit up by the setting sun. The colors were amazing, so we pulled off the road to get some photos. I realized the battery in my camera was dead, so I grabbed Katie’s camera, put my lens on it, grabbed a tripod and climbed down the embankment to the Gallatin River to grab a few shots. I think I took around 20-30 photos and I happened to get lucky with one that had a lightning strike in it.

Canon EOS 60D
50mm (manual) lens
1/100 sec
f2.8
ISO 160
**MNA Calendar**

**August**
26   Member Educational Opportunity: Online Media Campus: Maximizing Your Digital Revenue - Don't leave money on the table
Register at http://www.onlinemedia-campus.com/webinars/

**September**
1    Member Educational Opportunity: Application deadline for the Seminar on Jobs, Business and Economics Reporting
4    National Newspaper Carrier Day
5    Labor Day - MNA office will be closed
15   Member Educational Opportunity: Online Media Campus: InDesign Efficiencies
Register at http://www.onlinemedia-campus.com/webinars/
16   MNA & MNAS Board of Directors’ meeting, Livingston - MNA office will be closed
23   Deadline to submit articles for the September Press Pass

**October**
1    Deadline to file USPS Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation Form 3526
21   Deadline to submit articles for the October Press Pass

**November**
1    Deadline to return your MNA 2017 Rate & Data Survey
7    Montana Newspaper Foundation 2017 Internship Grant opens for applications
11   Deadline to submit articles for November Press Pass
24 - 25 Thanksgiving holiday - MNA office will be closed
MEMBER PROFILE

JACK H. SMITH
Owner/Publisher/Editor, Whitehall Ledger

BORN, YEAR & PLACE:

FAMILY:
Four kids. It’s a slimmed down Montana version of the “Brady Bunch.”

EDUCATION:
University of Wyoming – GO POKES!

FIRST NEWSPAPER JOB:
Green River beat reporter for the Daily Rocket-Miner in Rock Springs. I was lucky to get this job as a junior in college. The first few months were 40 hours a week of not having a clue what I was doing, but I learned lessons I keep with me today.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND DIVERSIONS:
I do a lot of things for youth sports and activities. I try to sponsor just about anything I can. I feel like donating to something like a “Chemical Free” Senior All Night Party is worth-while in so many ways. I also donate my time to the high school athletic department by building all of its sports programs.

HOW DID YOUR CAREER LEAD YOU TO WHERE YOU ARE NOW?
Prior to purchasing the paper, I worked at seven different papers in three states. I had a variety of job titles and duties, but I learned a variety of lessons at each newspaper. I had a lot of great mentors along the way who taught me the little things that help me on a day-to-day basis. I also started a small weekly paper from scratch in the State of Washington. That taught me to buy an established paper from somebody else. Starting a paper is not easy. I was proud of what I did, but I would never do that again.

WHAT’S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU LEARNED ALONG THE WAY THAT PREPARED YOU FOR YOUR CURRENT ROLE?
Probably the most important thing I’ve learned is how much a smaller community depends on a quality newspaper. I’ve worked at daily papers, but when I was able to see firsthand what a small paper means, I knew this is where I wanted to be. Once I learned this, I started to work with some knowledgeable mentors to prepare me to run a smaller paper.

WHAT ASPECT OF THE JOB DO YOU FIND THE MOST REWARDING?
Working on a daily basis with various members of the community.

WHAT ASPECT OF THE JOB DO YOU FIND THE MOST CHALLENGING?
Not being able to please everyone. You can publish what you think is the best paper you could possibly do, and people will still be upset about something. That gets old, but the juice is worth the squeeze.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ENHANCE THE BRAND OF YOUR NEWSPAPER IN YOUR AREA?
I’m trying really hard to include as many stories written by me as possible. I don’t ever want a paper full of press releases. I have also worked hard on giving the paper a fresher look on the design side. I’m not quite where I want to be on either, but I’m getting there.

WHAT IS YOUR DIGITAL STRATEGY RIGHT NOW?
I’m in the process of redesigning the web page and I’m happy to announce the new site should launch in the next few days. When I purchased the paper, the web site was out of date and not to my standards. I love newspapers. There is not much better than starting the morning with a cup of coffee and a good paper. I understand that things have been changing for the past two decades, so I will beef up the digital side of this paper, but will never forget that the print version is what matters the most.

WHAT IS YOUR PRINT STRATEGY RIGHT NOW?
To give the readers of the Whitehall Ledger the best paper possible. Sometimes this is tough with a very small staff, but it’s important to have this goal every week of the year.

HOW DOES THE MNA SERVE YOU AND YOUR NEWSPAPER?
Jim Rickman and the MNA are great. Any help I need with anything, they try to assist. They also do a great job with their ad programs and that helps us out a lot. They stand up for papers, and I couldn’t ask for anything more.
McNews purchase The Montanian

Tracy McNew said she will take the lead as publisher and editor, and Zach McNew will be advertising director of The Montanian. “We both plan to be involved in carrying on The Montanian legacy,” she said.

The sale closed on July 1, 2016, with Carol J. Latham of Libby, co-founder and former owner of the paper since 1989. Carol and her husband David announced they are retiring after 27 years of publishing the paper.

Tracy and Zach McNew have lived in the Troy area for seven years. Zach is originally from Troy. He and Tracy and their daughter Riley, age 8, moved back to Troy from Atlanta, Ga., in 2009. “Since then, we have built a successful business portfolio. We’re looking forward to providing high-quality, community-centered news stories and continuing to support the local economy,” Tracy said.

Emily Petrovski new editor of Philipsburg Mail

by Gwyneth Hyndman

Journalism is the perfect profession for the curious, says the Philipsburg Mail’s new editor, who took the helm this week.

Emily Petrovski, 22, graduated from Western Washington University in Bellingham with a degree in environmental science journalism in 2014. Her major set Petrovski on her current career path – an obvious choice for someone who describes herself as the kid who “nerded-out” on all things science and refused to mind her own business.

“Journalism is a great excuse to ask a thousand questions,” she explained. “It’s a free pass to figure things out.” She was drawn to the area because of the opportunity to live and work in a small community, after growing up in the Portland, Ore. area. She is looking forward to getting out and exploring the area, going on hikes, and already has her name down to adopt a dog once she is better settled in Philipsburg, where she will be based.

As well as being a completely different landscape to the West Coast, Petrovski said, Montana has weather patterns that she has only heard about.

“I’m already enjoying the thunderstorms – we’ve already had five in the time I’ve been here. I’m used to only having two to three a year,” she said, adding that the beauty of the area was one of the first things that struck her. “Before we came into town, near Maxville, there is that creek flowing and you see the mountains. I thought ‘this is Montana – this is where I’m going to live.’ It felt like home.”

Chuck Johnson to cover 2017 Legislature for the Chronicle

By Chronicle Staff

Veteran Montana journalist Chuck Johnson will join the staff of the Bozeman Daily Chronicle to cover the state’s legislative session in 2017, the newspaper announced Friday.

“Chuck’s experience and knowledge of Montana politics cannot be overstated,” said Nick Ehli, the newspaper’s managing editor. “We’re thrilled to have him joining our team.”

Based in Helena, Johnson will cover statewide issues, as well as those important to Bozeman and southwestern Montana. Troy Carter, the Chronicle’s government reporter, will also provide regular coverage of the session that begins in January.

“I’m excited about joining the Chronicle and its fine staff as a legislative reporter,” Johnson said.
**Awards and Honors**

Gwen Florio has been recognized for her work in journalism. She was awarded the Lee Enterprises President’s Award for her coverage of the way police, prosecutors, and the University of Montana handled rape allegations in Missoula in 2012.


She took a break from journalism in 2013 to write fiction full-time and is the author of three successful novels, with two others in the pipeline.

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**GMF to sponsor exciting two-day seminar**

The Greater Montana Foundation (GMF) has determined by quantitative and qualitative research that Montanans rank issues involving jobs and the economy as the highest priority set of issues facing our state. The Trustees of the Greater Montana Foundation believe that improvements in media reporting on such issues should be encouraged and supported.

**Program Summary**

A GMF-funded two-day seminar for working journalists and others in related positions (such as editors, radio and television news directors and producers) interested in exploring new information sources and techniques to improve their jobs, economy and business reporting will be held at the Gilkey Building on the University of Montana campus in Missoula.

The seminar will be managed by the new UM Center for Enterprise and Executive Development in cooperation with the UM School of Business Administrations Bureau of Business and Economic Research and School of Journalism.

Participants will have all expenses paid once they are in Missoula, including program costs, overnight lodging on Friday, September 23, and meals.

To qualify for consideration as seminar participants, professionals must complete the application form (see access instructions above) and have approval of their employers.

Selection of participants will be made by the trustees of the Greater Montana Foundation based on application responses and its desire to have a diverse set of participants, including with respect to the positions they hold and the work they do.

The seminar will be limited to the first 15 applicants approved. Those not approved for participation, as long as they otherwise meet the GMF’s requirements, will be given priority consideration for any future seminars.

Please send your completed application by September 1, 2016, to:

Sidney Armstrong  
Executive Director  
Greater Montana Foundation  
1038 Monroe Avenue  
Helena MT 59601  
info@greatermontana.org

Questions may be addressed to Ms. Armstrong at the e-mail address above, or by calling 406 443 5693

The following information provides the details on an amazing training opportunity for Montana newspaper and broadcast journalists. The complete overview and application can be found at:

2016-2017 MNA Rate and Data Questionnaire

With 83 newspapers come hundreds of different column sizes and space, dozens of rates for black and white advertising, and even more for color. Add in various page sizes, deadlines and contacts and it makes for a very robust advertising force! The annual MNA Rate and Data Questionnaire is the ultimate tool for MNA to use to represent its members’ newspaper advertising services accurately and in a timely fashion. Our policy is to provide clients and advertisers with quotes within 24 hours or less. In addition, we strive to upsell and offer additional markets beyond the client’s initial request, as often clients are unaware of all the markets that may meet their needs. In order to fulfill this promise to clients and to maximize each and every potential advertising buy for member newspapers, rate and specific information is needed and must be readily available. Time is of the essence and having needed rate and data could potentially make or break a sale!

Please take a few moments to go through the MNA Rate & Data Questionnaire with your newspaper’s staff. Complete and return to MNA not later than November 1, 2016. We understand rates change, contacts change and other items will change at any given time during the year, and maybe more than once. That’s to be expected... however, we do need to have a complete snapshot of all our members’ information at least once a year and we do that through the annual collection of rate and data. Thank you for your assistance with this BIG PICTURE piece of business. Please call Kev Campbell, (406) 443-2850, or email her at campbell@mtnewspapers.com for assistance. The questionnaire will be made available for members to access from the MNA website www.mtnewspapers.com by September 1.

“The annual MNA Rate and Data Questionnaire is the ultimate tool for MNA to use to represent its member newspapers’ advertising services accurately and in a timely fashion.”

Leeds takes over Havre Daily newsroom

Tim Leeds, long-time reporter for the Havre Daily News, is the newspaper’s new managing editor.

Leeds, originally hired as a reporter at the Havre Daily almost 17 years ago, had been serving as assistant editor for the last two years until he was promoted to managing editor Friday. He replaced former managing editor John Kelleher, who retired after 44 years in the newspaper industry.

“I think the paper has tried really hard ... to just try to get the news out to our readers so they know what’s happening,” Leeds said, “and my goal is to just keep doing that to the best of my ability.”

Leeds and his wife, Jodene, have two sons, Richard, of Billings, and Patrick, who is finishing U.S. Army advanced individual training this month and will be attending the University of Montana in the ROTC in the fall.

A fourth-generation area resident, Leeds said he sees both his ties to the area and his reporting experience as assets to his new position, including providing continuity.

“I’m excited to have Tim take the helm of the newsroom. I’m very proud of being able to promote from within,” said Stacy Mantle, publisher. “Tim has been with the paper for several years and is right at home here. He knows his way around the newsroom.”
Today is my last day as a reporter. I’m retiring after 44 years as a reporter/editor in small towns from New Hampshire to Havre in Montana.

Fortune magazine is wrong. I think it’s been a great way to spend a life.

I have told the story and helped other reporters tell the story of our communities — the sorrows, heartbreaks, the warts, the joys, the sense of community.

I’ve covered the murders, the massive explosions, the political corruption.

But, mostly, I’ve covered events that make small communities so interesting — the community festivals, the school board elections, the high school graduations and the special people who give of themselves for their communities. Telling people about the special moments in their community has been a real treat and an honor.

On the month that Fortune told me how wrong I had been about my profession, this is what I was lucky enough to cover:

• I got to report on a routine high school graduation at Box Elder. One of the graduates, Brandon The Boy, had, to put it mildly, a rough life. Family members were addicted to drugs and had served time in jail. He lived in one of the most financially depressed areas of Montana. By all standards, this young man grew up with not much of a chance for success. But through brains, talent and tons of determination, he turned out to be a star football and basketball player. He is headed to college on a basketball scholarship. He was speaking that day as the valedictorian of his class. He can do anything he wants with his life, but he promises to return to his reservation and help his people. He urged fellow students to avoid drugs and booze. I got to report on that. What an inspiration.

• I got to work with a reporter as he began to uncover the story of a secretive company that is buying up all kinds of land through tax sales in Havre and elsewhere in Montana for reasons they wouldn’t talk about. We couldn’t tell people what was going on, but we could let them know what was happening.

• I interviewed Pam Hillery, a prominent Havre woman who is fighting ALS with courage. She has been active in all kinds of community organizations over the years, always giving of herself. Pam taught us how to live, and now she is teaching us how to die. She has written local and national blogs and newspaper columns telling of her disease and its effect on her body.

She told me of her love of her family and her community and what she hopes to see before she dies. Most of us would be whining and feeling sorry for ourselves. Pam is raising awareness about—and money for—the fight against ALS. She is fighting for adoption of a street repair program for the city she loves. She wants to see her family succeed. And her passion for politics remains.

Because of her love of politics and her community, she said she hopes to stay alive long enough to see Hillary Clinton and Jacob Bachmeier elected, she told me.

Many people told me they cried reading the story. I know I cried writing it. She’s an inspiration.

So sorry, Fortune magazine. I don’t feel like I’ve wasted 44 years in a meaningless, dreadful job. I can’t think of any profession that offers the kinds of rewards I have had.

So now there will be a change in my lifestyle. I have lived in towns from one end of the country to another, but I saved the best for last. I’m a Montanan now, and I’ll be hanging around, volunteering for some of the great organizations I’ve covered, and attending some of the events I’ve written about over the years.

And some of the people you already know, Stacy Mantle, Alex Ross, Tim Leeds, Pam Burke and Paul Dragu will continue chronicling the events of Havre and the Hi-Line just as Havre Daily News people have for the last century and just as they will in some form or another for the next century. It is Havre’s most enduring institution.

And there are some people you may not know who have had a great deal to do with the Havre Daily News mission. Robb Hicks and Gary Stevenson are two Wyoming newspaper investors who own the Havre Daily News.

They like to make money. I can think of about 250 easier ways to make money these days than owning a newspaper, but they have it in their blood.

I’m always the envy of editors at Montana Newspaper Association meetings, from editors who have been through the trauma of slashing their staffs to meet budget constraints. Our staff has gotten larger over the years. Gary and Robb have the strange belief that the best people to put out a newspaper in Havre are people in Havre, not people in Washington, D.C., or Davenport, Iowa. No cookie-cutter journalism here. If you like or dislike something in our paper, call us, not corporate.

So, thank you Havre. It’s been a great honor to chronic the history of this very special place. It’s been a great ride. Hopefully I will see you around in another capacity.

(John Kelleher can be reached at 406-390-0798 or at johnkelleher48@charter.net.)
George Norman Larson

George Norman Larson passed away on July 18, 2016, at the age of 89, in Vacaville, CA, after a short illness. He was born on a farm in eastern MT on July 30, 1926.

He worked at the Wibaux Pioneer-Gazette during his youth.

At the young age of 17 (in 1944) he enlisted and served aboard the USS Darke in the South Pacific. His time in the Navy would take him to the invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, as well as the Philippine Liberation.

After his discharge from the Navy he moved to Billings, MT, where he attended Rocky Mountain College and majored in journalism and printing. After attending college for two years, he worked at The Hebron Herald in Hebron, ND, and, after a year, Western Litho-Print in Billings, MT. On Feb. 8, 1952, he married Claudia Begger and they moved to Ryegate, MT, where he had the opportunity to publish The Eastern Montana Clarion until the owner sold the paper and asked him to run The Jordan Tribune in Jordan, MT. Eventually, he went on to work at The Billings Gazette before moving his family to San Jose, CA, in 1959 to work at the San Jose Mercury News. He worked there until he retired in January of 1990.

Jim Fall

James “Jim” Randolph Fall, Jr. — father, husband, grandfather, friend, newspaperman, sports fan, fisherman, golfer — the former mayor of Maryville who served as the executive editor of the Maryville Daily Forum and who was a lifelong advocate for community journalism, died August 9, 2016. He was 79. Jim was preceded in death by his wife of 47 years, Janis Elaine Melvin Fall.

Born December 4, 1936, Jim attended Presbyterian Day School in Memphis, and Castle Heights Military Academy, Lebanon, Tennessee, where he was editor of their national award-winning high school newspaper, The Cavalier. In high school, Jim developed a love for veterinary medicine, but it was the University of Missouri’s School of Journalism that offered him a place in 1955.

Jim and Jan moved to Carbondale, Illinois, where Jim reported for The Southern Illinoisan. After being drafted, he was stationed at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, during the final months of the Korean Conflict and extending into the early years of the American military presence in Vietnam, working as a journalist in the Army’s Special Warfare Center.

In 1966, Jim became managing editor of the West Memphis Evening Times. Jim frequently recalled how he reported on the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the ensuing Memphis riots.

In 1975, Jim and Jan purchased the Albany (Missouri) Ledger, which was awarded three General Excellence awards by the Missouri Press Association between 1975 and 1982, with Jim as publisher, editor, reporter, photographer and layout artist. During that time, the Falls also published The Stanberry Headlight.

The Falls sold the Ledger and Jim assumed the editorship of the El Dorado (Arkansas) News Times in 1982. Jim was promoted to general manager of the newspaper, serving until 1988.

In 1989, Jim returned once again to Missouri, this time as publisher of The Daily Forum, and later as co-founder of the Maryville Free Press.

Relocating to Helena, Montana, Jim became the executive director of the Montana Newspaper Association, where he served from 1995 until his retirement in 2004.

Following Jan’s unexpected death in 2006, Jim decided to return “once and for all” to his beloved Maryville. He taught editing in the journalism department at Northwest Missouri State University in 2007, and returned to writing for the Forum as a columnist from 2008-2012.

Jim was elected to the Maryville city council in 2011, and in 2013 he was selected from among the council to serve as mayor.

He retired from municipal service in 2014, joining the management of the newly-relaunched Daily Forum as executive editor. Jim thrived on rebuilding the newspaper and on the professional and personal relationships that grew out of his service as a journalist.

Jim received numerous accolades for professional and community service, including serving as president of the El Dorado Chamber of Commerce, of the Northwest Missouri Press Association, and of Newspaper Association Managers, Inc.
West Yellowstone News to close September 2
West Yellowstone News, August 19, 2016

The West Yellowstone News will no longer be published by Big Sky Publishing as of Sept. 2. The newspaper and its website will close unless a buyer is found.

Big Sky Publishing president Stephanie Pressly shared the news with News staff on Monday. “This decision in no way reflects the excellent, award-winning journalism being produced by the News’ staff,” said Pressly. “It’s a business decision that’s been under consideration for quite some time.”

Pressly said that since the economic downturn in 2008, the News’ financial performance has continued to decline, despite the company’s best efforts to reverse the trend. The majority of operating revenue comes from advertising sales to local businesses. Advertising has declined dramatically as businesses juggle priorities in tough economic times.

“We are not in the financial position to continue producing the publication under these circumstances,” said Pressly.

“The town is very interested in the content of the News each week, but it’s necessary to have advertising support in order to make ends meet,” said Pressly. “Even adding paid subscriptions would not counter the deficit.” The News is primarily distributed for free, in addition to 180 paid copies delivered by mail.

Moving to a digital-only edition was considered, but the company concluded the paper would still lose money under that scenario and considering current advertising revenue.
Delivery is a proven value added to every newspaper

By William E. (Bill) Garber, Founder | Interlink

It is a rare newspaper whose single-copy sales exceed home delivery. Delivery is a tremendous value added to the newspaper. And with this in mind, better delivery just makes sense and dollars, when considering what poor delivery does to subscriber churn.

Delivery is a key reason why community newspapers compete, and compete well, in not only the world of radio and TV, but in the crazy, wonderful, everywhere, always-on digital world.

People are increasingly reluctant to turn on a computer or cellphone, find an app, open an app, look at the landing “page” and try to figure out what everyone is, or will be, reading, and see what’s going on in the news.

Too much work. Way too much.

News apps, even high-profile ones, are failing for this very reason.

Your newspaper delivers the result of more than 200 years of refining the newspaper’s method of giving the collection of news and stories a depth of meaning that is lost when a story exists outside the newspaper’s collections.

Fortunately, delivery is relatively inexpensive when using the U.S. Postal Service; hardly a dime around town, though a good deal more the more isolated the delivery address is from other subscribers to your paper.

So it pays to improve delivery when you can, especially if it is easy, and especially if the improvement offers one-and-done simplicity.

And companies that offer postal software, such as my company, Interlink, have made Full-Service Intelligent Mail just such an improvement.

No added software.
No increase in license fee.
It’s just better delivery and lower postage.
It takes about an hour to set up Full-Service Intelligent Mail, and minimal, if any, change in your mailroom process.

In fact, your mailroom may never know, but PostalOne!™ will know, and that will make all the difference.

Every Full-Service container tag headlines it as a Full-Service container. And every postal employee knows how to read those headlines.

Here is why that is really important.

Although PostalOne!™ tracks every Full-Service container, non-Full-Service containers are essentially lost as soon as you leave them at your post office. Lost mail depends on postal employees to manually over and over again do the right thing. And manual handling of the mail simply cannot be as consistently excellent as Full-Service mail.

Eighty percent of Periodical Mail is already mailed using Full-Service.

That number is much lower for newspapers.
Perhaps it is just simple confusion, like lots of postal matters.
Here’s the problem. Full-Service barcodes have been required for automation discounts for a couple years now. But using Full-Service barcodes for automation rate mail is not enough.

To qualify for Full-Service mail, you must add special information in the barcode for PostalOne!™ And you must submit your mailing using eDoc.

So let’s take the mystery out of the set-up process.
For a newspaper mailer using specialized postal software, qualifying for Full-Service is easy.
• Register and set up your PostalOne!™ account with the Postal Service (about an hour).
• Set up your postal software to digitally submit your mailing to PostalOne!™ (a few minutes).
• Check “Use Full-Service Intelligent Mail” to put that special Full-Service information in the barcodes (seconds).

That’s it.
From then on, your newspaper mail will be Full-Service. And you’ll receive a small postage discount—about a nickel per year per subscriber for a weekly newspaper.

For assistance in setting up your newspaper for delivery using Full-Service, call 888-473-3103.
Production, Design and Advertising will be the focus of upcoming webinars

The educational webinars are brought to you as a member service of the Montana Newspaper Association, in conjunction with the Iowa Newspaper Foundation.

For more information about each webinar, and to register, go to http://www.onlinemediacampus.com/webinars/

An advanced registration of $35 is required to avoid paying a late fee.

We encourage members to make the webinars a group educational event by gathering around a single monitor or projected image to take advantage of the one registration fee. Please allow a few minutes for discussion after the training.

Advanced registration will allow you to view the webinars at any time after the presentation date.

**Friday, August 26** – Maximizing Your Digital Revenue – Don’t leave money on the table

**Category: Revenue**  Presenter: Max Freund, The Gazette Company

**Thursday, September 15** – InDesign Efficiencies

**Category: Production/Design**  Presenter: Joe Greco, Gatehouse Media