Saying farewell after wonderful years at Herald

The time has come for my farewell column, and I really have been dreading it. How can I put 26 years of my life into a few paragraphs? But, as usual, my dear friend and editor Bill Vander Weele helped me out. He suggested I watch the last episode of the television sitcom “The Office,” where goodbyes were shared.

I hadn’t shed a tear on my leaving until listening to the cast of “The Office” and realizing how so much of what they were saying pertains to my life at the Herald. No words can begin to express the life I have shared with my staff and all the people I have built special relationships with. So I’m going to use some of the thoughts from “The Office Farewells” that touched my heart and said what I could not express myself.

Years ago I applied for a job at the Herald because they were hiring. It was just a job. A place to go to for a few hours a day to get out of the house. Never did I think that place would become home.

The Sidney Herald became my career, from being hired as a part-time typesetter, to full-time positions in classified sales, outside advertising sales, bookkeeper and finally publisher.

Wouldn’t it be great to be able see a tape of your life? You can see yourself change, make mistakes, celebrate accomplishments and, yes, even grow up. I’m lucky in my position because I have a “tape,” but it is in words written. Going back and reviewing the many, many columns shared in the 13 years as publisher, it does tell so much about me and my life with the Sidney Herald. Three words can best describe it: commitment to community.

A quick rundown of a few of my columns on people that made a difference in me and our community: Al Schmitz, a man whose love of family farms never went unnoticed; Jim Vaira, a role model and friend to all; John Bock, a man of so many talents who loved Sidney to the core; Howard Hunke, a music man and teacher expecting only the best in each student. The relationships with so many people and the friendships I have built over the years have formed me into the person I am. I thank all of you for that.

It is time for new energy and ideas to lead the Sidney Herald team, and I am ready to move on to the next phase in my life. I look forward to spending more time with my husband, children, family and friends, and not living from one deadline to another, but I know I will miss it at times.

Everything I know and believe in I owe to those special people I met in this job and to my Herald family. I’m proud to call each one my friend.

Sidney Herald, Sidney, Mont., May 29, 2013

“Access in Montana,” a handy guide for journalists and citizens seeking access to public meetings and documents, is now available in print or online from the Montana Freedom of Information Hotline, the Montana Newspaper Association, the University of Montana Journalism School and the Montana Broadcasters Association.

The Montana FOI Board recently obtained grant funding from the National Freedom of Information Coalition and First Amendment Funding Inc. to pay for updating and printing the access guide and reporter's wallet cards. The guides and cards are available for free upon request from any of the participating organizations.

Montana journalists and members of the public can also find the information from the guide and the wallet card online at www.montanafoi.org, where the two publications are available in text or downloadable PDF format.
MNACalendar

JULY
1  Deadline to comply Legal Advertising Requirements, “Sworn Statement of Circulation” must be filed with County Clerk & Recorder in county of publication prior to July 1.
4-5  MNA offices closed for the holiday weekend
19  Deadline to submit articles for July Press Pass

AUGUST
16  Deadline to submit articles for August Press Pass

SEPTEMBER
13  Deadline to submit articles for September Press Pass
20  MNA and MNAS Fall Board of Directors’ Meeting - Butte

OCTOBER
1  Deadline to file USPS Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation Form 3526
17-19  Institute of Newspaper Technology - newspaperinstitute.com
18  Deadline to submit articles for October Press Pass

Get kids interested
I am a 9-year old kid. My dad likes to read the paper, but I only read the comics.
I think that if you added fun Lego-building instructions, more kids would be interested in reading the paper maybe once or twice a week. Thank you for your considering this.
—Nathan Vosen
Great Falls

Carbon County News, Red Lodge, Montana, May 16, 2013

The Carbon County News is always trying to improve its services providing news to the people in the community. To help us further understand what our readers would like to see in the paper, we asked the people of Carbon County for their input in this week’s Carbon County Curbside.

“You’ve added a police blotter, so that’s great. We enjoy the current events and schedules and I think the schools are covered well,” Cathie Osmun said.

“There are so many interesting folks in town I think it would be great to see a weekly column that highlights someone in town’s back-story, how they ended up here, where they’ve been and what other lives they lived before Red Lodge,” Dave Dixon said.

“I’d like to see more historical facts about the town. Years ago they had before and after articles, which told stories about stuff that happened 100 years ago. I don’t know why they discontinued that,” noted Steve Butler of Red Lodge.

“I think for some people who don’t watch the news or get the Billings Gazette, to feature a headline every week about one National or Montana event. It would also be nice to know where the road construction will be ahead of time,” said Yvonne Jensen.
Kudos to Sens. Baucus, Tester for support of federal media shield laws

The recent U.S. Department of Justice probe into Associated Press phone records in search of the names of federal employees who may have leaked national security secrets to the press trained a spotlight on the glaring lack of media shield law at the federal level.

Shield laws protect news reporters from legal action for not revealing their sources. These laws provide assurance to news sources that their names will not be made public if they reveal information about wrongdoing in the government to the news media. And those sources can then have some confidence they will not be subject to retribution for speaking with the media.

Most states—including Montana—have these laws. But the federal government has so far neglected to enact such a law, perhaps in part because of the uneasy relationship between Congress and the news media.

These laws are extremely important to the gathering of the news. If whistleblowers within the government bureaucracy fear that they will be identified if they disclose information to the media, those whistleblowers are going to clam up. And when that happens, the loser will be the American people, because they will be far less likely to learn about corruption and inefficiency in the bureaucracy.

In the Associated Press case, Justice Department investigators secretly sought subpoenas for the reporters’ emails and — with no laws standing the way—the court granted them.

Montana Sens. Max Baucus and Jon Tester are cosponsors of a bill that would enact a federal media shield law. They are to be commended for their support on this issue. And Montana Rep. Steve Daines is urged to get behind the effort when it comes his way.

This measure would protect reporters from being forced to reveal the source of information gained confidentially. It would also require that the media be notified any time their records are being sought in court and provide them with an opportunity to challenge that action.

It’s simple, really. If reporters are forced to routinely reveal the sources of their information, they won’t have any sources, and neither will the consumers of the news who depend on those reporters.

Bozeman Daily Chronicle, Bozeman, Mont., May 24, 2013

Newly elected board of directors and officers

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<td>Tom Eggensperger</td>
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As amateur news hounds gain power and influence through social media, the definition of “journalist” has ripened for philosophical debate. But now it’s becoming a legal issue - one that could hamper efforts to protect the news profession at the very time federal lawmakers are awakening to the need to do so.

Following disclosure of government scrutiny of the Associated Press in connection with leaks of sensitive material, President Obama urged passage of a new shield law to cover journalists. Versions of the bill were quickly introduced in the House and Senate, each requiring the federal government to convince a judge about the significance of information possessed by journalists before their documents could be seized and their sources exposed.

One of the authors of the Senate measure, Democrat Charles Schumer of New York, said the bill “would balance national security needs against the public’s right to the free flow of information.”

But Schumer’s colleague Dick Durbin, D-Ill., raised the question, “What is a journalist today?” Durbin went on to ask, “Does it include a blogger? Does it include someone who’s tweeting? Are these people journalists and entitled to constitutional protection?”

The House and Senate bills differ on this key point. The Senate version defines persons to be covered as those whose “primary intent” is to disseminate public news or information. The description is lengthy and so broad that it could very well apply to anyone with access to the Internet or social media - which is to say, everyone.

The House measure, introduced by Rep. Ted Poe, R-Texas, is more focused. It defines a journalist as someone who gathers and reports news “for financial gain or livelihood.”

Poe’s legislation has broad support. Yet, in the digital age, can a law protecting news flow be so narrowly tailored that it covers only those who earn their living as journalists?

Forty states plus the District of Columbia have some form of shield law, but none exists on the federal level. State protections differ widely, and in many cases utilize antiquated language to describe the function of journalists by limiting their work to newspapers, magazines and conventional broadcasting. Courts in New Jersey and California have ruled that bloggers are also entitled to protection under state shield laws.

This goes beyond semantics. One can easily imagine a situation similar, say, to the Boston Marathon bombing, in which classmates of a possible suspect distribute information via the Internet. Should their sources be protected? Schumer first introduced a version of his shield law in 2009, but it ran into trouble after the online group WikiLeaks began publishing a trove of classified government documents, causing lawmakers to stall on the very question of who deserves protection.

Marshall McLuhan’s prescient discussion of the medium and the message still haunts us. To some, format has little or no relevance in defining journalism; what matters is content. To others, the media must be defined, and as such limited, lest shield laws apply to everyone with a mobile device. To authors of the House bill, journalists are only those who earn a living from their craft, meaning they might be expected to bring a measure of professional responsibility to handling of sensitive material.

I’ve written previously that the term “citizen journalist” is an oxymoron, because journalism is a profession for which training is requisite. However, when it comes to protection under law, I do not believe such rights can be restricted as they are in the House bill. If we are to have a federal shield law, then the Senate measure provides the more reasonable approach, even though its definition of journalism is more sweeping.

To answer Durbin’s questions: Are all tweeters journalists? No. Are those who seek to distribute information entitled to some level of protection from unreasonable government scrutiny? Yes.

(Peter Funt’s new book, “Cautiously Optimistic,” is available through Amazon.com and CandidCamera.com.)

Havre Daily News, Havre, Mont.
June 4, 2013
This column is adapted from Gene’s commencement address to the graduate journalism school at the University of California at Berkeley.

WASHINGTON — Before we begin, I’d like to address the elephant in the room. Yo, elephant.

No, there is actually a metaphorical elephant in the room. I get gigs like this only because I won two Pulitzer Prizes, which is an achievement less impressive than it sounds for two reasons. First, to win one you have to gain the approval of not just one committee but two, which means nothing really good will ever survive. If human evolution had been overseen by two committees, the dominant species on Earth would be iguanas. Second, have you ever seen one of these things? (I hold up my Pulitzer.) As Dave Barry has noted, it resembles a junior high school diploma.

The fact is, I have in my house a far more impressive-looking document. It’s bigger than a Pulitzer, on thicker paper and it’s in color. It was presented in 1986 to my 2-year-old son, from this day-care center. It says “Danny Stayed Dry All Day!” So.

In preparation for this speech, I have watched videos of recent commencement addresses, and frankly I’ve been appalled. They tend to be delivered by barely coherent, wizened old codgers like me, who start out by reminding about the good old days when newsrooms spent money as if they were drunken sailors. (This is literally true — I not once, but twice, was permitted to put on my expense account fact-finding excursions to whorehouses.) After waxing nostalgic for a while about the days when you could dig into petty cash to rent a Chinook helicopter to cover a high school soccer game, these commencement speakers will then blink themselves back into reality, as if they just realized where they were, and to whom they were talking, and they’d say, of course YOU’RE going to be having to supplement your income by taking in laundry.

This is alarmist claptrap. You might have to ghostwrite high school term papers for the kid sister of the 30-year-old dotcom billionaire who owns a company that makes an app that can summarize any book in 35 words or fewer, and whose company rents office space to the aggregators for which you summarize. So.

Consider satire. One of its great benefits is that no matter how obvious it is that you’re kidding, there will always be some people too ideologically constipated to understand. A few years ago, after it was reported that Vice President Dick Cheney, the evil puppet master, had signed a contract to write an autobiography, I wrote that I’d learned that at the author’s insistence he should be paid with “a gunnysack filled with unblemished human heads.” I got several outraged letters from conservatives, demanding that I either prove this charge or retract it. I don’t care what your salary: You are not going to get that demand in investment banking.

If this is to be an effective commencement address, I need to conclude with three rules for a successful future.

1. Stick to your principles, but don’t be an idiot. Do a good job on the boss’ kid sister’s high school term paper.
2. Change comas to semicolons in the absence of a conjunction.
3. Stay dry all day.

Gene Weingarten is a columnist for the Washington Post.

Bozeman Daily Chronicle, Bozeman, Mont., June 2, 2013

In Memoriam

Donald McKeever passed away on May 31, 2013. Don was born Sept. 16, 1935, in Forsyth. He was the ninth of 13 children and attended school in Forsyth, graduating in 1953. In 1966, Don moved to Helena and in 1967 began working as a relief driver for the Great Falls Tribune on a spur relay, distributing the morning edition to stops in Butte, Anaconda, Deer Lodge, Avon and Elliston. He bought the Main News in Helena in 1972 and made it into one of the hot spots on Last Chance Gulch. During this time, he took over as the circulation manager for the Great Falls Tribune in Helena, eventually becoming the district manager, with territory covering Helena, Bozeman, Three Forks, Dillon, Butte, Anaconda, Deer Lodge, Boulder and all points in between. He sold the Main News in 1975 and turned his attention full time to the newspaper business. After retiring from the Great Falls Tribune, he started his own business carrying short-haul loads for various businesses in the area and continued driving for the Tribune to Bozeman.

Don was a caring and generous person who touched the lives of many throughout Helena and the surrounding communities. He will be greatly missed.

-30-
Kesinger returns to Times staff

Baker native Lori Kesinger re-joins the staff of the Fallon County Times in Baker as a reporter. From 2008-2009, Kesinger was part of the production team designing ads. She is married to Bill, a welder with WBI Energy, and is the busy mom of three children: Moria (14), Javan (11) and Jaron (6).

The Independent Record has added Kaelynn Olsen to its team

Olsen comes to the IR from Carroll College, where she worked as the interim associate director of athletics for the past nine months. She will work as an advertising sales assistant. Olsen graduated from Carroll College in 2011 with a double degree in communications and public relations.

Otness finishes “school to work” at Sun Times

This past semester, Fairfield Schools paired up students with local businesses for their “School to Work” program. The Fairfield Sun Times had the privilege of working with Ty Otness. Ty would be at the Times office each morning to get daily instructions. He enjoyed working as a graphic designer; it brought new challenges and he said it pushed his creativity.

Valley Press to hold a garage sale to benefit kids and their education

The Valley Press in Plains will hold a garage sale on June 29 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in front of the office. All proceeds will benefit Newspapers in Education. Small or large donated items are accepted.

Jeff Malby joins TF Herald Staff

Jeff Malby, a longtime basketball coach who most recently led his Billings Central Rams to a pair of state titles in four years, has joined the staff of the The Three Forks Herald, which is owned by his brother, Andy Malby. Jeff will head up the sports department and also serve as advertising manager.

Chronicle wins 13 awards in regional journalism contest

The Bozeman Daily Chronicle was the most honored newspaper in its circulation category in the Society of Professional Journalists Annual Northwest Excellence in Journalism Contest. Chronicle reporters and photographers won 13 awards, including three first-place citations. The newspaper’s staff was second in the general excellence category among newspapers from the Northwest with a circulation of less than 25,000. Individual winners were:

- Whitney Berms, first place, crime and justice reporting, for “Drugged without knowing it.”
- Mike Greener, first place, portrait photography, for “Denise Malloy portrait.”
- Gidal Kaiser, first place, sports feature story, for “Game of life.”
- Gail Schontzler, second place, education reporting, for “Advanced education.”
- Rachel Hergett, second place, general column, for “Sound Check.”
- Ben Pierce, second place, photo page essay, for “Beartooth backcountry.”
- Ben Pierce, second place, video, for “Morel season.”
- Laura Lundquist, third place, government and politics reporting, for “On the attack.”
- Gail Schontzler, third place, education reporting, for “Growing pains.”
- Gail Schontzler, third place, personalities reporting, for “Miracle worker.”
- Laura Lundquist, third place, short feature story, for “Pentax camera.”
- Mike Greener, third place, photo portfolio.

Welcome to IR’s new Religion page

The Religion page will be published every Saturday and will initially include columns from local writers, along with local church events. The hope is that the columns will provoke all to reflect on their faith in new ways and challenge their beliefs a bit from time to time. The page will both teach and inform.

Chronicle welcomes new editorial board members

New Bozeman Chronicle editorial board members are Wendy Blake, Jim Hamilton, Dan Larson and Marilyn Wessel. They join the standing editorial board members: publisher Stephanie Pressly, managing editor Nick Ehli, editorial writer Bill Wilke and, also new to the board, Chronicle finance director Bob Eichenberger. The editorial board meets regularly to discuss local and state issues and strives to arrive at a consensus that is published under the “Our Opinion” heading on the daily opinion page.

Newsroom grows with Pioneer intern

Monica Gokey joins the newsroom staff at the Big Timber Pioneer as a summer intern. Ms. Gokey is a University of Montana School of Journalism graduate. In Missoula, Gokey worked for the college radio station as a features reporter. She also freelanced for the school newspaper, the Montana Kaimin, and the city weekly, Missoula Independent. The internship is funded in part by a grant from the Montana Newspaper Foundation. It’s the first time the Big Timber Pioneer has received funding for a summer intern.
New Cascade Courier owners

Cascade residents, Felicia and John O’Brien, have purchased the Cascade Courier. Although she doesn’t have journalistic experience, Felicia said that she looks forward to the challenge of publishing the local paper. Felicia, who will serve as editor and publisher, plans to continue the Courier as it is, but wants to add more features, including a children’s activity page and more human interest stories. The O’Brien’s have lived in Cascade for a decade. They have six children.

From the printing press to your hands

Weekly announces major Bozeman distribution expansion

Since January 2013, the Big Sky Weekly has launched a major distribution expansion in Bozeman as content continually expands. As the largest city in the Greater Yellowstone region, Bozeman is a conduit for travelers, particularly at the Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport. The Weekly is distributed from more than 100 locations in Bozeman. From Main Street to 10th Avenue, to the south side of town, the Weekly is excited to find readers picking up the publication.

Old news surfaces

Two fellows who live on a ranch near Cascade, Greg Loeffler and Alan McMillin, were cleaning out an old farmhouse in the Helena Valley in mid-May when they came across a box of old newspapers. There were more than 30 historic newspapers in the box, plus two magazines.

The newspapers came mostly from Montana, along with North Dakota, Washington and California, and ranged from the years 1918 through 1972. Plus, there was a Dec. 8, 1917 edition of Harper’s Weekly on trench warfare during World War I, and a special January 1972 publication by the Helena Independent Record about the Montana Constitutional Convention.

Some of the papers they found included: The Montana Record-Herald of Helena blaring: “Wilson suffers breakdown,” on Sept. 27, 1919. President Woodrow Wilson suffered a stroke, and his wife ended up running the country for many months.


“War in Europe Still Held Improbable,” predicted the Helena Independent on March 9, 1936, just three years before World War II began.


The Helena paper, by now called the Independent Record, reported on April 12, 1945: “Roosevelt Dies EXTRA! EXTRA!”

“We were very surprised,” Loeffler said in an interview. “We were pretty excited to read them.” The two men explained that the people in charge of the farmhouse cleanup gave the newspapers to them.

New masthead for Phillips County News
In June, the Montana Newspaper Association launched a new website: [mtnewspapers.com](http://mtnewspapers.com)

**PHASE I** of the new website offers a more modern design, ease of navigation and more extensive content. Features of the site include in-depth information regarding MNA, links to all member websites, public notices, FOI resources and some very cool photos.

**PHASE II** is now in the works. Our plan is to create “members only” access where we can facilitate conversations, share ideas and store training materials.