Best Sports Photo
Division 4
2017 Better Newspaper Contest
By Bob Zolman, Valley Journal

Titled: Goalie

Judge’s Comment: A terrific photo for its simplicity and execution. Kudos to the photographer getting into a position for a really clean background not distracting from the subject. Love the study of concentration on the goalkeeper’s face as she reaches out. I’d hang this on the wall.
May
11 Deadline to register for the MNA member Digital Advertising Sales Training
18 Deadline to submit articles for the May Press Pass newsletter
18 MNA member Digital Advertising Sales Training, Great Falls
   Details at: http://www.mtnewspapers.com/member-educational-opportunity-digital-sales-training/
18 Deadline to receive MNA group rate discount for the MNA annual convention
28 Federal holiday: Memorial Day
28 MNA office will be closed for the Memorial Day holiday

June
1 MNA convention registration deadline, details at: http://www.mtnewspapers.com/2018-mna-convention/
5 Montana primary election
14 MNA and MNAS Board of Directors’ Meeting - Billings
15 Deadline to submit articles for the June Press Pass newsletter
14, 15 MNA office will be closed for the annual convention
15, 16 133rd MNA Annual Convention - Big Horn Resort, Billings
15 Montana Newspaper Foundation fundraising event - Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings
15 MNA, MNAS and MNF Annual Meetings - Big Horn Resort, Billings
16 2018 MNA Better Newspaper Contest Awards Banquet - Big Horn Resort, Billings

July
1 Annual deadline to file a County or Municipal Sworn Statement of Ownership
4 Federal Holiday: Independence Day
4 MNA office will be closed for the Independence Day holiday
20 Deadline to submit articles for the June Press Pass newsletter

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Phone 406-443-2850
Fax 406-443-2860

OUR MISSION:
To advance and sustain the news publishing industry in Montana.

Jim Rickman, Executive Director | jim@mtnewspapers.com
Stacy Wirtz, Business Development Director | stacy@mtnewspapers.com
Ryan Stavnes, Member Relations & Client Services | member@mtnewspapers.com

mtnewspapers.com
**2nd PLACE**

**Division 4**

Weekly and daily newspapers with circulation of 4,501 or more.

By Hunter D’Antuono and Justin Post, Livingston Enterprise

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**2nd PLACE**

**Division 5**

Daily newspapers (6 & 7-day)

By Bozeman Daily Chronicle staff

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To view all the first-place winners of the 2017 Better Newspaper Contest, please visit the following link: http://www.mtnewspapers.com/awards2017/presentation.php
Bitterroot Star libel suit dismissed

Bitterroot Star

A federal district court judge has dismissed the case filed by former Ravalli County Treasurer Valerie Stamey and her husband, Richard Stamey, against the Bitterroot Star and the newspaper’s publishers Victoria and Michael Howell. The Stameys claimed that they were defamed by a newspaper article written by Michael Howell and published in the Bitterroot Star. The judge found that “the Stameys’ inability to establish that the newspaper story is false is fatal to their claims for libel.” Quoting a previous case, the judge noted, “It is well-established that ‘truth is a complete defense to a claim of defamation.’”

The Stameys filed their $8 million lawsuit against the Bitterroot Star over two years ago on February 11, 2016, claiming that Michael Howell had defamed them in an article that mentioned Richard Stamey’s political practices violations and Valerie Stamey’s role as treasurer of his campaign finance committee.

Ironically, the Stameys opposed the introduction of the ruling made by the Commissioner of Political Practices as evidence. But U.S. District Court Judge Dana Christensen allowed it.

On January 5, 2018, Stamey’s attorney, Robert Myers, was disbarred from the practice of law concerning actions unrelated to this case. The Court gave the Stameys 30 days to hire an attorney or decide to proceed pro se. A 30-day extension of time in which to respond to the motion for summary judgment and the motion to strike filed by the defendant’s attorney, Michael Meloy, was also granted.

The Stameys indicated to the court that they would proceed pro se and argue the case themselves, but failed to file any response. Nor did they file a request for an extension of the deadline.

That’s when Meloy filed for dismissal.

Judge Christensen’s order states that summary judgment is warranted “where the documentary evidence produced by the parties permits only one conclusion.” He notes that the party opposing a summary judgment “may not rest upon mere allegation or denials of his pleading, but must set forth specific facts showing that there is a genuine issue for trial.” … “The mere existence of a scintilla of evidence in support of plaintiff’s position is insufficient to defeat a properly supported motion for summary judgment.”

The Court then notes that the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has held that summary judgment “by default” is prohibited even if “there is a complete failure to respond to the motion. However, if there is a failure to respond, a court is permitted to consider the facts in the motion to be undisputed for purposes of the motion.”

The Court found the facts to be in favor of summary judgment against the Stameys, stating, “The Stameys’ inability to establish that the newspaper story at issue is false is fatal to their claims for libel. It is a well-established fact that ‘truth is a complete defense to a claim of defamation.’”

All other motions in the case were denied as “moot” and judgment in favor of the newspaper and its publishers was entered on March 13th.

Circle Banner ownership change

As an Army brat, Mary Heidi was always the new girl, so she had to learn fast to be outgoing and friendly, attributes that have served her well in life. Mary visited Circle in 2012 and “fell in love with the people and the community, something I had never been part of before.” Mary said, “I will try my best to make the Circle Banner a fun and informative history of McCone County and the surroundings.”
Missoula Independent staff votes to unionize

By Dillon Kato, Missoulian

The employees of the Missoula Independent voted unanimously to unionize on Friday, weeks after alerting parent company Lee Enterprises of their intent to organize.

Lee owns the Independent, the Missoulian and papers in Hamilton, Helena, Butte and Billings in Montana. It purchased the financially ailing Independent a year ago.

In mid-March, staff in the editorial, production and sales departments of the Independent filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board to begin the process of forming a union, called the Missoula News Guild.

Derek Brouwer, a reporter for the Independent and one of the union organizers, said of the initial 10 employees who signed the petition in favor of a union, eight votes were tabulated in favor on Friday.

A ninth employee had already submitted notice of intent to leave the company and was out of town for the vote.

The vote of the tenth petitioner is being disputed. Brouwer said Lee is contesting Independent Arts Editor Erika Fredrickson’s eligibility to be a member of the union, and that while she cast a ballot, it was not tabulated. The issue of her eligibility will be taken up by the NLRB.

“I’m just really proud of the staff of the Indy and the readers, advertisers and community members who voiced their support for us,” Brouwer told the Missoulian.

In a press release, the union said it is “excited to sit down with management and hopeful that we can reach a mutually beneficial collective bargaining agreement with Lee Enterprises. The unanimity of the vote is proof of how strongly the paper’s staff feels about securing a viable future for the Independent in Missoula.”

The Independent has been in publication in Missoula since 1991. When the company purchased the Independent, Mike Gulledge, Lee Enterprises vice president of publishing and publisher of the Missoulian, said both papers would remain editorially independent.

Independent publisher Matt Gibson, who had owned the publication since 1997 before selling it to Lee, was named general manager of the Indy, Missoulian and Ravalli Republic after the sale.

Specifics needed to justify Montana meeting closures

Associated Press

Montana’s government bodies and agencies must give some details about whose privacy rights they are protecting when justifying closing a meeting that would otherwise be open to the public, the state Supreme Court ruled.

Justices in a 5-0 decision Tuesday said that the Wolf Point School District Board of Trustees’ explanation for closing a four-hour meeting to the public before firing a schoolteacher in 2015 was insufficient.

Teacher Kristine Raap had waived her right to privacy to keep the meeting open, but the board closed it anyway and prohibited her from recording it. The board cited the privacy rights of unnamed individuals who were not in attendance as justification for the closure.

Justice Dirk Sandefur’s opinion said there is no evidence that an outside individual provided any information, and that a “particularized showing” is needed to comply with Montana’s open-meetings laws.

Montana’s constitution and statutes presume government meetings are open to the public, and the burden is on the agency to justify a closure due to a person’s right to privacy. That justification must be descriptive enough to provide a legal and factual basis for the closure, without disclosing private information, Sandefur wrote.

“The law requires something more than cursory reference to undescribed third-party privacy rights and mere recitation of applicable constitutional or statutory language,” Sandefur wrote in the opinion.

Raap was a new teacher four months into a one-year employment contract when then school district superintendent recommended her firing.

The board of trustees met on her case in the four-hour closed meeting attended only by her, her union representative, the superintendent, the school principal and the board’s lawyer. The board then went into executive session for 11 minutes, excluding Raap and the union representative, before terminating her contract without discussion.

Raap sued, and alleged her firing came after the board violated the state's open-meetings laws and right-to-know constitutional provisions.

The high court reversed a lower judge’s ruling against Raap and sent the case back to the judge for further proceedings.

The court also ruled that the board of trustees did not meet its burden of proof for going into executive session.
PEOPLE

and PAPERS

Aston Kinsella Montana High School Journalist of the Year

My name is Aston Kinsella. I am a senior at Sentinel High School in Missoula, MT. While I enjoy drawing, music and Netflix, my real passion is journalism.

As a sophomore, I was placed in Sentinel’s yearbook class. I knew absolutely nothing about yearbook, thought journalism was journaling, and wondered how I ended up in the 500 Building Annex of the high school that hasn’t been updated since it was built in the ’50s. Little did I know that it would become my second home, my refuge from the drama of high school, and a place that has left a mark on me and my future in permanent ink.

Within this class, I was able to learn many hands-on applications of journalistic skills, including design, writing, and photography. I’d never been in a class before where what you did was real, where people paid to read your homework, and where if someone didn’t do their work it impacted the entire class. It wasn’t a class. It was a staff, and I belonged.

Thus began my career that would lead to where I am now. At the start of second semester, I joined the newspaper staff as a reporter. I have a passion for writing, and this was the first time I was able to see my words being read, and discussed, by members of the student body on a regular basis. This class allowed me to not only expand my skills as a writer, but also learn new techniques and apply them to a real publication.

I returned to school the next fall as editor-in-chief of the newspaper, and assistant editor of the yearbook. As a first year editor, and with a staff of only six students, we took second in the Pacesetter competition for best newspaper in the state of Montana.

Currently, I have retained my position as editor-in-chief of the paper, and am co-editor-in-chief the yearbook. In addition, I have joined the broadcast class, SpartanTV, and am an associate producer and reporter. I was able to continue my passion of photography and writing, while taking on more leadership skills.

The Montana Newspaper Association congratulates Aston Kinsella on being named the High School Journalist of the Year. Aston will be receiving a $1,000 scholarship from the Montana Newspaper Foundation.

The Montana Newspaper Foundation is a 501 C organization, governed by a board of trustees, whose purpose is to raise, accumulate and disperse funds in support of scholarships, internship grants and member education. To make a financial gift to the Montana Newspaper Foundation, please contact Jim Rickman at (406) 443-2850 or jim@mtnewspapers.com.

New publisher at the Glasgow Courier

Anthony “A.J.” Etherington started a new chapter in his life earlier by becoming the newest publisher at The Glasgow Courier.

Etherington, with his wife, Jewel, and five kids, Jaden, Toni, Patrick, Ella and Maria, have made Glasgow home for nearly the past three years. Etherington loves every minute of the “small-town feel” that comes with living in the middle of nowhere.

After high school, A. J. immediately joined the Marine Corps in 2005. He became a military intelligence analyst and Arabic linguist before serving two tours of duty in Iraq and one in Afghanistan.

Following nine years of Marine Corps experience, Etherington became a full-time National Guard recruiter in Glasgow.

Etherington is excited to start this new venture, stating, “I’m proud to be a part of a community newspaper where I get to listen to—and tell—various people’s stories and viewpoints. I want to ask the tough questions, to get people thinking about what living here means. My goal with the Courier is to keep this small town paper focused on the small town and the people who live here.”
It’s been a great ride

By Jim Strauss, Great Falls Tribune president and publisher

I almost missed out on my chance to be editor of the Tribune back in ’94.
I had accepted the position when I learned the company’s health insurance wouldn’t cover preexisting conditions, including my wife’s pregnancy with our second set of twins. After racking up $25,000-plus in medical bills for our first set, which was born prematurely, it was a risk I couldn’t take.

I had previously worked in Montana for 3 ½ years and wanted to get back to those endless horizons. Fortunately, the editor who filled the void stayed less than a year, and my second acceptance of the job stuck in ’95.

As I wrap up my Tribune career next month, I’m thankful for that second chance because it’s been the opportunity of a lifetime. Coming to Great Falls from an urban Midwest city, the hard news pace was slower, but it was a welcome change not having to cover constant crime and homicides. The Montana news cycle is just as full but its pace allows reporters to more often take a step back from the daily rush to more fully develop their stories.

I will miss the dedicated staff in every corner of our building, from the reporters and editors who cover our state with passion and knowledge, to our sales staff who work with our advertisers as marketing partners, to our production and distribution crew who ensure the paper gets out on time each day. When I hear people bash journalists, I always tell them I wish they could spend a couple of days in our newsroom and get to know the reporters and experience the daily push for depth and balance in our reporting.

While the push for getting behind the news and finding fresh angles and more depth hasn’t changed, how we deliver the news has shifted seismically. In my time here we rolled out our website, launched news apps and found ways to deliver the news via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media platforms. In 2006, we acquired the printing equipment of a local company and launched River’s Edge Printing, which now prints 17 area weekly newspapers and more than 25 other magazines and publications each month.

We also connected with our communities with events, such as the Academic Leadership and All-Star awards, the Northcentral Montana Sports Awards banquet, the Beer & Gear outdoor expo and microbrew fest and, of course, the What Women Want Expo. The expo has grown into the largest women’s event in Montana, with more than 8,000 attendees last year.

I also will miss my daily chats with customers who keep us on our toes when we err and are quick to call with a compliment when we make their day with a story that hits home. As publisher & editor, I’ve had the opportunity to serve on many local and state boards. The love of Great Falls and Montana and the push for even better tomorrows was a common theme on all. Great Falls is the kind of town where an ounce of effort gives you a pound of personal reward in return, working with others to make a difference.

I do exit this career with two regrets. The first is that I jumped at the chance to move into management after just eight months as a reporter. Management could have waited a few more years. The second is that as a manager in a media industry going through transformation, I had to make decisions that directly affected loyal, talented employees’ jobs, lives and families. Layoffs hurt … deeply.

This change for me has been awhile in the making. Last summer, after 22-plus years directing the newsroom, I stepped out of the editor role and handed those reins to News Director Jo Dee Black. I teamed with Director of Sales Holly Kopeikin to run advertising, and as I exit Holly will lead that team. I was the only person in my company, Gannett, to hold the joint roles of publisher & editor, and as I exit the Tribune is good hands with Holly leading advertising and Jo Dee news.

The timing is right for me. This month marks a milestone I wanted to hit: 50 years in the publishing world. I was 9 when I took on my paper route and have had only two years out of the business since, when high school sports practices didn’t leave me time to work. I’ve had some people say delivering a route doesn’t really count, but after delivering morning and evening newspapers daily to more than 200 customers through seven Minnesota winters, it counts. Plus, I learned more about business and customers delivering that route than I did in six years getting my undergraduate journalism and economics degrees and an MBA.

This timing also allows me to make good on a promise. When the Great Falls health-care facility my wife was running was put up for sale last spring, she knew her position was in limbo. So, when a dream offer came to run a nearly new facility in Wyoming, she put her destiny in her own hands and took the job. She noted then it was nice I had won state and national leadership awards for helping women advance in the workplace, but it was time to really show that commitment and follow her career. She had, after all, followed me my whole career. I agreed, and one year later will make good on that promise in time for our 35th anniversary next month.

For now, I’ll be splitting my time between Wyoming and our place on the Clearwater River in the Seeley-Swan Valley. I turned 61 this month and, frankly, am old enough but not mature enough to retire. So, I’ll see what my next chapter is.

As I said at the top, this has been the chance of a lifetime. Thanks, Great Falls. It’s been a great ride.
PEOPLEandPAPERS

Statewide Online Advertising Program

The Montana Newspaper Association is excited to notify our members we are expanding our advertising offerings to include a members-only online network. This new program will provide your local advertising clients a more extensive, statewide online audience at a very cost-effective investment.

Just like our statewide, member-sold, display and classified programs, each member has the right to participate in the network. And we will continue to use the same exacting standards we apply to the current programs, so you can trust you’ll have superior quality ads on your website. And just like our other statewide advertising programs, the MNA will manage the administrative work.

Here’s what a member gains from the statewide online advertising program:

- Additional revenue.
- Filling an online need for your clients with the expanded audience.
- Creating additional credibility for your website.
- Supporting your MNA.

Here’s how it works:

- You select 1 run-of-site position on your website.
  - 150 x 150 square
  - 180 x 250 rectangle
  - 300 x 250 rectangle
  - 728 x 90 leaderboard
- Our partner, Missouri Press Association (MPA), will provide you the ad code to place on your website. This one-time step will allow the MPA to directly place and remove the online ad. You do nothing else.
- The MPA offers complete design service and formatting of the online ads you sell.
- The MPA will provide you and your client analytics at the end of ad campaign.

The Montana Newspaper Association is fortunate to have such outstanding members. We trust we can count on you as we launch the new online network, which will only strengthen our association and better serve you.

Take a moment and join the Statewide Online Advertising Program by downloading the signup form at: MNA Statewide Online Advertising Program Participation Form

Our thanks to the following members who have already signed up for the program:

- Havre Daily News
- The Herald-News, Wolf Point
- The Montanian, Libby
- The Searchlight, Culbertson
- Livingston Enterprise
- Roundup, Sidney
- Daily Inter Lake, Kalispell
- Big Horn County News, Hardin
- Hungry Horse News, Columbia Falls
- Cut Bank Pioneer Press
- Whitefish Pilot
- Shelby Promoter
- Lake County Leader, Polson
- Valierian
- Clark Fork Valley Press, Plains
- Glacier Reporter, Browning
- Mineral Independent, Plains
- Laurel Outlook
- Western News, Libby
- Lewistown News-Argus
- Belgrade News
- Seeley Swan Pathfinder
- Choteau Acantha
- MSU Exponent

Please call the MNA office at 443-2850 if you have any questions.
Montana Newspaper Foundation needs your help

Fellow MNA members and friends,

I am writing to ask you to please support the Montana Newspaper Foundation’s fundraising activities at the annual convention this June in Billings. There are a couple of different ways you can do this. Firstly, you can donate an item to the live or silent auction. Items that reflect the history and character of your community or your newspaper are particularly valuable. Secondly, you can attend the association functions that support the Foundation and bid generously on auction items. If you are unable personally to attend, I would greatly encourage you to delegate this task to one of your staff members and send them with the authority to bid and take part in the fundraising effort.

The Foundation supports the cause of journalism and the newspaper industry in Montana every year in many ways. The Foundation awards five $1,500 grants to member newspapers to hire summer interns, who provide much-needed vacation relief and bring a new, cutting-edge perspective on the industry to those papers. The Foundation also awards journalism scholarships totaling $6,000 to students at the University of Montana School of Journalism, helping these bright, young people master the skills they need to work as professional journalists in today’s fast-changing industry. And the Foundation is proud to recognize the Montana High School Journalist of the Year with a $1,000 scholarship. The Foundation through the years has also helped fund market and demographic studies on industry benchmarks that newspaper owners have used to benefit their businesses. These are just a few examples of how the Foundation works to help Montana newspapers survive and thrive in today’s challenging business climate.

Please consider supporting the Foundation at the convention with an auction item, a direct cash donation, or by sending a bidder (or two) to the events. Contact Stacy Wirtz, MNA Business Development Director at (406) 443-2850 or stacy@mtnewspapers.com. Stacy will be happy to help with suggested auction items.

For the complete schedule of activities and registration form for the 133rd MNA annual convention, please click on: http://www.mtnewspapers.com/2018-mna-convention/ or see Pages 10 and 11 of this newsletter.

Thank you,

Melody Martinsen, board president
Montana Newspaper Foundation
2018 Convention Agenda

133rd Annual Convention
Covering Our Communities... Past and Present

Thursday, June 14
3:00 pm MNA & MNAS joint Board of Directors' Quarterly Meeting

Friday, June 15
8:00 am Montana Newspaper Foundation Annual Meeting
10:00 am Montana Newspaper Foundation Event - Golf Scramble
10:00 am Montana Newspaper Foundation Event - ZooMontana
2:00 pm Montana Newspaper Advertising Service Annual Meeting
2:30 pm Montana Newspaper Association Annual Meeting
4:00 pm Montana Newspaper Foundation Event - Explore Downtown Billings, Transportation to the Yellowstone Art Museum, Self-Guided Brewery Tour and Foundation Fundraising Poker Run
5:30 pm Montana Newspaper Foundation Event - Yellowstone Art Museum Foundation Fundraising Activities
7:00 pm Montana Newspaper Foundation Dinner - Yellowstone Art Museum
9:00 pm Hospitality and Social Networking

Saturday, June 16
9:00 am Educational Session by Cindy Sease, advertising director, Bozeman Daily Chronicle, Roundtable: How Do We Remain Relevant to Our Advertising Customers
10:00 am Educational Session by Allison Perk, director of web development, eType Services, Ten Simple Rules to Managing Your Website
10:00 am Educational Session by Dennis Swibold, professor, U of M School of Journalism, How to Get on a Horse: A humorous look back at the career of Dorothy Johnson, the Western writer and former air raid warden, journalism professor and secretary of the Montana Press Association
11:30 am MNA Past Presidents' and Awards Luncheon
2018 MNA Distinguished Service Award Presentation
2018 MNA Master Editor/Publisher Award Presentation
2018 Montana Newspaper Hall of Fame Induction
1:45 pm Educational Session by Leah Todd, Solutions Journalism Network
Solutions Journalism 101 Workshop
3:15 pm Educational Session by Leah Todd, Solutions Journalism Network; Melody Martinsen, editor and owner, Choteau Acantha; Nick Ehli, editor, Bozeman Daily Chronicle; Kathy Best, editor, Missoulian, The Montana Gap: Collaborative reporting on responses to Montana's economic problems
5:00 pm MNA President's Reception
6:30 pm 2018 Better Newspaper Contest Awards Banquet, Foundation Fundraising Activities
7:30 pm 2018 Better Newspaper Contest Awards Presentation, Emcee: Dennis Swibold, professor, U of M School of Journalism
9:00 pm Welcome Incoming 2018-2019 MNA President Scott Squillace, Yellowstone Newspapers
9:15 pm Announce Foundation Fundraising Activity Winners
10:00 pm Hospitality and Social Networking
# 2018 Convention AGENDA

## 133rd Annual Convention

*Big Horn Resort, Billings MT, June 15 & 16*

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<th>Events</th>
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<td>General Convention Registration</td>
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<td>Zoo Montana Foundation Fundraising Event</td>
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<td>Golf Scramble Foundation Fundraising Event</td>
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<td>Yellowstone Art Museum Foundation Fundraising Event</td>
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**Please complete for each attendee - print full name and mark box for events attending. Thank you!**

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**Your Organization Name:**

**Please Send Convention Registration To:**

Ryan Stavnes, member services  
Email: member@mtnewspapers.com  
or  
Montana Newspaper Association  
825 Great Northern Blvd, Ste 202  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 443-2850  
Registration Deadline: June 1, 2018

**Convention Lodging:**

*Big Horn Resort*  
1801 Majestic Lane  
Billings, MT 59102  
(406) 839-9300  
Group Rate: $119 + tax  
Group Rate Discount Deadline: May 18, 2018

**Our Mission:**

To advance and sustain the news publishing industry in Montana
Every day at the News Media Alliance headquarters, a stack of newspapers arrives for myself and the staff. But with the Department of Commerce and the International Trade Commission currently considering tariffs on Canadian newsprint, those days of screen-free reading could be coming to an end.

The fact that newsprint is being threatened is the work of one newsprint mill in the Pacific Northwest, NORPAC. In August 2017, NORPAC petitioned the United States Department of Commerce to begin applying tariffs to newsprint imported from Canada, claiming the imported paper was harming the U.S. newsprint industry. But NORPAC is not acting in the best interests of newsprint consumers or the U.S. paper industry at large — they are acting in their own interest and no one else’s.

The buying and selling of newsprint has always been regional without regard for the border. Consumers of newsprint — from newspaper and book publishers to telephone directory manufacturers — tend to buy newsprint in their region, close to their printing operations. The printers who typically utilize Canadian newsprint are those in the northeast and Midwest, where there are currently no U.S. mills operating. But those regions are not newsprint deserts because of unfair trade by Canadian paper mills. Rather, newsprint mills shut down or converted to producing other, more profitable paper products when the demand for newsprint fell, something that has been happening steadily for decades. Since 2000, the demand for newsprint in North America has dropped by 75 percent.

But affordable Canadian paper has helped keep the printed news alive and flourishing well into the 21st century. With new tariffs, many smaller newspapers will feel their belts tightening. The combination of preliminary countervailing and antidumping duties increases the cost of imported newsprint by as much as 32 percent, and a number of newspapers have already experienced price increases and a disruption in supply. If the International Trade Commission and the Department of Commerce make these tariffs permanent in the coming months, it could lead some small local publishers to cut their print product entirely — or even shut their doors.

Some, like NORPAC, may argue that by imposing duties on Canadian imports we’re saving American jobs and boosting our own economy, but while that may sometimes be true for other industries, the opposite is true of newsprint.

What we’re seeing with the newsprint tariffs is not a government acting to try to better the economy for its citizens. Instead, it is “political arbitrage” by one private investment group — where they are effectively looking to use the U.S. government to tax local and community newspapers across the United States in order to bolster their own bottom line.

When considering whether to take NORPAC’s claims seriously, the Department of Commerce excluded input from U.S. newsprint mills owned by Canadian companies — specifically Resolute Forest Products and White Birch. Excluding manufacturers who, during the period of investigation, had three functioning newsprint mills in the U.S. because they have sister mills in Canada shows an unwillingness to understand the borderless newsprint industry and the restructuring that has taken place in recent decades.

If the tariffs on Canadian newsprint are allowed to stand, we’re not only risking a centuries-old relationship with our neighbors to the north, but we’re putting our own U.S. news industry in jeopardy. While the big national and regional papers may have less trouble finding the funds to keep their print editions coming, we could see small publishers lose footing, and those tiny local papers are some of the most vital members of our news community. Under the right conditions, those papers can find a way to maintain their footing, but if the newsprint industry can’t support them, those communities will become news deserts, and that’s a future none of us want. We may not be able to save the entire industry by keeping tariffs off our paper, but we can keep it thriving while we re-position ourselves for the years to come. Having affordable newsprint will help us do that.

The Miles City Star, a five-day afternoon newspaper in southeastern Montana, has openings for a reporter and a sports editor. The reporter will cover local government, business and general assignments. The sports editor will cover high school, junior college and community sports, and design the daily sports page. Both positions will be responsible for taking photographs, updating the website and assisting with special publications. Pay DOE. Send a resume, and links or PDFs of published clips, to jonescasey886@gmail.com.
DIGITAL ADVERTISING SALES TRAINING

Friday, May 18, in Great Falls

Improve your online advertising sales skills by joining Advertising Directors and Digital Advertising Experts Erica Yakawich of the Independent Record, Helena, and Anton Kaufer of the Daily Inter Lake, Kalispell, for this very special advertising sales training opportunity.

Our presenters will cover the following topics:
1) Online advertising - what do the trends tell us?
2) Website design - what makes for a good user experience?
3) Selling your audience - print and online
4) Newspaper audience vs. the competition
5) Getting started
6) Digital display - local and network
7) Search engine marketing and search engine optimization
8) Video in online ads
9) Social media sponsored content
10) How does it all fit together?
11) What needs to be done after the sale - reporting and follow up

MNA Member Educational Opportunity

May 18
Great Falls
10:00 am – 2:30 pm
Includes Lunch

$40 Registration Fee invoiced by the MNA

Register by May 11
email Jim Rickman at jim@mtnewspapers.com

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