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WYOMING PRESS ASSOCIATION



WPA Bulletin

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Upcoming Events

SEPT. 23

WPA Fall Meeting
Laramie

Feb. 3-5, 2022

WPA
Annual Convention
Casper

TOWNS PASS ORDINANCES THAT EXEMPTS THEM FROM PUBLIC NOTICE STATUTES

The towns of Mills and Bar Nunn have passed ordinances exempting themselves from state statutes regarding a municipal corporation’s requirements to provide notice of government actions. These public notice statutes include (see detailed descriptions page 11):

W.S. 15-7-303 - Vacation from public use; hearing; notice; contents; objections,

15-7-106 - Bonds; notice; receiving bids; exception; limitation; private sale,

15-7-107 - Bonds; tax; interest; sinking fund; redemption,

15-1-110 - Minutes of meetings and titles of ordinances passed to be published; exception; contents; publication of names, salaries and wages of specified officials and employees, and

15-6-202 - Initiative resolution; contents; acceptable bids; notice to be published and mailed.

The ordinances state the towns are exempt from the public notice statutes pursuant to the Home Rule Amendment to the Wyoming Constitution.

The Home Rule states: “Each city or town may elect that the whole or any part of any statute, other than statutes uniformly applicable to all cities and towns and statutes prescribing limits of indebtedness, may not apply to such city or town.”



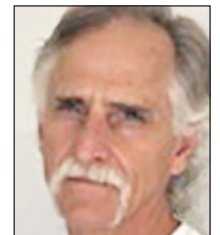
Darcie Hoffland
WPA
Executive Director

The Wyoming Press Association (WPA) argues that the towns of Mills and Bar Nunn illegally exempted themselves from these public notice statutes because the Home Rule Amendment has an exception - the municipality may not exempt itself from “statutes uniformly applicable to all cities and towns,” and each of the notice statutes uniformly applies to “any city or town.” Even the Wyoming Association of Municipalities’ guide, “Home Rule in Wyoming,” clearly states, “The principal general restriction [on home rule ordinances] is that any law uniformly applicable to all cities and towns cannot be changed or ignored under home rule.”

The WPA sent a letter July 1 to each mayor and councilor from both towns requesting they rescind the ordinance. Darcie Hoffland, executive director for the WPA said, “We received a four-page response from their attorney that was for the most part a policy argument that newspapers do not give sufficient notice. The letter also stated they completely disagree that the ordinances were adopted illegally.” Hoffland went on to comment that “the attorney for the towns seems to indicate the towns are actually complying with the statute by giving notice on the towns’ websites and posting them in three public places, and that there is no over-reaching notice statute requirement anyway.” Additionally, the attorney, Patrick Holscher, stated the laws in question only provide that municipalities provide notice - that the publication requirements are only listed methods and they can be exempted through the liberal interpretation allowed by the Home Rule Amendment.

Bruce Moats, attorney for the WPA, responded to Holscher: “W.S. 15-1-101(a)(i) – Cities and Towns General Provisions, sets forth the following definition: ‘Any city or town’ means any incorporated municipality. A statute cannot get anymore uniformly applicable than that.”

In a June 25 story, the Casper Star-Tribune reported that the “Mills’ ordinance says it now publishes notices on its website, at its City Hall, the Mills Library and post office. Bar Nunn only names two physical locations — its Town Hall and Fire Department — despite language in the ordinance that specifies notices will be available in three places besides the town’s website. On Friday, meeting minutes from the most recent regular and special council sessions, along with bills and claims, were posted in Mills at City Hall and in the post office lobby. The library was temporarily closed. In Bar



Bruce T. Moats
WPA Attorney

See TOWNS PASS ORDINANCES page 11

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PUBLIC NOTICE SHOULD NEVER BE PUBLISHED EXCLUSIVELY ON THE INTERNET

There's no question that public notice ads should be displayed on the internet. That's why 15 states have passed laws requiring newspapers that publish notices in their print edition to also run them on their website and/or on their state press association's statewide public notice site.

After all, notices are designed to be read and lots of people read stuff on the internet.

However, without intending to do so — he had a broader point in mind — internet scholar and Harvard Law School professor Jonathan Zittrain (pictured) published an article last week in *The Atlantic* that explains why the internet should never be the exclusive domain of public notice. "The Internet is Rotting" makes it clear that it would be a mistake to rely only on the ephemeral web as the sole publication point for statutory notice even if there were no newspapers left to publish them in.

As Zittrain's essay notes, there are advantages and disadvantages to the way the internet has developed. The disadvantages are especially acute in the case of official government records.

The primary threat in the case of public notice is the potential elimination of the historical record they represent.

The relative inviolability of newspapers has long been an essential element of their role as heralds of public notice. Their archival capacity helps to ensure published notices will be available for future use by the judicial system, researchers and historians.

By contrast, the internet is intrinsically capable of preserving information until the end of time but the network's design has produced the near-opposite result. "Digital data lasts forever, or five years, whichever comes first," RAND Corporation computer scientist Jeff Rothenberg famously wrote.

Zittrain cites as examples two studies in

which he participated. In the first study, conducted in 2014, researchers focused on "documents meant to endure indefinitely." They found that nearly half the links embedded in U.S. Supreme Court judicial opinions since



1996, and 75 percent of those in the Harvard Law Review, were broken. The documents behind those links had either changed since their original publication or disappeared entirely.

A more recent study from earlier this year focused on the New York Times, another well-resourced organization highly motivated to keep its website up-to-date. Zittrain and his colleagues found that 25 percent of the approximately two million deep links they analyzed on nytimes.com webpages published between 1996 and 2019, and 72 percent of those from articles posted in 1998 alone, were dead. Moreover, the information at thirteen percent of the site's still-reachable links had changed, including the information at 25 percent of the intact links from 2009.

If the New York Times, the U.S. Supreme Court and Harvard Law School can't manage to keep the data on their websites fresh, how do you think state and local governments will handle the task?

Bottom line: Public notices posted exclusively on government websites — or on any other kinds of website — will almost certainly disappear within a few years after they are published, lost forever to history.

The Public Notice Resource Center is a non-profit organization that provides research and education about effective public notice. To subscribe to PNRC's monthly email newsletter, visit pnrc.net.



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WHO'S MISSING FROM YOUR TOP ADVERTISER LIST?



By Jim Wood, Wyoming Newspapers, Inc.

As publishers, managers and ad directors we go out of our way to woo our big advertisers and develop strong working relationships with them. We know that having a tight relationship with them will help us keep and grow them as revenue generators for our businesses.

So, are we putting the same effort into customer service for the governmental entities that spend thousands of dollars each year with us publishing legal notices in our newspapers?

According to some in the Wyoming State Legislature the answer to that question is a resounding NO.

During the 2021 legislative session we were fortunate to beat back Senate File 17, which would have eliminated some requirements for cities, counties and school districts to publish legal notices in our newspapers. We may not be as lucky next time a similar bill gets introduced. And that will happen again -- soon.

A theme often repeated by state senators as we lobbied them during the last session was what they were hearing from some of their city and county clerks and other officials. They were hearing that some newspapers in Wyoming are hard to deal with. It is difficult to place these legal notices in newspapers in some communities in our state, they say. These officials are telling their state legislators that they don't get timely responses when they try to place these legal notices. Sometimes the legals get left out of the newspaper, or are run on the wrong dates. When this happens, they say, there is no easy recourse for them, and very little remorse on the part of the newspaper.

Now we know politicians are prone to hyperbole, and are exaggerating the problem. But we also know we do have a problem that needs to be addressed, so we don't have to deal with this objection the next time we are trying to kill a public notice bill.

Please take the time, on an ongoing basis, to make sure your newspaper is making it as simple and easy as possible for governmental agencies to place their legal notices in your newspapers. Treat these people as you do your other top advertisers. Take the time with them, and with your staff members, to make sure you have a solid process in place that keeps everyone happy.

Being proactive will mean your state legislators will not hear negative things about your legal notice procedures from county and city clerks and other officials. That will make it a little easier for all of us next time we are faced with an effort to eliminate legal notice publication in newspapers.

Michael Bradly Enzi Feb. 1, 1944-July 26, 2021

Gillette Mayor: 1975-82
Wyoming House of Rep. 1987-91
Wyoming Senate: 1991-97
US Senate: 1997-2021



Photo courtesy Gillette News-Record

"I worked with Sen. Enzi when I was a reporter and when I was director of the Wyoming Press Association and in both situations, he was a joy to work with. Always ready to answer questions, always respectful of your job, always thoughtful and articulate. I considered him a true statesman. It's not enough to say he will be missed — I have to go so far to say that I will miss him."

-- Jim Angell

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ASSOCIATES GROUP SEMINARS AND NETWORKING IMPORTANT AT CONVENTION



By Milton Ontiveroz
UW Institutional Communications
WPA Associates Chair

It's been pretty dang hot these last few weeks in Wyoming. So, how about a reprieve in the summer weather and talk about winter -- as in the Wyoming Press Association's Winter Convention, where our Associates group has a presence. That ought to give you somewhat of a mental break from how to stay cool during these dog days of summer.

The WPA Associates subcommittee has been discussing the WPA Winter Convention and is putting together meaningful daylong workshops for the state's public relations professionals during the newspaper association's annual convention. The WPA's largest gathering is scheduled early February instead of the traditional January date. The convention returns to Casper Feb. 3-5 at the Ramkota Hotel. Associates members will hold their workshops Friday, Feb. 4.

Some of the workshop topics discussed by the subcommittee focus on how the Associates members can get their message to the public using the state's media outlets, especially hometown newspapers where many of the small-town residents rely on newspapers as their only source of local news.

That leads to how to get our media releases published. We are going back to the basics in offering a workshop on how to write a good release that can be published. We can all use the expertise of others on what works and what doesn't.

At our recent subcommittee meeting, we also discussed other topics such as offering a photography/video workshop, and a dis-

cussion with publishers and editors, which is a good way to keep those lines of communications open. In addition, we will still have our own Associates contest where the work we have produced the past year will be judged against other Associates members. We will provide more information on the contest once the final workshop programs are finalized.

In my more than 20 years of being a WPA Associates member -- after starting my career as somewhat of a decent reporter/photographer for a handful of Wyoming newspapers -- I have come to realize how important it is for Associates members to attend the annual WPA Winter Convention.

It's an opportunity to mingle and talk with the state's newspaper folks to forge those contacts in the state. In our UW Institutional Communications office, we have learned the value of getting to know newspaper folks in the state -- we know who to call if we want to give reporters a heads up if we have a UW event happening in their backyard, or if we have a release that is perhaps important to their community. In turn, we have editors and reporters who trust us to find a UW professional to interview for their local stories.

Those connections we have made over the years have given us a good working relationship. I know other Associates professionals who can attest on how the WPA convention helps them with getting their own individual messages across to the public. We all have our own stories to share, and I hope other WPA Associates members take the plunge and learn how the annual winter convention can benefit their organizations.

In the meantime, stay cool the next several weeks. To take a line from one of my favorite series: "Winter is coming."

But, in a good way.

-MDO-



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From left: Tiffany Erickson and Dave Eskelsen



RESEARCH: NEWSPAPER READERSHIP MULTI-GENERATIONAL

We keep hearing that “only old people read newspapers.” That’s partly correct. Readers 65 and older are loyalists. But junk the “only.”

Coda’s research shows the two other age categories collectively covering 18 to 64 are well represented.

Here are the numbers and related commentary:

*Three out of 10 newspapers readers — 30 percent — are in the 18-to- 34 age group. It’s no surprise that this group uses smartphones to access local news from all sources, including newspapers. Credit newspapers for strategically pushing into digital as a way to reach new audiences. Newspapers now are improving digital initiatives focused on attracting new audiences with new products — responsive websites that adjust to various screens, social media campaigns, easy-to-use apps, emailed newsletters, video, multimedia E-editions, digital niche offerings and more.

*A whopping 5 out of 10 — 50 percent — are 35 to 64. This group is primarily composed of Generation X (born approximately between 1965 to 1980).

According to the US Department of Labor, Gen Xers account for 27% of all US

household spending and outspend all generations on housing, clothing, dining out and entertainment.

They access news and information across a multitude of media platforms and comprise the largest segment of newspaper readership.

*The remaining two out of 10 — 20 percent — are 65 or older. With this group, 75 percent believe that newspaper advertising is important.

According to Nielsen, an audience data and measurement firm, Boomers control 70 percent of all disposable income in the United States, making them a dominant financial force in the marketplace.

They always have been strong print newspaper readers, but they are also accessing content digitally. To reach the people who have the time and income to spend, astute advertisers are leveraging both print and digital newspapers.

OVERALL CONCLUSION:

Newspaper readership is multi-generational.

The Relevance Project has released a new, two-installment promotional campaign that once again amplifies the power of newspaper advertising and the fact that

newspaper readership remains multigenerational.

Six new promotions tout newspaper readers as an advertiser’s best prospects, based on Coda Ventures’ market studies completed for seven members of NAM (Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota and Tennessee).

The upshot:

Publishers advancing digital strategies while maintaining a strong print product are being rewarded with audiences that crush the perception that only “old people” read newspapers.

The campaign’s eye-opening facts about Millennials and Gen Xers are meant to help our advertising staffs turn heads and close deals.

To access the resources and download these ads go to: <https://relevanceproject.net.wordpress.com/revenue-resource-2020/>

The Relevance Project is an energetic strategic partnership that unites state and provincial press associations to speed the resurgence of community newspapers in North America. It’s proud — regularly boastful — of newspapers and what they represent.

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HOW TO SAVE LOCAL NEWS

(WITHOUT GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE)



By **Steven Waldman**

Local news is crumbling. During the past two decades, the number of newspaper reporters has dropped by 36,000 or 60%. Some 1,800 communities have lost newspapers. News deserts and “ghost newspapers” -- newsrooms so desolate that they don’t truly cover the town -- abound across the country, especially in rural areas and communi-

ties of color.

This is a serious threat to our communities. The local news vacuums are being filled by social media, partisan hyperbole, and harmful disinformation. Without good, accurate information, families cannot make good decisions for themselves -- and communities cannot solve their own problems.

Rebuilding local news will require a massive effort that must include a significant increase in philanthropic support, loads of innovation in the news business — and, yes, some (smart) help from the government.

Government help? You might wonder: How on Earth can newsrooms take money from the government? Isn’t that like the muckrakers taking money from the muckmakers?

Fortunately, there is a shrewd way to help save local news without excessively involving the government. It’s called the Local Journalism Sustainability Act, which was just reintroduced by Reps. Dan

Newhouse (R-WA) and Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ). This clever, bipartisan bill would provide more help for local news than any time in about a century, yet it’s done in a very First-Amendment-friendly way.

The bill is focused on local news (not national) and helps community newsrooms by amplifying the choices of consumers and small businesses, rather than having the government pick winners and losers. Is strictly nonpartisan and guards against government favoritism or manipulation of media. It helps small media as well as larger players, nonprofits as well as commercial models, digital and print, communities of color and rural areas.

The key provisions are:

- Tax credit of up to \$250 for consumers to buy newspaper subscriptions or make donations to nonprofit local news organizations.
- A refundable payroll tax credit of up to \$25,000 for local news organizations for journalists
- A tax credit of up to \$5,000 for small businesses to use to advertise with local news publishers.

There are several things to like about this. Because it doesn’t involve a government agency picking journalism projects, it’s akin to the Postal Subsidy implemented by the Founding Fathers. By

giving lower postal rates, the policy helped create the newspaper industry but without having either Alexander Hamilton or Thomas Jefferson select their favored publications.

Second, this approach could really goose the growth of digital subscriptions, which most local news leaders believe are the only way that local news can become sustainable in the long run. We don’t want legislation that just ladles water into sinking ships. We want to create incentives for a better, more inclusive, more durable model.

The payroll tax credit goes right at a core problem -- that the current business models don’t support labor-intensive types of journalism. This tax credit could change the dynamics within newsrooms by making the hiring or retaining of journalists relatively more appealing. Because it’s a payroll tax break, rather than an income tax break, it is also available for nonprofit organizations.

The refundable tax credit for small businesses to advertise obviously has two beneficiaries, the newsroom and the small business which basically gets free marketing money. They could sure use that as they try to get back on their feet post-COVID-19.

One item I might change in this proposal is that the tax credit

is not refundable. That means while many newsrooms will indirectly benefit, the only taxpayers who would benefit would be those who pay federal taxes and itemize. If we believe that we should be helping Americans be better informed, that benefit should be offered to all residents, regardless of

income.

Because this approach tries to help local news -- but uses a market-oriented approach -- it has gained truly bipartisan support. (The “Newhouse” of Kirkpatrick-Newhouse is a Republican from Washington state.)

I hope you’ll urge your own Representative and Senator to support the Local Journalism Sustainability Act.

This bill is not just a stopgap but rather would help create a stronger, more inclusive local news system in the future.

Steven Waldman is coordinator of the Rebuild Local News Coalition and also co-founder and president of Report for America, a national service program that places journalists into local newsrooms to report on under-covered topics and communities.

A note from the WPA

You can find more information on the bill by visiting America’s Newspapers resource page, which tracks all things related to the LJSA:

www.newspapers.org/ljsa.

Preparing for Problems

Limiting issues that pose threats to our deadlines



by Kevin Slimp
kevin@kevinslimp.com

Assuming COVID-19 doesn't rear its ugly head over the next few weeks in such a way that groups curtail travel and in-person meetings, I will be making my first trip to speak at a newspaper convention since March 2020. Interestingly, I will be returning to the place where I last appeared at a live conference just days before last year's lockdown began. Frankly, I'm excited.

The big question on my mind is, "What should I speak about in Des Moines?" While the pandemic effectively shut down speaking opportunities for a few months, by late fall 2020, groups were assembling online, virtual conferences. Negating the necessity to travel, I found myself speaking at sometimes four or five newspaper conventions in a week. Sometimes, I would speak at two on the same day. Having appeared virtually to so many groups, there's a danger that folks have heard my most popular topics at one of these virtual meetings.

Again, I ask myself, "What should I speak about in Des Moines." Thankfully, coming up with new topics is a skill I perfected long ago. After considerable thought, I suggested a list of topics to cover during my two days in Des Moines. My favorite is, "Help! I Don't Know What to Do About this Problem!"

I'm not sure if it's a series of coincidences or

– 30 –

In Memory of Max Heath

Most readers have heard by now of the passing of Max Heath. Max and I became quick friends when I entered the speaking world, and very few folks in the newspaper and magazine worlds are unfamiliar with his work. I got to know the humorous side of Max, whose dry wit often left me in stitches.

My favorite Max Heath quote happened five or six years ago, as we stood in the vendors' area of a convention in Denver while a famous speaker was in the next room giving a keynote. I asked Max if he was going in to hear the speaker. His response: "Kevin, I've heard the wind blow before." I cracked up because Max was so right.

Every time you mail your publication at a discounted rate, be sure to thank Max Heath.

if newspapers are just a lot busier than they've been for a while. Whatever the reason, I've fielded considerably more calls about deadline-defying problems at papers over the past few weeks. I'm not talking about your run-of-the-mill issues. It seems that almost daily, a publisher has called with an issue that was going to force their paper to miss deadline. Some have even worried about – heaven forbid – running a day late.

So, I will be speaking – at least for an hour – about fixing problems, which brings me to my bit of advice for this column. While most recent calls about problems have forced me to scratch my head before coming up with a solution, we can limit issues that pose threats to our deadlines. Here are a few:

- Take advantage of training opportunities: Whether in-person

or online, be aware of seminars, classes, and webinars offered by associations and other groups. Even the smallest papers will benefit from regular training. Before the pandemic, dozens of small community papers throughout the U.S. and Canada would invite me to work with their staff every two or three years. During the pandemic, this number increased as folks realized it was easier and less expensive to get training designed specifically for their needs.

- Keep hardware and software up to date: With the advent of Adobe's Creative Cloud software, it has become more common for newspapers and other designers to have the latest version of production software. In addition, we must make certain other software

applications not related to production haven't become outdated. I've noticed newspapers have gotten better at keeping hardware up to date. I can remember a time not too long ago when it was common to visit newspapers using computers that had been in use ten years or more. It's obvious we've learned that "time is money." Not only will updated software and hardware speed production, but I'll be receiving fewer frantic calls from papers in fear of missing deadlines.

- Stay on top of news related to technology: Who knows what new program or gadget will improve our ability to get our papers out? Hold regular conversations at staff meetings about technology. What needs updating? What isn't working? What have you heard about that could help our paper?

I received an email today from a former student who has attended dozens of my classes over the years. She wanted me to know that something she learned in my class a few years ago kept her paper from a "near-death experience" this week. Information is a powerful thing. Be aware of what is working well – and what isn't working well – at your operation and take steps now that might just save your paper in the future.

Kevin's webinar schedule is at:
newspaperacademy.com

REWARDS OF SELLING THE DAILY NEWS WERE SUBSTANTIAL



By John Davis, Northern Wyoming News

In the late 1950s, I was a salesman for the Northern Wyoming Daily News. The Circulation Manager back then was a man named "Ralph," and Ralph would organize trips out of Worland to adjacent towns. The purpose of the trips was to take boys on selling expeditions, wherein they would work

residential neighborhoods, trying to persuade the residents to subscribe to the Daily News.

The rewards to the salesboys were substantial. One award we received was a free bowling game from the local bowling alley for every subscription sold. I was a pretty good salesman (as I recall, I was the one who usually sold the most subscriptions), and so received many free lines of bowling. Enough, in fact, that I became a fairly skilled bowler in Worland's junior league.

I remember another reward, a contest wherein the boy who sold the most subscriptions won a free helicopter ride from the Greybull airport. There was a flying service at this airport; Hawkins and Powers, I believe, and they had a helicopter with a big glass bubble in the front that provided a first-rate view. I won that contest and still remember the sensation of suddenly rising straight up and finding myself sitting in an armchair with the whole town of Greybull seemingly sitting in my lap, but a thousand feet below. [From that vantage point, you can clearly see what a long town Greybull is, only four or five blocks wide at most (on an east-west axis), and stretching about a mile north and south.]

We went to almost all the towns in the Big Horn Basin and at

least one outside the Basin, and I certainly had my favorites. I recall trips to Shoshoni, Thermopolis, Meeteetse, Lovell, Powell and Cody. For some reason, I don't believe we ever worked in Basin and Greybull.

I remember Meeteetse especially. The town was full of very nice, polite people who seemed to have no sales resistance whatever, and I sold a lot of subscriptions in Meeteetse. I sold many subscriptions in a number of other towns, too, but none so successfully as Meeteetse.

I remember going to the two biggest towns in our area, Cody and Powell (not counting Worland, which back then may have been the biggest town in the Basin). I quickly determined that you wanted to avoid the well-to-do sections of these towns. They were filled with people with settled feelings about the newspapers to which they wanted to subscribe (most were already taking the Billings Gazette; in general, our biggest competitor throughout the Basin). So, when our little sales caravan traveled to Cody or Powell, I always asked to be taken to out of the way areas with lots of mobile homes. The owners of these homes were frequently new residents, men working in adjacent oil fields, and they usually had not settled on a newspaper to be delivered to their homes.

Another thing I figured out fairly quickly is that when someone answered the door and I started rattling off all the features of the Daily News, those features were not what I was really selling. What I was really selling was myself. If people liked me they were much more apt to buy a subscription from me.

The sales trips were great learning experiences in my young life, and the lessons I learned from them applied to all kinds of activities during the following 65 years or so.

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DON'T IGNORE COVERING INTENSE TOPIC OF AGRICULTURE



“extremely important.”

Depending on where you live and work as a journalist, there are two basic levels of importance when it comes to coverage of the agriculture industry: “very important” or

How and where food is grown or raised, how it is processed and transported, what it costs to buy and how the industry affects the economy and the environment are important to readers, advertisers, agricultural producers and policymakers.

And yet, mostly due to cutbacks, agricultural coverage has been reduced or even eliminated by many traditional media outlets.

Specialty agricultural publications still do yeoman’s work in covering the industry, but their reach beyond the industry core is limited and the news is often presented from the perspective of an industry insider.

Every journalist has the opportunity, and some might say the imperative, to cover agriculture and the vast range of news topics associated with it. Here are some

tips to start or expand your coverage of agriculture.

— **Start small, then go in-depth.** Take on a weather story or farmer profile to break in, then go deeper as your skills and confidence build. Do not be intimidated; most farmers want to share stories about their lives and work.

— **Read widely to get story ideas.** This is true on all beats, but keeping your eyes and mind open to ideas is especially important about a complex industry such as agriculture. Subscribe or go online to scan speciality publications focused on agriculture, then go deeper into topics that may be old hat to industry reporters. Read national stories about the industry and localize them. Talk to government officials who oversee the industry and read reports they or industry groups produce about concerns or issues facing the industry. Visit websites of industry or lobbying organizations.

— **Sign up for online bulletins** sent regularly by government regulators, industry groups, the National Weather Service, university extension offices or consumer groups. Then read the bulletins and mine for ideas.

— **Drive around the countryside with the radio off.** Look more closely at farms, ranches and the people who run them. What is new or unusual or special? Seek out industry trends, historical patterns or colorful feature stories worthy of reporting efforts.

— **Consider how agriculture affects your own life.** Wear your story-idea hat while grocery shopping, while visiting the farmers’ market or while considering the weather and its recent or long-range patterns.

— **Once an idea emerges, interview government officials or industry groups** for the big-picture outlook, and then ask for names and phone numbers of producers who might be willing to be interviewed by phone or in person. Be aware that some producers may be de facto industry spokespeople, so try also to find local producers on your own. Scouring social media platforms or speciality publication

websites can help you find fresh producers to interview.

— **Take a two-pronged approach to reporting.** First, speak to a variety of sources (especially front-line producers) on the phone. Then, set up a site visit or farm tour to meet producers where they work and live to create opportunities for a deeper understanding of issues, to get great photos, audio or video, and to create opportunities for colorful, detailed writing.

— **Think deeply, ask many questions and never assume.** Modern agriculture is complicated and high-tech. Be patient and diligent in trying to understand the terminology or concepts involved. Confirm your understanding of a topic with sources so you can present information or processes clearly and accurately to readers.

— **Ask tough questions, play devil’s advocate at times and get the other side.** Not every agricultural story needs a quote from PETA, but it is important to seek out reasonable sources who question agricultural procedures or ecological impacts. Often, those sources are not anti-agriculture, but mostly want the industry to operate more efficiently and in concert with the earth.

— **Prepare well for farm visits.** Get clear directions, map your route and show up on time; do not arrive in your Sunday best; be ready for sun, rain or snow; have water or soda; bring a rag or napkins for messes; take written notes while also tape-recording interviews; ask permission before getting close to crops, equipment or livestock; be wary and respectful of animals; take candid photos of farmers in action but get a staged portrait just in case; never be in a hurry.

— **Enjoy the writing process.** As an agricultural reporter, you have the rare opportunity to bring readers into a world they may never see. Embrace that gift by writing clearly and accurately but with authority, flair and color.

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TOWNS PASS ORDINANCES CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Nunn, meeting minutes and a recent proclamation were available to view at the Town Hall. The volunteer fire department was not publicly accessible.”

The latest data from the Pew Research Center found that only 13 percent of adult internet users visit a local, state or federal government website. And, according to the most current numbers from the WPA, approximately 70 percent of Wyoming citizens read their community newspaper in print and online. Wyoming public notices can also be found online for free on a statewide website funded by Wyoming newspapers at wyopublicnotices.com.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, SF17, a bill relating to W.S. 15-1-110,

was introduced. The bill would have removed public notice from newspapers on meeting minutes and salaries for cities, counties and school districts and required the information be posted only on the government entity’s website. It did not get past the Senate, having been defeated on third reading 20-9.

Several legislators testified on behalf of their constituents of their desire to have public notices remain in their community papers. Additionally, the WPA lobbied hard on its free online statewide repository of public notices. The mobile-first website contains all public notices published in newspapers around the state.

Hoffland, said, “It appears like these

municipalities do not want notices about local government action delivered into homes or available for free on a third-party website, and this is an attempt to get around the requirements without a change in the legislation. This disregards the will of the people as expressed by the Legislature in our state statutes.”

Moats sent a letter to Holscher July 13 requesting that the respective councils begin the process of repealing the ordinances based on the legal argument that the Home Rule does not allow municipalities to exempt from state public notice statutes, and should the towns stand behind the ordinances, legal action would be required.

PUBLIC NOTICE STATUTES

W.S. 15-7-303 – Vacation from public use; hearing; notice; contents; objections.

If the governing body considers it to be in the public interest to vacate any public park or part thereof from the public use to which it was dedicated, it shall set a time and place for a public hearing upon the proposal to vacate. Notice of the hearing shall be published for three (3) consecutive weeks prior to the hearing in a newspaper published in the county in which the city or town is located, or if there is no newspaper published in that county, then in a newspaper published in this state and of general circulation in that county. The notice shall contain a statement of the time, place and purpose of the hearing, the reason for the proposed vacation and shall provide that any person objecting to the proposed vacation shall file his objections with the city or town clerk in writing at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time of the hearing.

W.S. 15-7-106 - Bonds; notice; receiving bids; exception; limitation; private sale.

After any bonds to be issued for any of the purposes set forth in this article, other than special improvement bonds, have been approved by a vote of the people, the governing body shall give notice by advertisement for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper published in the city or town, if there is one, and if not, then in some newspaper of general circulation in the city

or town, and in any newspaper published in other places as may be deemed expedient. The notice shall state that the city or town will receive bids for the sale of the bonds and shall give the time and place where bids will be received and opened. No bonds may be sold for less than their par value.

W.S. 15-7-107 – Bonds; tax; interest; sinking fund; redemption

A tax to be fixed by ordinance shall be levied each year to pay the interest on the bonds and to create a sinking fund for their redemption. The money that may be on hand at any time belonging to the sinking fund, until there are bonds redeemable, may be loaned or invested by the governing body in any public securities of the state, any subdivision thereof, or of the United States, and the interest that accrues shall be added to the sinking fund. If at any time after ten (10) years from the issue of the bonds the sum in the sinking fund equals or exceeds five hundred dollars (\$500.00), and from time to time thereafter when it accrues, the city or town treasurer shall publish a notice in a newspaper in the city or town that, thirty (30) days from the date of the notice, he will redeem the amount of bonds then payable, giving their number and giving preference to the oldest issue. If at the expiration of thirty (30) days the holder of those bonds fails to present them for payment, the interest thereon ceases, but the treasurer shall redeem them on pre-

sentation. A copy of the notice shall be sent to the bank designated as the place of payment of the interest on the bonds.

W.S. 15-1-110 - Minutes of meetings and titles of ordinances passed to be published; exception; contents; publication of names, salaries and wages of specified officials and employees.

(a) The governing body of any city or town shall designate a legal newspaper and publish once therein the minutes of all regular and special meetings of the governing body and the titles of all ordinances passed. If a newspaper is not published in the city or town the proceedings or ordinances shall be posted for at least ten (10) days in the city or town clerk’s office and in such other places as the governing body determines. The clerk of each city or town shall within twelve (12) days after adjournment of every meeting, furnish the newspaper a copy of the proceedings of the meeting. Except for salaries and wages published under subsection (b) of this section, the copy shall include any bill presented to the governing body stating the amount of the bill, the amount allowed, the purpose of the bill and the claimant. Claims for part-time employees may be summarized by department without listing each part-time employee. The newspaper shall publish the copy of proceedings within nine (9) days after receipt.

See STATUTES next page

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The Powell Tribune is focused on producing quality stories, photos, and other content for the residents of Powell and Park County in northwest Wyoming. This job will encompass a variety of day-to-day responsibilities, including editing copy from staff and other sources. We are searching for someone who possesses excellent communication skills and who can work with a variety of personality types — both in the newsroom and in the community.

Preferred candidates should have: newsroom experience; bachelor's degree; strong grasp of AP style; digital photography experience.

The Powell area is surrounded by beautiful mountains and scenery, including Yellowstone National Park just 90 miles to the west.

To learn more about the Tribune, visit our website at www.powelltribune.com.

We offer a competitive beginning salary plus health and vision benefits and paid vacation. Please send a cover letter, resume, clips, and a photo portfolio to: toby@powelltribune.com

INTERN SPOTLIGHT



AIDAN MCGUIRE

Aidan McGuire is interning at the Uinta County Herald for his senior project at Evanston High School.

An Evanston native, Aidan is active in student council, theater, choir, the Spanish Honor Society and is a two-time qualifier for the National Speech and Debate Association tournament in three different disciplines.

Aidan's plans after high school graduation currently include law school and public service.

STATUTES CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

(b) A city or town required to publish minutes under subsection (a) of this section shall separately publish:

(i) Within sixty (60) days after the end of each fiscal year, the name, position and gross monthly salary of each full-time employee and each elected official. A brief statement shall accompany the salary publication specifying that all salaries are listed as gross monthly salaries or actual monthly wages, not including any fringe benefits such as health insurance costs, life insurance benefits and pension plans. The statement shall also indicate that the salaries or wages do not include any overtime the employee may earn which would be paid by the city or town;

W.S. 15-6-202 - Initiative resolution; contents; acceptable bids; notice to be published and mailed; caption.

(a) Any improvement may be initiated directly by the governing body by resolution declaring its intention to make improvements. The resolution shall specify with convenient certainty the streets or part thereof proposed to be improved, if the improvements are street improvements, the boundaries of the proposed assessment district, the character, kind and extent of the improvements and if paving is involved, the kinds of paving to be used. The resolu-

tion shall specify an estimate of the cost of the total improvement project and of each proposed assessment unit, if any, and also an estimate of the contract price of the total improvement project. The governing body shall not accept any bids or combination of bids which exceed by more than ten percent (10%) the estimates of the contract price, unless the legal owners of record of all property in the district waive this limitation.

(b) If an improvement will result in a change in existing street elevations or grades, it is sufficient if the resolution of intention so states without a description, directly or by reference, of the extent or location of the change.

(c) If any part of an improvement is to be paid out of the general fund or road fund of the city or town, or out of funds available to the city or town from any other source, the resolution shall so state. If the improvement is to be maintained by the contractor for a specified period, not to exceed five (5) years, the resolution shall contain a statement to that effect and that the charge for maintenance is to be included in the assessment for the improvement.

(d) The resolution shall fix the time and place, when and where the governing body will meet to consider any remonstrances and objections to the proposed improve-

ments, and the time within which remonstrances and objections must be filed with the city or town recorder. It shall direct the recorder to give a fifteen (15) day notice to all legal owners of record of the property liable to assessment for the proposed improvements by publishing the resolution in one (1) issue of some newspaper published in the city or town once a week or more often. If no newspaper is published within the city or town, notice may be published in any newspaper of general circulation in the county once a week or more often. In addition to the publication, a copy of the resolution of intention shall be mailed, postage prepaid, at least fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing, to each legal owner of record of the property within the proposed district.

(e) The resolution when published and mailed as a notice shall have the following caption:

"Notice to all persons liable to assessment for the improvement of (state names of streets or if improvement is not to be located in the streets, identify by general character and general location). The governing body of the city (city or town) on the day of passed the following resolution of intention."

The resolution shall be set forth in full immediately after the caption of the notice.