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Visit the ISWNE's Web site: [www.iswne.org](http://www.iswne.org)

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# The International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors



## Get your kicks in Joplin June 26-30

Get your kicks on Route 66 and Joplin Miss-ouree, as the old **Bobby Troop** song goes.

Joplin, Mo., right in the middle of "The Mother Road" and "America's Main Street," will be the scene of the 2002 ISWNE conference, June 26-30. Delegates will be housed in the residence halls of Missouri Southern State College.

The tentative agenda on Wednesday, June 26 includes a program on Joplin's colorful history and scientific wonders. Joplin, founded in 1873 as a lead and zinc-mining community, gained notoriety for the nightlife of its saloons, the most famous of which was the House of Lords. In 1933, **Bonnie and Clyde** killed two law enforcement officers in a shootout that brought Joplin national publicity. Famous Joplinites include **Langston Hughes, John Beal, Bob Cummings, Gabby Street, Percy "On Moonlight Bay" Wenrich,** and **Dennis Weaver. Mickey Mantle,** who grew up in nearby Commerce, Okla., got his start with the Joplin Miners baseball team in 1949.

Joplin's scientific wonders include

Grand Falls, the only continuously running waterfalls in the state of Missouri; Crystal Cave, a giant calcite-lined cavity discovered in 1894; and the Spooklight, a nocturnal light with a 100-year history that glows along the

miles north of Joplin in Lamar. Delegates will enjoy a program and catered barbecue at George Washington Carver National Monument in the evening.

Friday's schedule has programs on the Joplin trucking industry, cultural diversity, and trends in community journalism. A visit to King Press, one of the principal manufacturers of web offset presses for newspapers, is also planned. The Golden Quill and Eugene Cervi awards banquet will be held that evening at Missouri Southern.

On Saturday, delegates will board buses for Branson, Mo., "The Live Music Show Capital of the World." You'll have the choice of spending the day at Silver Dollar City or seeing one of the city's elaborate shows (**Andy Williams, Lawrence Welk, Jimmie Rodgers, the Osmonds, Mickey Gilley, Shoji Tabuchi,** etc.) and hitting the outlet malls. Everyone will come together that evening for a dinner cruise on Table Rock Lake aboard the Showboat Branson Belle.

*continued on page 4*

Come home to...

# JOPLIN MISSOURI

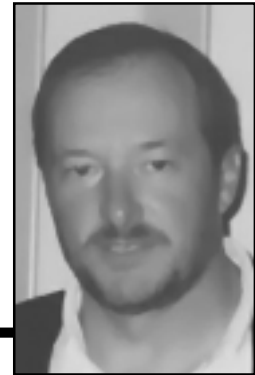


Missouri-Oklahoma border.

ISWNE member **Kim McCully,** from Aurora, Mo., will present a program on the culture of the Ozarks Wednesday afternoon. That evening, conference attendees will take a short trip to an Ozarks hootenanny, featuring real hillbillies, storytelling, and perhaps a fish fry.

Thursday's tentative agenda includes programs on Route 66, area Civil War battles, and **Harry S. Truman,** born 35

# President's Report



By **Bill Haupt**  
Lodi Enterprise, Lodi, Wis.

As I prepare this column on Dec. 13, it is exactly one month from our ISWNE board meeting in New Orleans. I'm already looking forward to re-connecting with our publishing friends.

I expect that four topics will dominate our focus in New Orleans: the newly formed ISWNE Foundation, our editorial critique road show, the 2002 conference in Joplin, and avenues to increased membership. We'll also address the usual administrative stuff and check to see if we have a few bucks in the sock.

Truthfully, our current strong financial position provides us with a unique opportunity. Rather than scrambling to pay bills or build revenues, we can now focus on other building blocks for our organization. That means encouraging editorial voices, broadening and strengthening our membership rolls, and ensuring the future of a free press.

Naturally, we'd love to add your views to the dialogue. You may join us at the Quality Hotel and Conference Center in Metairie,

halfway between the airport and the city. The phone number is 504-833-8211. If you're unable to attend but desire to share some input, please contact Chad or me.

Don't worry — we won't work ourselves to death. Saturday night is reserved for discovering New Orleans, and I expect some of us will add a day or two to explore the area. I am personally planning to drive from Lodi to New Orleans, visiting significant civil rights venues along the way. I'm also hoping to connect with some ISWNE members en route, while also making a recruiting pitch or two. I'll share details of the trip in our next newsletter.

\*\*\*\*\*

Do you have a colleague who would be a great fit for ISWNE? Why don't you purchase an ISWNE membership for them? It's a great holiday gift, and the cost is only \$20 for each gift membership after you've paid your standard \$50 stipend.

We can talk about membership 'til the cows come home, but personal contact is the ticket to success in this game. What great people do you want to introduce to our great organization? Please send us a list and a check.

\*\*\*\*\*

Attendees of the Madison conference may be interested to learn that **Ben Masel**, the drug legalization activist, recently lost a circuit court case in Columbia County. The case involved the permits required by neighboring Sauk County to conduct a "Weedstock" marijuana and hemp rally. A number of those assembled at the rally were arrested. Masel indicated in press reports that he intends to appeal the decision.

# ISWNEWS



## Walters enjoying life in small-town America

Jeremy Waltner of the *Freeman Courier* reports:

Don't ever let anybody tell you there's nothing to do in small-town America. Here in Freeman, things have been busy since summer. A busy season for the Freeman Area Arts Alliance, which I am active in, proved successful, as our traditional Arts in the Park and Kitefest drew large crowds. The highlight of the season, however, was the summer theater production of *The Nerd*, which shattered previous summer theater records.

Here at the *Courier*, we have been publishing our centennial series, "Freeman in Print," a comprehensive, 13-part series, 520-tab-sized-page historic review of the community as reported in the *Courier*. It's been time-intensive ... and rewarding. Come April of 2002, it will all be over and I think I'll need a beach towel to soak up the sweat off my brow.

In other news, I played the role of technical director for a local high school presentation of *Little Women* (the kids in this town are talented beyond their years, by the way, and it's a pleasure to work with them). I am also playing in a pool league for a local bar and a basketball league for a local clinic, and am planning to audition for the Schmeckfest production of *Carousel*.

Don't ever let anybody tell you there's nothing to do in small-town America.

Meanwhile, **Tim L Waltner** has reverted to his youth; after nearly 30 years he's playing in a band again. Tim helped assemble a folk/blue grass group in the fall of 2000 for what was supposed to be a one-time performance. But Tuesday night practices continued and with that, the Schweitzer Toe-Tappers were born. The name Schweitzer reflects the Swiss-German-Russian Mennonite heritage of the members. The music is diverse, ranging from old-time to blue grass to gospel to blues to folk; nearly every concert includes at least one Bob Dylan song. Tim sings and plays the 6-string and 12-string guitar and occasionally the banjo. The Toe-Tappers have been playing at a variety of venues in

the region and are getting paid enough to buy new strings for the instruments. "I really don't have time for this," Tim says, "but we're just having too much fun."

## Connelly elected president of Vermont Press Assoc.

*Hardwick Gazette* Co-Publisher **Ross Connelly** has been elected president of the Vermont Press Association at its annual meeting at the Capitol Plaza in Montpelier.

Connelly, who also is the editor, and his wife, **Susan Jarzyna**, a co-publisher and advertising director, have operated the 112-year-old weekly with a circulation of 2,800 circulation since 1986. Before that he was a long-time journalist in Massachusetts and she was a graphic artist.

Connelly, an award-winning writer and photographer, is a former board member of the New England Press Association and served as its president in 1996.

The VPA, with headquarters in the Journalism Department at St. Michael's College, represents the interests of the 10 daily and about four dozen non-daily newspapers circulating in Vermont.

Longtime VPA Treasurer **M. Dickey Drysdale**, publisher of *The Herald of Randolph*, was re-elected. Drysdale is also an ISWNE member.

## Another award for Tuam Herald reporter

Just three weeks after he won the Provincial Journalist of the Year award in November, **Tony Galvin**, senior reporter with *The Tuam Herald* (Ireland) won a Certificate of Commendation in the non-daily category of the Justice Media awards promoted by the Law Society of Ireland.

His award was for an article on the reality of being a witness in a court case. The Garda Siochana (the Irish police) had asked people to report cases of bad or dangerous driving as part of their drive to reduce the number of deaths in road traffic accidents.

Galvin's article pointed out to potential witnesses the potential psychological trauma involved in being a

# ISWNE new member



**Elizabeth Laden** is the publisher and editor of the weekly *Island Park News* in Island Park, Idaho. Island Park is a recreation-oriented community 20 miles from Yellowstone National Park. Elizabeth and her husband, John Losch, founded the newspaper in January 1997.

Her journalism career spans more than 20 years and she has worked at newspapers in five states.

She is also the founder of SowersS: The Sowers Syndicate, a service for weekly, biweekly, and monthly columnists; the author of two novels; and the editor of the *Fertile Ground Seasons Project*, a four-volume set of inspirational books.

## More ISWNEWS from page 3

prosecution witness in an adversarial system of justice where part of the job of the defense lawyer is to undermine the evidence and credibility of the witness.

A bonus for *The Tuam Herald* was that the reporter who won the category, **Jerome Reilly** of the national *Sunday Independent*, started his career with the paper before moving to the *Independent*. Reilly commented that as his family still lives in the area, and his wife is also from there, the photograph of him and **Tony Galvin** in *The Tuam Herald* would be more important to him personally than any other coverage.

## More recognition for Japanese intern

**Norio Tamura** says **Yasuo Katatae**, the student from Tokyo Keizai University who interned at *The Mountaineer* in Rocky Mountain House, Alberta, gave a short presentation on his experience at this year's Internship Society meeting Dec. 22 at TKU. It was also reported to one of Japan's major national newspapers, *Asahi Shinbun*.

Tamura is acting dean of TKU's Graduate School of Communication Studies and has other obligations at the university, including regular lectures.

## MaryJo Benton Lee's book now available

**MaryJo Benton Lee's** book, *Ethnicity, Education and Empowerment: How Minority Students in Southwest China Construct Identities*, is out and available through amazon.com. She gave a major university address on it in October. The research for it was part of her doctoral dissertation several years ago (why the Lees missed the ISWNE conference in Flagstaff in 1997).

## Sosnieckis keeping busy in Missouri

**Gary Sosniecki**, co-editor and co-publisher of the *Lebanon (Mo.) Daily Record*, was elected second vice president of the Missouri Press Association. **Gary and Helen Sosniecki** together have been elected vice chairmen of the Missouri Associated Press, and Helen has been elected secretary-treasurer of the Ozark Press Association. Gary and Helen are also vice presidents of the Lebanon Publishing Co.

## Joplin from page 1

Many separate activities are planned for children as well; editors are encouraged to bring their families. Conference fees will be announced in January, after the ISWNE board meeting in New Orleans.

### Some helpful web sites:

**Joplin Convention and Visitors Bureau**

[www.joplincvb.com/](http://www.joplincvb.com/)

**Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce**

[www.joplincc.com](http://www.joplincc.com)

**Missouri Southern State College**

[www.mssc.edu](http://www.mssc.edu)

**The Spooklight**

[www.qsl.net/w5www/spooklight.html](http://www.qsl.net/w5www/spooklight.html)

[www.twilitedrivein.freesevers.com/tris/tatespooklight.htm](http://www.twilitedrivein.freesevers.com/tris/tatespooklight.htm)

**George Washington Carver National Monument**

[www.coax.net/people/lwf/carver.htm](http://www.coax.net/people/lwf/carver.htm)

**Branson, Mo.**

[www.branson.com](http://www.branson.com)

**Silver Dollar City**

[www.silverdollarcity.com](http://www.silverdollarcity.com)

**Showboat Branson Belle**

<http://showboat.silverdollarcity.com/>

# O'Leary stresses family ownership rather than merely 'the bottom line'

By Hilary Haddan

Senior Communications Major Missouri Southern State College  
Somewhere between landing a job as a bookkeeper at her hometown newspaper in Savanna, Ill., and holding the position of publisher of three newspapers and two shoppers today, **Carol O'Leary** has found her niche.

O'Leary began working in the newspaper business in 1964 when she was 19. She began her work for a twice-weekly newspaper under a man named **J.A. O'Leary**. The field and the management under which she worked apparently found her at just the right time. She fell in love, both with newspapers and O'Leary within just a few months. Nine months later, she and O'Leary married.

In 1966, the O'Learys purchased the newspaper for which they both worked and sold it four years later. At this time, they moved to Abbotsford, Wis., where the couple bought two community newspapers. Between these two newspapers, they covered three small villages and two small cities.

This move, as well as pressures in this period of her life, proved to keep O'Leary very busy.

"I was in charge of three small children, a job printing shop, the bookkeeping, subscriptions, and proof-reading," she said.

O'Leary also moved around to all departments, helping anyone who was shorthanded.

In 1981 the O'Learys started a shop- per and then moved on to purchase *The Star News* weekly newspaper and shopper in Medford, Wis., five years later. This also proved to be a hectic time in the O'Learys' schedules as **J.A. O'Leary** worked out of the Medford office and she managed the Abbotsford office.

But things in O'Leary's life were not getting easier as the years and her experience progressed.

"In late April of 1997 we took over a very small area weekly newspaper upon the death of the publisher. A week later my husband had a fatal heart attack and I suddenly became the publisher of four newspapers and two shoppers," O'Leary said.

Fortunately, she did have help during this time.

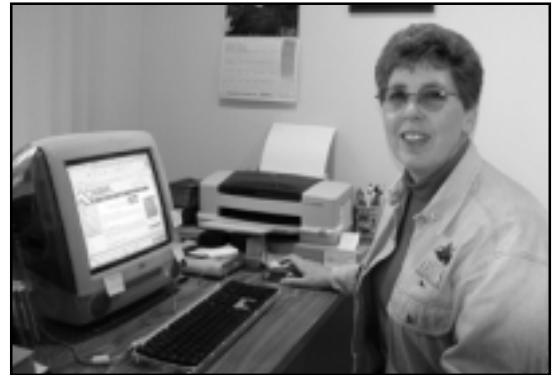
"My son-in-law had sold his farm the year before to become our pressman and his wife, my youngest daughter, a social worker by profession, changed careers and joined the business, managing the Medford office," she said.

Today O'Leary is still the publisher of those papers. Although she "cannot foresee a retirement in the near future," O'Leary said her daughter will take over her position. She is currently training her.

Amid her busy work schedule three years ago, O'Leary received an invitation to an ISWNE convention in Nova Scotia from current president Bill Haupt.

"He sold me on that first convention by describing ISWNE as a family oriented group. He was absolutely right; it is a wonderful family," she said.

O'Leary has since become a member of the ISWNE board of directors. She said the most important point she tries to get across to the other members is "to encourage family ownership and independent newspapers that care about their communities, not the bottom line." She said making a profit is important, but she also wants "to give to the community the real measure of success." And success is something fel-



**Carol O'Leary**

low publishers and peers could argue that she has achieved.

O'Leary has been a member of various other organizations such as the National Newspaper Association, Inland Press Association, Wisconsin Newspaper Association, Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce (which she served as president), as well as participating in a charitable and community organization.

She has also received many general excellence awards in state contests, an honorable mention for a series of stories she submitted on an Inland Press Association trip to China, and a "red typeface" award in the Wisconsin Newspaper Association.

If this is not enough, O'Leary said she has quite the family to brag about. After the death of her first husband, she remarried into a family that, to say the least, was large.

So when newspaper deadlines, stress, and overload don't wear her out, she has a family, as well as her second husband's family, to turn to.

"His five daughters, three sons-in-law and seven grandchildren, and my three children, one son-in-law, one daughter-in-law, and five grandchildren keep us from being lonely," she said.

# Wills promotes 'Superman' image in Metropolis

By Catherine Singleton

Junior Communications Major  
Missouri Southern State College

It's a bird, it's a plane, it's **Clyde Wills!**? Clyde Wills is one of the newly re-elected board members of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors. He shares his hometown of Metropolis, Ill., with the comic strip character Superman. But instead of being "a man of steel," he is editor and publisher of the *Metropolis Planet*. Wills grew up around a weekly paper, being involved in his father's paper, *The McLean*, in Calhoun, Ky.

"So I've experienced every aspect, from emptying the waste baskets and sweeping the floor to production," he said.

Since *The Planet* does operate out of Superman's hometown, this superhero cannot go ignored. Every year the town of Metropolis hosts a "Superman Celebration," in which *The Planet* is a major participant.

"We make capes for the kids out of plastic tablecloths and the kids trace S's on the back," Wills said.

The tradition of the celebration has been going on since 1979. Wills was chairman of the first Superman celebration.

"It always draws national publicity and it is great for tourism," he said.

Wills was interested in photography, and was the photographer for his school paper at the University of Kentucky. After his sophomore year, he married **Carolyn**, and transferred to Wesleyan College only 20 miles from his father's paper. Wills once again became an active member of the staff, running *The News*.

After finishing school with an emphasis in social studies, Wills longed to experience something new; he left and entered into the insurance business. After a couple of years selling insurance, he missed the newspaper

business and heard of a job opening at *The Planet*.

"I didn't realize how much I missed it until I was out of the business," he said.

Wills has since been the editor and publisher for 28 years.

Wills has been a member of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors since 1975 and his late father became a member in 1960.



**Clyde Wills**



"I find it interesting that people I meet in ISWNE are children of my father's friends, when he was a member," Wills said.

"I enjoy ISWNE for the opportunity to sit down with people in similar situations and discussing the good and the bad of being in a small community," Wills said. "We can relate and exchange ideas."

Wills is also past president of the Rotary Club, Metropolis Chamber of Commerce, and is now chairman of a board promoting regional tourism.

Wills publishes two papers per week: *The Planet*, which is the main paper circulated to 5,200

people, and the *Southern Scene*, which is a free paper circulated to three and a half counties. The Southern Scene is mostly advertisement, along with some news. He also has an online site that promotes the community and *The Planet*. It consists of classifieds and community information.

"Work seems to consume my life, which I suppose is good," Wills said.

When Wills does get time off he likes to travel.

"I really enjoy the trips with ISWNE, they go to places I normally wouldn't go like Tombstone, Ariz.; I'm looking forward to our next trip."

# Down to Earth in the Third World

Country Press Australia Associate Director **David Sommerlad** reports on a recent visit to Nepal.

**T**here is nothing like a trip to the back-blocks of the Third World to bring a Westerner rapidly, physically, metaphorically down to earth with a thud.

Around two-thirds of the world's population, we are told, live — or try to exist — in appalling conditions where basic needs to survive often are not met. It's not that bad in the parts of rural and regional Nepal I saw on a visit during November but in many places a primitive life-style prevails.

In a country with vast areas of steep hillsides, peasant farmers, with women doing most of the work by hand, cultivate crops in endless terraces to produce the bulk of the grain and vegetables the country needs to sustain its population, rapidly approaching 25 million. Mechanisation is virtually non-existent.

As a diversion from the usual, my trip was not to visit newspaper publishers and organisations. The reason was two-fold. Let me explain. Foremost was my desire to participate as a volunteer in a humanitarian exercise in a country that needs and welcomes assistance.

The second was a little more complicated. It was a desire to be part of a team organised by the current version of an overseas aid body I had helped to establish in 1962 when I was a community newspaper editor and publisher and a Rotarian in a rural area of Australia, 600km north west of Sydney. This aid organisation has evolved into an activity called Rotary Australia World Community Service, operating on a big scale, mainly in the Pacific area and southern Asia with teams of self-paying volunteers, mostly with professional or technical qualifications, undertaking selected projects at community level in needy nations.

In November I was a member of a team of 26 volunteers from throughout Australia with the task of conducting free eye tests and dispensing appropriate ready-made spectacles in rural towns and remote villages in central Nepal. The team comprised 11 optometrists, five optical dispensers, a doctor, nurse and support staff such as me who organised the crowds for registration and orderly processing by the professionals.

As is essential with project work in developing countries, Rotary Australia currently operates in Nepal through the infrastructure of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency — Nepal, headquar-

tered at Banepa, 30 kilometres from the capital at the top end of the narrow Kathmandu Valley. This agency, established and maintained from the United States, organises the locations for the visiting teams and hires out its vehicles to transport the Australians. It also organises for the employment of teams of interpreters — university students and teachers — who accompany the Australians to each location.

If a Rotary club exists in the towns visited, local Rotarians always help as well.

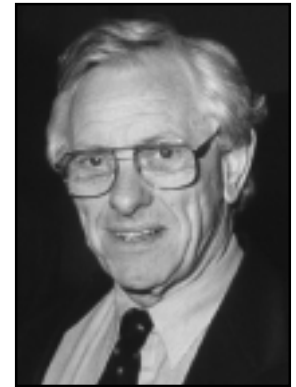
In a two-week period, two groups from our team working at separate locations, tested almost 7000 people aged from four to 94 with about 60% requiring spectacles. Those with cataracts or needing specialist attention were referred elsewhere.

The "eye-camps" were conducted at schools or community centres in the regional centres of Banepa and Dhulikhel and at remote villages on steep hillsides or in deep valleys within a two-hour drive from these centres. Only a small number of main roads through regional areas in Nepal are sealed and the journeys along tortuously winding, poorly maintained gravel roads along hillsides to isolated villages were experiences in themselves. After travelling beside precipitous gorges and being tossed around in a small bus, reaching our destination evoked sighs of relief.

In the rural villages, people who normally spend the daylight hours tilling the soil in the same way as their forebears had farmed for centuries left their toil to gather enthusiastically at the places the eye testing was to take place. They would assemble in hundreds before the eye-testing volunteers arrived and were happy to stand for hours in long queues under scorching sun before assessment.

It was apparent to professionals that the eyesight problems encountered (some were merely treated with drops) were the result of very poor nutrition; living and working without proper light; and mostly living in a very polluted atmosphere, particularly in the villages.

What were intensely gratifying were the occasions when local people became aware it was possible to see more clearly and children with very poor sight could



**David Sommerlad**

virtually see for the first time through strong lenses. Expressions of thankfulness by many scores of aided people was often an embarrassment. Always, the gentle, happy nature of the Nepalese people was endearing and memorable.

Most of the village schools where the tests were done comprised small blocks of old brick classrooms with earthen floors, rising-damp up the walls, open spaces with shutters for light and ventilation, ancient wooden forms for the students and the structures we would call toilets non-existent or in a rugged (to put it kindly) state. In and around the towns, the standard of buildings was somewhat better and one new school we used was a two-storey brick block with concrete paths, furniture and facilities that would be acceptable in a rural township in the Western world. This situation was said to reflect the (questionable) politics of the locally elected representatives.

Rotary Australia Community World Service has been sending volunteers to Nepal for almost 12 years after being unable to work originally in Indonesia because of Communism influence and after the late 1980s in Papua New-Guinea and the Solomon Islands because of local unrest. Since moving operations to Nepal, co-ordinated groups totalling more than 700 volunteers have helped to build and outfit hospitals and clinics; provided and installed medical and surgical equipment; and undertaken medical, surgical, dental and optical work among Nepalese people in Kathmandu, regional towns and rural villages.

Recently some unease has been caused by Maoist Communists endeavouring to influence the government by creating disruption and death throughout the country. In November, our team was prevented from travelling on one day because the Maoists would not allow the movement of any road transport, and another Rotary team had to withdraw because of threatening



*David Sommerlad trying to control a crush of enthusiastic Nepalese villagers waiting to register at an Australian Rotary eye-camp near the Tibetan border.*

conditions.

My trip ended with a brief stay in Kathmandu when I telephoned the daily *Kathmandu Post* to arrange to see the management and editor of the English-language newspaper I read with interest whenever I could secure a copy. Unfortunately, the executives were unavailable because of "festival days" when few people worked. But the *Post* impressed me as a small, community-style newspaper covering national and regional news and always featuring an excellent editorial page with a heavy philosophical bent verging on the spiritual. It featured some very profound articles well suited to our own culture.

I could not complete a brief review of my time in Nepal without becoming philosophical myself. Our team stayed in a hotel at Dhulikhel with a 150-degree view of the Himalayan Mountains - when they were visible above the mist and the smog of the Kathmandu Valley! Happily, during the last eight days, they were always visible.

The multitude of ever-ascending ranges of hills leading to the mountain vista was beautiful in itself, always featuring soaring eagles rising on the thermals.

When the mountains first began to emerge I could not see them because my vision was directed about 20 degrees below the peaks peeping through the clouds, so high they were. When I did sight this wondrous mountain range, I became filled with awe and understood why the people of that area believe so fervently in meditation. My mind automatically recalled some biblical verses my mother had taught me as a child: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills. From whence cometh my help? My help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" — Psalm 121. Again: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" — Isaiah 40.

# Lee to receive Freedom Forum award in London

By Sarah Passick  
*Collegian*  
South Dakota State University

For almost 25 years, **Richard W. Lee**, South Dakota State's journalism department head, has devoted his professional life to the success and accomplishments of so many.

On Jan. 7 in London, Lee, known by many as Dick, will be awarded the Freedom Forum's Journalism Administrator of the Year award to celebrate those accomplishments.

The award recognizes outstanding leadership in the advancement of journalism education. Lee was nominated by **Will Norton Jr.**, dean at the University of Nebraska's College of Journalism and Mass Communications, and was selected by a panel of educators as well as professionals.

**R. Brown**, dean of the school of journalism at Indiana University, received the award last year.

Previous winners of this award include journalism administrators from the University of Nebraska, University of Maryland, University of Florida, Ohio State University, and Arizona State University.

Lee, who will turn 67 on Dec. 25, was ISWNE executive director from 1992-99, when the Society was headquartered at South Dakota State. He is the third generation of a weekly publishing family.

In February 2000, the AEJMC accreditation team that visited South Dakota State wrote that the "department is led by a dynamic head who has held that position since 1978 and whose energy and enthusiasm remain high."

The accreditation team also described Lee as a shepherd, having

guided the department through a \$1.8 million fund-raising effort and facility remodeling.

"He is held in high regard by his department members, fellow heads across the campus, senior administrators, students, alumni and media professionals across the state," Norton said. "Dick Lee is indeed a shepherd."

Two words described Lee's reaction upon receiving notice of his award: "Wow and me?"

"I am very humble," he said. "I know all the people who have been selected previously and they are all wonderful people who have wonderful journalism programs. I am just in awe.

"It's (the award) is not all about me, most of it is because of our faculty, our program, our students and our alumni."

Under his shepherd's staff at SDSU, Lee has guided the department through accreditation four times. He's overseen the remodeling and renovation of the current journalism building, Yeager Hall.

During the remodeling, Lee had a vision to set one room aside to promote diversity and multiculturalism, not only in the journalism department but also throughout campus. The room that he envisioned was the Lakota-Dakota Conference Room.

"His appreciation of Indian culture is evident in the room he dedicated as the Lakota-Dakota Conference Room to honor Native Americans," **Doris Giago**, journalism professor, said. "He wants the journalism students to be aware of and appreciate the Indian culture as well. This room lets SDSU know that Indians count."

Lee co-chaired the Association of

Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's Native American task force and is a founding organizer of the annual Native American Newspaper Career Conference held at Crazy Horse Memorial.

"Dick is an advocate for Native American journalists," Giago said. "He values tribal voices and he has created an atmosphere in the journalism department that encourages and supports Native American students."

Few students have walked through the journalism building and not felt his sense of value and trust he has towards his faculty and his students.

"Dr. Lee shaped my education by letting me know that he respected me not only as a student but as a person," **Sasha Ulvestad**, a senior news-editorial journalism major, said. "He treats you like a peer and I believe that that kind of relationship results in much more respect than a normal teacher/student relationship."

Lee has established an enjoyable learning environment, said **Lyle Olson**, journalism professor.

"Dick trusts the students and the students reciprocates by treating the facilities well," he said. "His ability to treat people with dignity and to make everyone feel as if they are part of a team. He makes people feel important. He takes time for people."

Lee is one of the first journalism faculty members high school students visit when making a college decision. He discusses the programs and designs a schedule. He also helps calm their fears about their first year of college.

"My first memory of him was at freshman orientation four years ago

*continued on page 16*



**Ray Laakaniemi** retired in 2000 after teaching 22 years at Bowling Green State University. His book, *The Weekly Writer's Handbook*, Second Edition, is available for \$43.15.

Email [doclaak@home.net](mailto:doclaak@home.net), call 989-667-1315, or write 2479 S. Harbor Dr., Bay City, Michigan 48706.

# 1958: Those were the days

**Ray Laakaniemi**, who spent 40 years news and teaching, finally has a job he can handle — retirement. But then **Rick Friedman** got him wound up in last issue. Rick compared today's newsroom decibel levels to those of a funeral parlor (we agree) and it hit the target like a smart bomb on Tora Bora. Or was that Tora! Tora! Tora! or Bora Bora? Whatever, these are his memories of newsrooms in a weekly 40 years ago — lest you forget.

It was 1958. I had just left the hallowed halls for a job on a weekly, my first newspaper job, mindful of the old prof's parting shot on editorials. "Write about local things, not about abstruse and impersonal problems half way across the world. The word for that is Afghanistanism."

The paper I worked on for 13 months was a fine 8-12 pager. It sold 2,000 copies in a town of 1,800, and was all done in a one-story cement block building behind a house a half-mile from the heart of town. It looked like it might have been a car repair facility (we called them garages then) in years past. To cover the summer festival of the largest local church we just walked across the street.

The newsroom was small. How else can you describe two desks, a window, and enough room to walk between the desks from the front door to the shop? Ten by 10 feet would be stretching it. There were five of us full-time: a secretary, the editor and ad salesman (me), the

typesetter and correspondent, and two delightful guys in the backshop. Both did everything, one of them standing eight hours every Wednesday flipping huge broadsheets just enough that they were caught by the rotary press grippers. Of course, it was all metal type. Every line, every ad was metal, jammed into a metal chase or holder. One of the reasons we have VDTs is that it often took as much time to correct errors as it did to set the type originally. Usually, the chases only had to be moved a few feet, but one week the press broke down when my boss was still running the paper. The chases were lifted into a trunk, driven eight miles, lifted again up a short flight of stairs and carried to the back of the building. The last chase didn't make it, something about a stumble on the steps. Type all over the sidewalk, replaced that week by the only full-page house ad the paper ever ran.

I wonder about the hot metal, though. I have all but lost touch with the people who worked there, but I am concerned that a couple of them decades later have had strange health problems which may have developed from breathing the fumes from the molten lead. I don't know if there is a provable connection, probably not.

My job on press day, after everything was set in type, was the catcher. Not the Yogi Berra type. I sat cross-legged at the end of the folder as the papers came out and

gathered them so someone else could tie them and take them to the post office. Never missed a postal deadline in 13 months, but a couple of times the train was puffed pretty heavy when they got to the station. All-nighters? I remember two during the 13 months — in at 8 a.m., out the next morning at the exact same time. I usually put my 40 hours in by Wednesday, and then put another 40 in getting early copy and ads for next week. We had to have our Polaroid pictures sent out by Thursday to be turned into zinc plates and be back by the following Tuesday for layout. I was paid \$56 after taxes, and one of the current editors in the same area said "That's about what we pay our reporters now." I am not sure if he was kidding or not.

Those were the days. If you went to an advertiser and saw your last week's paper still folded up on his desk, you knew it was going to a hard sell. Or maybe he was trying to figure a way to trade advertising for home appliances, which sometimes came up. It was a great town, fine people. The high school "kid" who swept the office after the press run grew up to be the athletic director at a Southeastern Conference school. The basketball coach told the superintendent he would coach until he was called to the Big Ten, which he was four years later because his college coach got a job there. The shortstop on the town baseball team was getting a degree

in education, but disliked teaching in the public schools and is now better known for being one of three founders of a national restaurant chain.

And there were characters. Several years after I left, an editor/owner came in from a large West Coast state that starts with "C" and he was going to show 'em. Small-town editors had power and the county had problems, starting with the dog catcher (we called them dog catchers then). He got the animal control officer so riled that the man rounded up a dozen strays in his pickup, backed them up to the newspaper office, and opened the door. All hell broke loose. No one seems to know what happened eventually to the editor, something about leaving in the middle of the night just before accounts payable became due.

During my time, and I had more help than I had original ideas, I think we covered the town well, and I know I got a real education. Maybe the learning curve was straight up, but it was the hardest I ever worked and probably the most satisfaction I ever had in the newspaper business. At age 22. This was eight-column days, two postcard-sized zincs each week for pictures (in those days we called them penny postcards, because they were). We covered everything from school boards to council (the mayor said no one called him any more till after the paper came out and they learned what the council had done) and controversies. We were careful, but not gutless. And people respected the paper. How else could my boss sell 2,000 papers in a town of 1,800?

I left for the Army (explain what the draft was to your teenagers, would you?) My boss later sold the paper to a person I did not know. He cut the paper to six columns, ran an 8-by-10 photo on the front page, and used the extra two columns as more white space between stories. And he won second place in his class for news coverage. But the readers knew. Circulation dropped. The newsroom was small, but the paper had a big heart. It had a small staff and limited resources, but it had the respect of the community.

I know things have changed. Weeklies no longer get unannounced full-page ads (in mat form) from the car companies. Business is tougher, except for the affluent suburbs. Freeways have changed shopping patterns. The three car dealers and three groceries in town at that time are down to one grocery and two carry outs. Regional printing plants have replaced the back shop, and the amorphous amoeba called group newspapers (we called them chains in those days) have brought economy of scale to a new science. And often news quality to a new low. But some things never change. Beginning reporters are probably getting the equivalent of \$56 a week (after taxes, I should add) and the same message still rings out. It is not the noise in the newsroom, it is not the amount you are paid. The question is does your paper have a heart for the inevitable battles, or the heart of the Tinman?

## ISWNE web site had nearly 1,000 visitors

ISWNE, which launched a web site in the Fall of 1999, is getting a decent amount of traffic via the Internet. According to WebTrends, a web analytics company, [www.iswne.org](http://www.iswne.org) had 996 visitors during the month of November. Of those 996 visitors, 609 were unique visitors.

The most active countries were the United States, with 737 visitors; Canada, 17; the United Kingdom, 12; France, 11; Japan, 8; and Ireland, 7. We've even had one visitor each from Hong Kong, South Africa, Italy, Fiji, Iran, the Netherlands, and New Zealand.

The ISWNE Member List page is the second-most-requested page, behind the ISWNE home page. The most-downloaded files are issues of *Grassroots Editor* and the August newsletter.

WebTrends supplies a wealth of information, although much of it is trivial. For example, we're averaging 35 visitors per day on weekdays and 53 visitors per weekend. Monday is the most active day of the week; Saturday is the least active. The most active day during the month of November was the 19th, with 1,212 hits. The least active was Nov. 23 (the day after Thanksgiving), with only 34 hits.

The top referring site — the site with a link to [www.iswne.org](http://www.iswne.org) — is [www.mssc.edu](http://www.mssc.edu) (Missouri Southern State College), with 230 referrals. The Metropolis Planet (Clyde Wills' newspaper) had nine referrals. The top search engines that relayed visitors to [www.iswne.org](http://www.iswne.org) were Google (183 referrals) and Yahoo (151).

The most-used browsers were Internet Explorer (78% of all visitors) and Netscape (20%). The most-used platforms were Windows 98 (58% of all visitors), Macintosh (14%), Windows 2000 (10%), and Windows NT (9%).

"The statistics are interesting and give us a benchmark to judge future growth of the ISWNE web site," said **Chad Stebbins**, executive secretary-treasurer. "I would encourage our members to create a link to [www.iswne.org](http://www.iswne.org) from their newspaper's home page to help us generate a little more traffic."

# Here's why I like community newspapers

I've been involved with the news media for a good part of my life, but I'll have to confess that the one medium that pulls at my heart-strings is the community newspaper.

Whether it comes out weekly, daily, or somewhere in between, I suppose a big part of my feelings relate to the Americana in the whole thing. Even though there have been many corporate buyouts of mom and pop newspapers, they're still the **Norman Rockwell** and Route 66 of journalism. Gosh, **Mark Twain** even had one.

Of course, I may be a bit biased because so many of my journalist friends are from community newspapers — and not all of them are in America. But almost without exception or wherever they're located, those folks are salt of the earth people who report community happenings of great magnitude along with carrying news about club happenings and the past week's activities out at Bishop Creek, as reported by **Maude Evans**, the correspondent who's been doing it ever since the fire station burned down back in 1936.

Even some faceless corporate owners have found that they don't have enough money to put people like Maude Evans out of business, and I love it. Slick big-city whippersnappers have tried that, and they've bit the dust. Which means I can look forward to continued reading about **Lester** and **Molly Johnson's** guests from Minneapolis and the latest to get baptized at the Antioch Church. Plus, a bonus is that in another section I'm often able to find out what happened that particular time-period in the community 10, 20, or even 50 or 100 years ago.

I might tell myself that I'm not a bit

interested in who shot **Lester Baker's** horse in 1928, and I have a devil of a time stumbling through Maude's syntax. And I sometimes even gripe about the unimportance of the information in the grand scheme of things. But I well know that it's me who's wrong on what's important down home — which is why Maude Evans has outlasted 25 editors.

Sure, I get most of my national and international news from elsewhere. I gripe about that, too — especially some of the "news" that's seemingly manufactured more for ratings than for enlightenment. In all fairness, however, there's some great journalism going on out there. It's just on a different level.

But the closer-to-home newspaper, corporate or not, or polished or unpolished, is the cohesive fabric of community life. Well-used copies even hang around homes and coffee shops for a week, not a day — which is an advertiser's dream, by the way.

This may be sounding like I'm saying that smaller papers don't deal in "big" news, but nothing could be farther from the truth. More often than not, that's where some mighty important stuff gets its first ink, and it's a rare urban newsroom that doesn't have an assortment of area papers that city journalistic cousins pick through to find out what's happening — and especially what may be behind it. Sometimes they've even been known to take a little too much credit for "their" latest scoop.

There's one more big reason community newspaper folks are on my hero list: They have to put their journalistic integrity on the line 24/7 in a very face-to-face way with the community. Although news and

advertising don't mix well under the same hat, comparatively smaller-staffed papers have to toe that line in an extremely public way. And they're

masters at making sure the unadulterated news is protected and gets out, come hell or high water. On the community level it's far easier to link a byline with a familiar face, journalistic accountability.

You see, journalists out there in those papers are just as bent on getting the whole-truth-and-nothing-but as the bigger folks. They, too, are keen on facts and get extra sources for verification — even if their mothers tell them they love them and they're just checking it out.

To put it another way, a community's newspaper is its voice and its best friend — United States or elsewhere.

Believe it.

*ISWNE member **Jim Sawyer** writes a widely carried column for weeklies. It's issued by e-mail. For details, contact him at [jimsaw@msn.com](mailto:jimsaw@msn.com) or (417) 742-5211. Or write him at 711 South Main Street, Willard, MO 65781, USA.*



**By Jim Sawyer**

**Statement:**  
**Due by January 31, 2002**



December 15, 2001

**2002 ISWNE Dues .....\$50**

**All Membership Dues Must be Paid in U.S. Funds**

**You may wish to do one of the following:**

- Be a Sustaining Member at \$100 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Make your editor-friends members of ISWNE at a special price of \$20 per year. \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
If you do, please list their addresses below in space provided.

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**Total Enclosed: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to ISWNE

**For Our Records**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Web Site: \_\_\_\_\_

**If You Are A New Member :**

Please attach a brief description of yourself for the ISWNE Newsletter if you are a new member. A mug shot would be appreciated.

**Mail To:** Dr. Chad Stebbins, Missouri Southern State College,  
3950 East Newman Road,  
Joplin, MO 64801-1595

Questions: Phone: (417) 625-9736 Fax: (417) 659-4445 E-mail: [stebbins-c@mail.mssc.edu](mailto:stebbins-c@mail.mssc.edu)



# ISWNE 2002 awards competition

## The 27th Annual Eugene Cervi Award

The Eugene Cervi Award was established by ISWNE to honor the memory of Eugene Cervi of the *Rocky Mountain Journal, Denver*, by recognizing a newspaper editor who has consistently acted in the conviction that “good journalism begets good government.”

The award is presented not for a single brave accomplishment, however deserving, but for a

career of outstanding public service through community journalism and for adhering to the highest standards of the craft with the deep reverence for the English language that was the hallmark of Eugene Cervi’s writing.

The award also recognizes consistently aggressive reporting of government at the grassroots level and interpretation of local affairs.

**Cervi Award Nominations should begin with a letter of nomination**, which should include the writer’s reasons for making the nomination. The nomination also should have other letters about the nominee, clippings demonstrating the criteria for the award and a biographical data sheet giving basic facts about the nominee’s career.

**Nominations are open only to editors of newspapers of less than daily frequency.** Daily is defined as at least five days per week in frequency. (Note: Since the Cervi Award covers a journalistic career, supporting materials are not limited by chronology. Clips can be made from any point in the nominee’s career.)

**Nominations should be sent by Feb. 1, 2002**, (materials may follow by end of month) to:

**Chad Stebbins, Institute of International Studies, Missouri Southern State College,  
3950 E. Newman Road, Joplin, MO 64801-1595.  
Please mark the envelope: CERVI AWARD ENTRY.**

# The 42nd Annual Golden Quill Award

Entries should reflect the purpose of the ISWNE: Encouraging the writing of editorials that identify issues that are or should be of concern to the community, offer an opinion, and support a course of action.

## Eligibility:

All newspapers of less than daily frequency (published less than five days per week) are qualified to enter. Entries must have been published between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2001.

**Entries must be postmarked by Feb. 1, 2002.**

**Please mark the envelope:  
GOLDEN QUILL ENTRY.**

**Send to: Chad Stebbins,  
Institute of International Studies  
Missouri Southern State College  
3950 E. Newman Road,  
Joplin, MO, 64801-1505**

## How to Submit:

Select up to four best editorials or signed opinion pieces from your newspaper. **Two is the maximum number of entries permitted from each individual.** Mount each entry on 8 1/2-by-11-inch white paper, using glue or mounting material that does not bleed through newsprint. Please try to eliminate any identifying information, such as a byline or mug shot.

On the back of each page on which the entries are mounted, the following should appear: Name of newspaper, full mailing address of newspaper, date of publication, full name and title of the writer, and the writer's email address and telephone number. *Grassroots Editor*, ISWNE's quarterly journal, will reprint the 12 best editorials as the Golden Dozen in the Summer, 2002 issue.

## **GOLDEN QUILL and EUGENE CERVI AWARD**

**winners will be invited guests of ISWNE for a presentation during the Society's annual conference at Joplin, Missouri, June 26-30.**

**Each award includes a plaque, conference expenses, and travel expenses up to \$500.**

# Lee to receive Freedom Forum award from page 9

when he helped me register for classes," **Michelle Selchert**, a senior new-editorial journalism major, said. "He was very thoughtful and helped ease my nervousness about starting college. He assured me that I'd do fine and have a good time in the process."

**John Andrews**, a senior broadcast journalism major, had a similar experience.

"Dr. Lee was the first professor I ever met," he said. "The summer before my freshman year, when I was still trying to pick a major, I sat with Dr. Lee at a orientation session. He helped me put my first schedule together and helped decide that journalism was the right major for me."

Students do not hesitate to bring their problems or concerns to him. They trust him as much as he trusts the students.

"There are very few students who

hesitate to bring a problem to Dr. Lee," Ulvestad said. "He is trusted by the students and he will be greatly missed by everyone involved in the department when he retires. Dr. Lee is a person who truly enjoys and takes pleasure in his work. You can see it in his face and his attitude."

Many faculty members admire Lee for his contribution to the department and to the students. They said he has compassion and loyalty towards his employees. Many see him as a great friend and others see him as a great leader.

"I think so highly of him," **Roxanne Lucchesi**, journalism professor said. "He is a wonderful leader. He welcomes these talents and celebrates them. He is a humble leader and leads you in the right direction, quietly."

"What I admire most is his unflinching loyalty to his faculty," **Jack**

**Getz**, journalism professor said. "He has always back everyone of his employees. He has encouraged them, supported them, counseled them, advised them and welcomed them into his home. He has been a friend."

During his award ceremony in London, Lee will receive a medal and a cash prize, which will be split between him and the department.

Lee says his wife, **MaryJo**, plays an important part of this award.

"MaryJo plays a large role in what goes on here. She has been willing to let me spend a lot of my time here. She is always in search of good ideas that I can claim or steal as my own," he said, chuckling.

Earlier this semester, Lee announced that he plans to retire after the summer semester.

"It's a terrific way to end his career," Olson said. "He's going out with a bang."

## ABOUT THE ISWNE

The International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors (ISWNE) was founded in 1954 at Southern Illinois University (SIU) by Howard R. Long, then chair of SIU's Department of Journalism at Carbondale, and Houston Waring, then editor of the *Littleton (Colo.) Independent*. ISWNE headquarters were at Northern Illinois University at DeKalb from 1976 to 1992, at South Dakota State University in Brookings from 1992 to 1999. Missouri Southern State College in Joplin became the headquarters in 1999.

ISWNE's purpose is to help those involved in the weekly press to improve standards of editorial writing and news reporting and to encourage strong, independent editorial voices. The society seeks to fulfill its purpose by holding annual conferences, presenting awards, issuing publications, and encouraging international exchanges. There are ISWNE members in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Japan, and India. There are subscribers to *Grassroots Editor*, the society's quarterly journal, in still more countries.

**Dr. Chad Stebbins**

Editor & ISWNE Secretary/Treasurer  
Director, Institute of International Studies

**Produced by the Institute of International Studies**

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