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Official Publication of the Kentucky Press Service - Volume 60, Number 4 - April, 1989

In study done at Columbia School of Journalism

Messenger-Inquirer recognized as one of top five newspapers in U.S.

The Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer has been named of the nation's top five newspapers in under 50,000-circulation, according to a study at the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism.

The study, done by Jeanne Abbott, a member of the journalism school faculty, was done with daily newspapers with circulations less than 50,000 to determine which newspapers excel and why. She found many similarities among the papers making her final list, most notably that small dailies can be of high quality without high salaries and expensive equipment.

In all, Abbott rated the top three newspapers in each state. In Kentucky, her list included the Messenger-Inquirer, Kentucky Post and Elizabethtown News Enterprise.

She then pared the list to come up with five newspapers that are examples of what makes small dailies outstanding. On that list, with the Owensboro Messenger Inquirer, were the Fredericksburg, Va., Free Lance Star; Gwinnett, Ga., Daily News; St. Cloud, Minn., Times; and the La Crosse, Wisc., Tribune.

"Happily, these five proved to be remarkable illustrations of the premise that under-50,000 circulation papers can be quality dailies with fewer staff and resources," Abbott said.

Her interviews at the five exemplary newspapers in the study indicated that while salaries aren't as high as reporters might want, job satisfaction keeps them at the papers.

"Many of them said they would consider another position if it were a better job opportunity, but not merely for more money."

Surveys were sent to editors at 1356 newspapers nationwide and to directors and deans of 350 journalism schools across the country, asking them to rate the top three newspapers in their states.

Abbott said most of the better newspapers on the list take care to tailor news to their readers' interests, monitor their readers' opinions from time to time, take pride in their work and choose news reporters and staff members carefully.

In her blueprint of excellence, Abbott found that the best small daily newspapers:

- * have a clearly articulated mission with high standards;
- * expect their staffs to commit their best work to the product;
- * provide an atmosphere to maximize effort through inspiration, feedback and resources;

(Continued on Page 5)

SPJ dinner honoring Gill will be April 13

The date of the Society of Professional Journalists dinner, honoring First Prize recipient George Gill, president and publisher of the Louisville Courier-Journal, has been changed.

The dinner will be held Thursday, April 13, beginning with cocktails at 6:30 p.m. The dinner is scheduled for the Galt House in Louisville. Tickets are available from Jack Guthrie and Associates, Louisville.

Annenberg

Controversial change may alter handling of libel suits, awards

A controversial change known as the Annenberg proposal would alter the way libel suits are handled. News organizations would sacrifice the actual malice standard (Times vs. Sullivan), but they would get relief from long and disruptive libel suits and huge damage awards.

In a libel suit, the only issue decided would be the truth or falsity of what was said or printed. The loser would pay the other side's lawyers fees. This speedy "non-fault" judicial determination would also prevent aggrieved plaintiffs from collecting punitive damages for libel.

Aimed at finding neutral ground in libel disputes, the proposed Libel Reform Act has a three-stage process.

Stage One: A person complaining of coverage could seek a retraction or an opportunity to reply. If the newspaper agrees and honors the request within thirty days, there is no case.

Stage Two: If the Stage One request is denied, plaintiffs can sue. Either party can request a declaratory judgement, no-fault, trial option. The trail would only argue truth or falsity of the statement, and must be held within 120 days of filing. If either side accepts, no damages would be awarded, but the media defendant loses First Amendment protections (including the plaintiff's burden or proving actual malice against public figures). The loser would pay for the winner's attorney's fees.

Stage Three: If neither side agrees to the shorter procedures, the libel suit can proceed to a present-day type of damage suit, with only actual losses awarded. Punitive damages would not be allowed.

The proposal comes from the Annenberg Washington Program of Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, and has benefits and drawbacks for the media. Among the benefits are that the proposal presumes that editorial, letters-to-the-editor, editorial cartoons, reviews, parody, satire and fiction are works of opinion and are not actionable.

Floyd Abrams, a noted constitutional lawyer, thinks that such a sweeping proposal should be tested in a small area before proceeding on a larger scale. "The main danger of the proposal," said Abrams, "is that it could lead to an explosion of new libel litigation in which people seek declarations that something that was said about them was not true."



THE KENTUCKY PRESS

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Official Publication of the Kentucky Press Association

Across Kentucky...

Jim Thompson, retired Courier-Journal business reporter, is the new editor of USFN Alert, a new monthly newsletter that will report on stocks of companies based in Kentucky and Southern Indiana.

Danville Advocate Messenger columnist Helen Palmer and the Boyle County daily have been honored by the Dog Writers Association of America. Palmer, who writes a weekly column for the Advocate called "K-9 Korner" received the Kal Kan Pedigree Outstanding Journalists Pet Care Award. The Advocate-Messenger also was honored because of Palmer's columns promoting proper dog care.

Steve Robrahn, Associated Press correspondent in Pikeville, has been named the AP's news editor in Louisville. Kentucky AP bureau chief Ed Staats made the announcement. Robrahn has covered Eastern Kentucky from his base in Pikeville for the past two years. He succeeds Debra Hale who has transferred to AP's Atlanta bureau.

Mel Holbrook and Bob Herron have joined the staff of the Berea Citizen. Holbrook, previously the sports editor of the Frankfort State Journal, Middlesboro Daily News and Richmond Register, has been added to the Citizen's sports staff. Herron has worked as a reporter and photographer for the Citizen Voice & Times in Irvine and the Richmond Register will operate in a similar capacity with the Madison County weekly.

Paula Daniels has joined the staff of the Cumberland County News in Burkesville as advertising production manager. Before joining The News, she worked for the Citizen Statesmen in Celina, Tenn.

Kim Mattingly has been promoted to classified advertising manager of the Kentucky Standard in Bardstown. Mattingly formerly was secretary-receptionist for The Standard.

Lea Schultz, Lifestyles editor of the Richmond Register, has earned a Thomson Newspapers Award of Excellence, a monthly recognition honoring exemplary work by employees of Thomson Newspapers. The award was given to Schultz for her four-part Veterans Day package about four local men who had

been prisoners of war during World War II.

Shelbyville Sentinel News general manager Jim Edele has announced the addition of two staff members. Paula Douthitt, who most recently was with Landmark Community Newspapers headquarters in Shelbyville, has been named circulation clerk. Lisa Rose, who worked with the Eastern Kentucky University public information office during her time as a student, returns to her native Shelbyville as an advertising representative.

Kentucky Post files appeal of 'local newspaper' ruling

The Kentucky Post has filed an appeal to the Kentucky Court of Appeal in its attempt to receive notification of special meetings in Maysville.

In February, Mason Circuit Court Judge Richard Hinton ruled that the Kentucky Post was not a local newspaper for Maysville as defined in Kentucky's Open Meetings/Open Records law and thus the city was under no obligation to notify the Post of special meetings of government agencies.

The notice of appeal did not state the grounds on which the motion was based, but Whitney Dunlap III, attorney for the Post, said he would urge the court to interpret the opening meetings statute in the broadest way possible.

Dunlap said the Post was a regional newspaper, not a statewide newspaper and that Maysville falls within the scope of its coverage and circulation.

"We feel the Kentucky Post is a local newspaper within the meaning of the legislature when it drafted the open meetings law," said Dunlap. "The statute should be broadly construed to effect its purpose of providing a mechanism for citizens who would be affected by the action of a public agency to be made aware of public meetings."



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hi-Larry-ous Stone: The thief of bad gags, and a good book to go along with them

by Teresa Sullivan

There is something stubbornly sacred about humor: it seems to reach into the soul of man and make bad situations seem amusing; it takes the hurts and heals; it soothes the nerves and settles the arguments; it's like seeping rain water that slowly makes its way into every crevice of the mind to dispell despression. It's been said that laughter is a cure-all. Dis-ease and Dis-order alike have been cured by it. In fact, cancer has even been known to fall prey to its healing powers.

Good humor has the power to reach down deep and draw up a bucket of kicks even on sensitive subjects. Somehow humor has the ability to make one laugh when the whole world is turned upside down in your lap!

Larry Stone is a master of this type of humor. His recent book release, *Mulebergers*, by hi-LARRYous STONE is a perfect example of his light-hearted sincerity and innate talent. Perhaps one of his greatest strengths is that he is definitely not superficial. He is deeply opinioned on nearly every subject, but can make light of any of them whether they agree with what he really thinks or not. He's versatile...he touches nearly everyone on nearly every subject.

This talent, along with his illustrious personality, has made him thousands of friends across the United States and made his book a success.

Stone is no stranger to success. Most important though, is the fact that he has earned every letter of it. When he was ten years old he started in the newspaper business selling newspapers on the street. By the time he was 12 years old his mother and had died. Compelled to forge his own way, he took advantage of his love for words and throughout high school and college he wrote the word term papers. Being a very intellectual man, he put himself through college writing

and editing term papers "for the less fortunate". Where other students had money and no knowledge, Stone had knowledge and no money. The uniqueness of his talent was this: If the kid was a "B" student, Stone wrote a "B" term paper. If s/he was an "A" student, he'd write an "A" paper. He could even write a "D" paper if necessary!

His wife, Judy Magee Stone, says, "The pursuit of words led him into a number of reporting jobs until World War II when he went in the Infantry and ended up on the staff of Stars and Stripes in Europe." After the war, he bought his own newspaper, *The Times-Argus* in Central City (in Muhlenberg County), Kentucky. Thus the name of his weekly column, *Mulebergers*, which he has written consistently since 1946.

Literary work, which is a natural for Stone, comes a little harder when it involves writing good humor. At that, he works hard.

Mark Twain once said, "Humor is the good-natured side of truth." when it comes to taking the truth and turning it inside out for a laugh, Stone knows his P's and Q's. He writes, "Lead me not into temptation...I can find plenty by myself." As if that wasn't tipping the scales on truth he adds, "I worry about temptation...what if I resist it and it never comes again."

More than one person can identify with this: "Nobody can say that I don't know my own two minds."

Nor can anyone say Stone doesn't know kids. He writes, "Hire a teenager while he still knows it all!"

And life...well, he's got that figured out too. He carves these words straight from the animated basics of living: "Just when you thought you were winning the rat race...along come faster rats!" Or, "America is a great country....if you can't make it in the rat race, they give you free cheese."

Of this book he says, "I am the

Thief of Bad Gags. Never let it be said that I was guilty of oververification.

"There are all kinds of stories in this book: true stories, partly true stories and stories that are pure invention. This book is a combination of all three." (Trying to figure out which story falls into which category can be very interesting.)

He defines his sources as such: "Today's headlines, friends who contribute material, a little stretching of my little grey cells and downright thievery."

He continues, "I am not sure whether an apple a day will keep the doctor away or not for look what trouble Adam and Eve got into foolin' around with an apple! Nothing has been in apple pie order since then.

"But I do think a good belly laugh twice a day will keep the blues, if not the doctor, away..."

A man who never takes anything seriously is "serious" when he says, "My cure for bellyache...belly laugh twice a day." And that's precisely what his book, *Mulebergers*, is all about...a good laugh. The laugh is sometimes on your friends, sometimes on the neighbors, and sometimes on yourself. Like when he says, "Childhood is the time of life when you make funny faces in the mirror. Middle age is the time of life when the mirror gets even."

He is a wonderful and talented man with a wonderful and talented wife. Both are prolific writers, but his book was solely a product of her determination. He proudly admits, "(This book) was conceived, carried and delivered by my bride based on my previous writings." The *Times-Argus* and his *Mulebergers* columns have won more than 100 prizes in contests sponsored by the National Newspaper Association and the Kentucky Press Association. Larry Stone is one of the

Continued on Page 5

Be glad he's on our side

New Georgetown publisher member of U.S. karate team

Karate instructor and newspaper publisher Bob Scott went to the Soviet Union in mid-March as a member of the first U.S. karate team to compete with that country.

Scott, a Morehead State University alumnus who was named publisher of the Georgetown News & Times in late February, was the only Kentuckian on the 20-member U.S. team that participated in the competition March 8-16 in Leningrad.

"Excited" and "elated" are the words Scott used to describe his first trip out of the U.S. "There are so many good martial artists in this country," he said. "It is indeed an honor to be selected as a member of this team."

Muleburgers

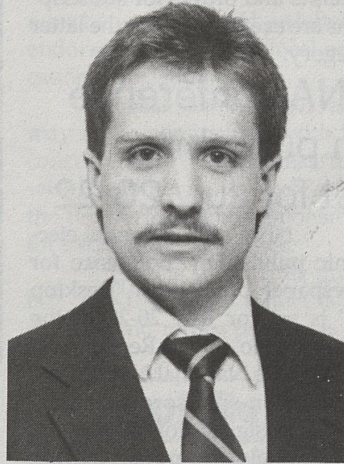
Continued from Page 4

most widely quoted writers in the state of Kentucky.

He has four sons, two stepsons and one stepdaughter. He refuses to retire; continues to write Muleburgers and several news stories each week; loves people and doesn't worry about anything in the world. So when he writes, "Age is when you find yourself over the hill and you don't remember climbing it," he doesn't really mean it!

His punchlines fall somewhere between the bold truth and a suspected lie...just where I'm not sure, but they're sure to make you laugh. "The trouble with truth," Stone says, "is that it has so many variations"...and his humor takes advantage of them all.

His book, Muleburgers, can be purchased at the Times Argus or at the Magee Newspapers in Wickliffe, Smithland, Clinton and Paducah, or by writing to him at Box 31, Central City, Ky. 42330.



Bob Scott

The competition was organized by the Waterbury (Conn.)-Lenningrade Intersport Trade Commission, a non-profit organization which helps amateur athletes train and compete in the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Eric Breuer, a Connecticut state trooper, suggested Scott attend the competition after watching him work out at a karate camp some two years ago.

The schedule for the Soviet competition included four to five days of getting acquainted and exchanging ideas, followed by two days of actual competition with the Russian team. "The experience of seeing another culture only adds to the thrill of this competition," he said. "In the Soviet Union, karate is illegal and can only be used by members of the military or police force."

A black belt instructor in Tae Kwon Do/Tang Soo Do Korean Karate, Scott teaches four evenings a week at the High Street Greater YMCA in Lexington. Since he became involved in the

martial arts, he has given private lessons on numerous occasions because he just "enjoys working with kids."

Scott was born in Wheeling, W. Va., but has lived most of his life in Kentucky. At Morehead State, Scott majored in communications and received a bachelor's degree in 1982.

Upon graduation, Scott worked for a year as the assistant general manager of Channel 61 in Ashland, sold life insurance and was in advertising sales with the Ashland Daily Independent.

M-I honored

(Continued from Page 1)

* treat their staff with enlightenment;

* take the chance that a gifted journalist will use them as an interim step to a bigger job;

* establish avenues for communication, including planning meetings, critiques and and other feedback, and regular evaluations;

* harbor mutual respect and decision-making equality between ownership and management;

* encourage flexibility and teamwork;

* and are a complete product, with strong local elements, a high quotient of enterprise and follow-up, mature reporting of issues, well-organized presentation and reader involvement.

Abbott gained first-hand experience in coping with the challenges facing small daily newspapers during 15 years as a reporter for the Anchorage, Alaska, Daily News.

New postal regulations on inserts now in effect

New postal regulations which apply to pre-printed inserts carried in second class publications took effect March 19. These are the same regulations which had been scheduled to be implemented in December but were postponed in recognition of Christmas business contracts. The three main rules now in the Domestic Mail Manual in 425.42 say:

* A supplement may not exceed the external dimensions of the host issue;

* Material inserted as a supplement in a second class publication may not bear a third class mailing indicia;

* No independent publication (identified by its own International Standard Serial or Book Number -- ISSN or ISBN -- may be mailed as a supplement in a second class publication.

Here are a couple more regulations you need to know when mailing inserts in your newspaper:

* There are no requirements mandating editorial content in advertising supplements inserted in or mailed with unbound second class publications. In such second class publications, the supplements may contain no editorial content or may be a mix of advertising and editorial. The advertising content of the supplement, however, must be included when determining the total advertising and non-advertising percentages of the second class publications.

* No product or product sample may travel as a newspaper supplement. Examples of prohibited products are stationery, cassettes, floppy disks, merchandise samples, swatches of materials, calendars (except for printed cal-

endars of events) and envelopes carrying their own enclosures. Receipts and orders for subscriptions are exempted from the latter category.

NNA conference on publishing set for July 20-22

NNA's third annual electronic publishing conference for newspaper publishers, "Desktop III," is set for July 20-22 at the Denver, Colo., Hyatt Regency.

The National Newspaper Association-sponsored conference is designed for newspaper professionals who are considering or are already using electronic publishing to produce their newspapers. Sessions for the experienced will cover future directions, integration and pagination, personnel changes and training, lots of new software and a users panel.

Those who are considering a system will benefit from sessions such as one with Don Comedy, publishing of the Haskell, Texas, Free Press. Comedy will give straight answers on what works in the newspaper operation.

Max Gordon, an expert on the graphics abilities of desktop computer systems, presents sessions on scanners and graphics manipulation. She is contributing editor to Electronic Publishing and Printing magazine and author of the book "The Guide to Image Processing."

Desktop III also features an exhibition of the latest computer equipment used in desktop publishing.

Desktop III registration forms are available for calling NNA at (202) 466-7200.

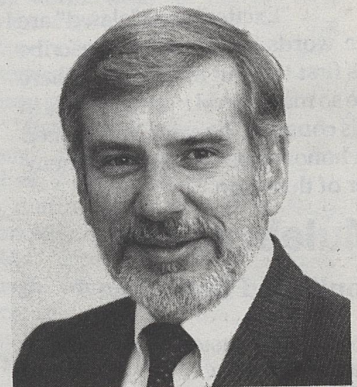
After 40 years

Hust retires

Edd Hust, publisher of the Providence Journal-Enquirer announced his retirement in mid-February in his column "Edd-itorially Speaking."

Hust has been editor/publisher/owner of the Journal-Enterprise for the last 25 years.

Hust recalled for his readers the changes in the newspaper industry over those 40 years in the business -- "Today...I don't even know the terms our staff members have had to learned about our brand new computers."



John Scharfenberger

Scharfenberger joins UK PR

John Scharfenberger, former director of community relations for the Regional Airport Authority of Louisville and Jefferson County, has been named assistant to the director of publication relations at the University of Kentucky.

UK public relations director Bernie Vonderheide said Scharfenberger will be responsible for news media contacts, script writing and specialized public relations projects.

Entry deadline is June 2**KEA accepting School Bell award entries**

Entries are now being accepted for the 1989 Kentucky Education Association's School Bell award. The award program is designed to recognize excellence in reporting and analysis of public education news in Kentucky during the 1988-89 school year.

This year's awards will be presented to reporters who have made a significant effort to provide continuing coverage of the public schools and education issues. Emphasis will be placed on news coverage leading to improve public understanding and support of quality public education.

Entries will be judged on effectiveness of news, feature, or editorial issues. Enterprise must have been published between August, 1988, and June, 1989.

Up to two entries by any reporter will be accepted.

Entries will be judged according to these classifications:

CATEGORY A: Newspapers and wire services -- Print entries will be divided into two categories (1) daily newspapers and (2) weekly or bi-weekly newspapers.

Each newspaper entry should consist of three or more examples of sustained coverage by a single reporter or by a team of reporters.

Entries should be submitted on full-page tearsheets with the entries clearly outlined.

Entries from wire services, consisting of telecopy from wire service printers, will be judged with those from daily newspapers.

(Category B and C are reserved for television and radio news coverage respectively).

CATEGORY D: Invariably there will be instances in which outstanding media efforts do not fit listed categories. In such cases, judges will have the latitude to present special awards.

Entries from newspapers should be submitted directly by reporters or on their behalf by their editors. Such nominations must be accompanied by a letter of endorsement from the local education association.

Local associations also may make nominations with the concurrence of the journalists they wish to nominate. In such cases, the reporters will be responsible for submitting the entries.

Entries become the property of KEA unless return is requested and return postage is included.

Entries must be postmarked no later than Friday, June 2, 1989.

Entries are to be mailed to Mary Ann Blankenship, KEA Communications, 401 Capitol Avenue, Frankfort, Ky., 40601.

Judging will be done independently by professionals in journalism and communications.

Winners will be notified of judges' decisions in July, 1989. Public announcements of winners will be made in connection with KEA's 1989 Summer Convention. Winners will be invited to attend that conference to receive the School Bell awards.

School Bell Awards Entry Form

Please check classification that applies:

Newspaper -- Daily Weekly/bi-weekly
 Special Award

This nomination is made by (check one):

a media representative

a local education association

Name of Newspaper _____

Address _____

City _____

Editor _____

Reporter/Writer _____

Subject matter _____

Explanation and significance of entry (use additional sheet)

Entered by _____

Position _____

Address _____

Complete form, attached to entry and mail to Mary Ann Blankenship, KEA Communications, 401 Capitol Avenue, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Will '89 Kentucky Derby winner spend the night on a bed of....newspapers?

Hay! Look what's new in recycling

Recycling is the name of the game in many states and here's any interesting angle which was reported in the Feb. 6 issue of the Milwaukee Sentinel.

Shredded newspaper is cheaper and cleaner than straw, say Wisconsin farmers who use the shredded newspaper for animal bedding.

"Straw is about \$75 a ton, while newspaper can be purchased for \$20 to \$30 a ton," said a county agent who demonstrated the practice.

In addition to its lower cost, newspaper is non-toxic, has an absorbency of almost twice as much per pound of bedding as straw, and it's a relatively sterile product -- meaning that shredded paper has lower levels of breeding flies than other bedding materials. Shredded

Attorneys General focus on car rental advertising

Attorneys General of all 50 states took under consideration guidelines for advertising car rental rates when they met recently in Hawaii. A task force of National Association of Attorneys General will ask for approval of limits aimed at hidden charges and fees that inflate advertised prices.

The guidelines would require that print media ads contain a clear and conspicuous disclosure of expiration dates, geographical limitations, advance reservation requirements, mandatory airport access fees, refueling costs, time limits, cost for additional drivers, blackout dates, mileage limitations and costs of collision damage waivers.

We'll keep you posted on what, if anything, develops from this task force.

paper also demonstrates and is no problem in waste handling systems.

The article also quotes a pig farmer who says shredded paper lasts longer, too, and is healthier for the pigs, since it does not support mold growth or dust, the "two things that are really bad for animal health."

So the next time you have to spend the night in the doghouse, take along some shredded newspaper.

New HUD ad regulations set penalties for discrimination

New rules by the Department of Housing and Urban Development setting heavier penalties for "discriminatory" classified and display advertisements went into effect March 12.

The new rules also expand existing definitions of "discriminatory" phrases to include those which refer to "handicap" and "familial status." Current law already prohibits the printing and publishing of advertisements which indicate a preference, limit or discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

Exempt from the federal restrictions -- under the current and new regs -- are advertisements for share housing accommodations which indicate a preference on sex (tenants seeking roommates, but not landlords indicating a preference based on sex) for housing by religious organizations limiting occupancy to members of the same religion (unless membership in such religion is restricted on account of race, color, national origin) and members of a truly private club which provides lodging as part of its basic functions.

Kentucky Press Service - 332 Capitol Avenue - Frankfort, Kentucky 40601