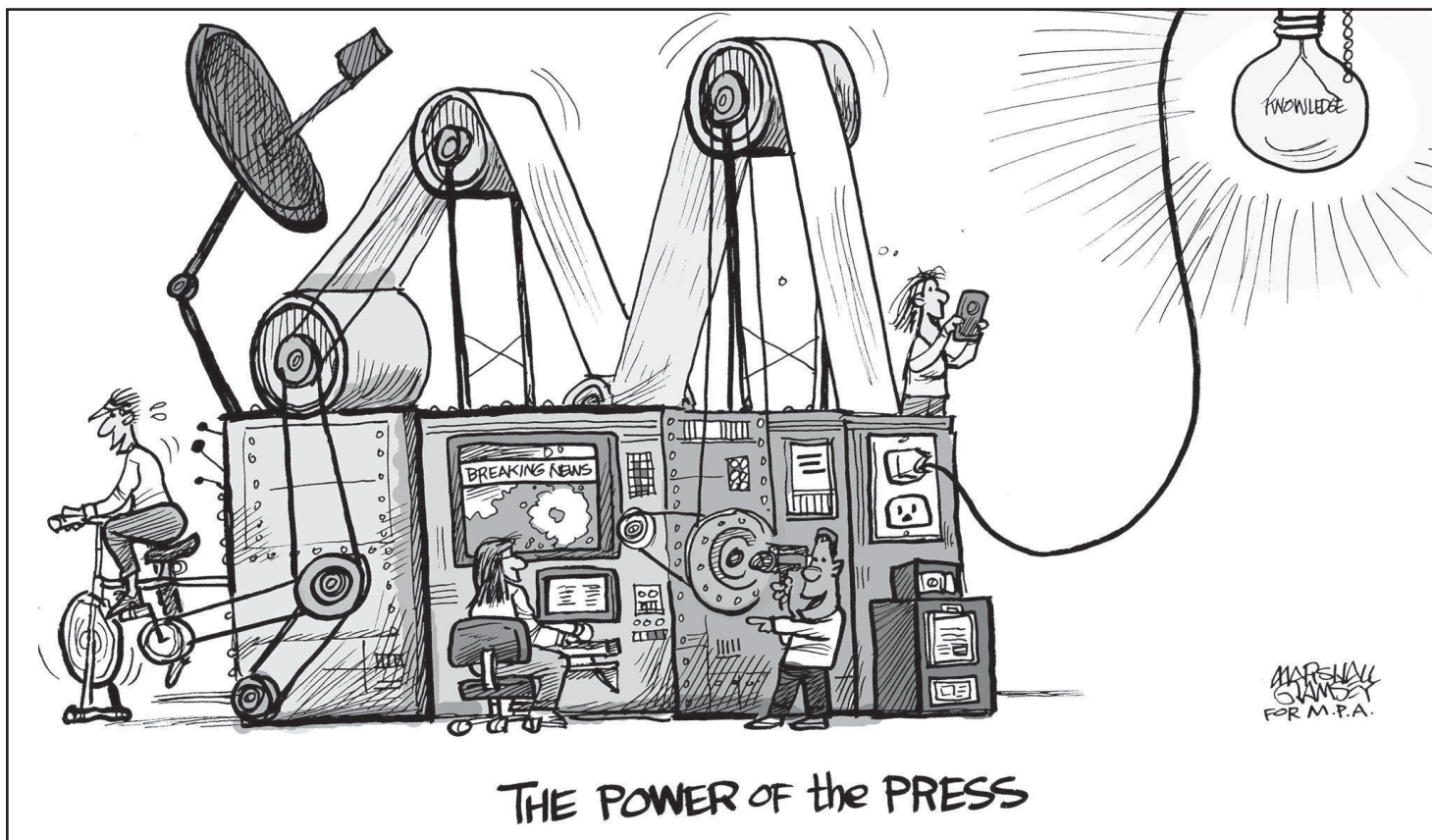


OPINION

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)



The First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition their Government for a redress of grievances.

Letters to the Editor Policy

The Sentinel welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or without documentation will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside The Sentinel readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

Political/Election Letters:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

Send letters to:

nhickson@cgsentinel.com or cmay@cgsentinel.com

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Celebrating National Newspaper Week



and national counterparts. "Community papers are doing better than many large, daily papers because they provide news coverage about things that matter to their local community that would otherwise be overlooked without them," said Al Cross, director of the Institute for Rural Journalism at the University of Kentucky.

In fact, in 2017, the com-

ant understanding that continues to define us as a community newspaper:

To our readers, we are not just the newspaper; we are their newspaper.

USC professor Judy Muller told the Stanford University Press that, while local journalism is certainly about police blotters, obituaries, bake sales and club meetings, "The best community newspapers also hold local

on either side of me.

Twenty years later, it's a sound that I have come to love in the same way a mechanic appreciates the sound of an engine hitting on all cylinders, or the way a music conductor savors the convergence of musical notes into a singular harmony.

(Keep in mind I still type with two fingers, so my contribution to that harmony is more like the cow bell, but still...)

As we continue through National Newspaper Week (Oct. 7-13), I'd like to thank you, our readers, for supporting your local newspaper. Not only with your subscription or weekly trip to the office to buy your copy, but also for your participation and contributions — through letters, emails, phone calls and conversations in our office — that help make *The Sentinel* one of those 7,500 non-daily community newspapers that is continuing to grow.

In the words of Thomas Jefferson in a letter to Col. Edward Carrington on Jan. 16, 1787:

"Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

From the Managing Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

combined readership of those 7,500 non-daily newspapers was almost 20 million more than that of daily newspapers, with non-dailies tallying 65.5 million subscribers — compared to 45.5 million daily-paper subscribers.

This is according to the National Newspaper Association (NNA), which also noted that 70 percent of those small non-dailies have a circulation of less than 15,000; *The Sentinel* is among that smaller group.

When I became an editor-in-chief in September 2016, I'd had the good fortune of working with three terrific editors over the past 20 years I've spent as a journalist.

And while each brought their own style and focus, there has been one import-

governments and institutions accountable by covering meetings, asking questions and recognizing the good as well as the not-so-good because ... if not them, then who?"

While we've received equal amounts of accolades and criticism regarding our coverage of controversial issues ranging from housing and education, to guns and hate crime over the past year, our story meetings are underscored by the notion of "If not us, then who?"

I am reminded of my first day as a journalist covering sports in November 1998 — and how intimidated I felt sitting at my desk listening to the constant sound of keyboard hammering emanating from behind partitions

At least once a week, some 7,500 community newspapers — those with a circulation of less than 30,000 — land on porches, inside mail boxes or at local supermarkets and coffee counters across the United States.

According to a survey conducted by the University of Missouri-Columbia, more than three-quarters of respondents said they read most or all of each edition of their local newspaper — with 94 percent of those people holding subscriptions.

Locally, on Wednesday mornings, you can see the front page of *The Sentinel* suspended in front of faces in coffee shops, restaurants and markets around Cottage Grove as people inform themselves about what's happening in the community — from upcoming festivals and events, to recaps of the latest board meetings and features on local issues and residents.

While there is a notion that print journalism is dying, the truth is that many community newspapers are actually thriving compared to many of their large metro

Guest Viewpoint

End-of-life choice is about compassion

By Bruce Yelle
End Choices

Death is nothing to be afraid of no matter what your belief, we all have to do it. It's not death but the *dying* that is what I and many others fear — particularly for those suffering for years with debilitating conditions and diseases.

I for one do not want artificial measures keeping me alive past my God-given expiration date. Too much money is made by keeping people alive.

Roughly 37 million baby boomers will turn 65 over the next decade, bringing the percentage of people aged 65 or older to 20 percent — or more than 71 million people by the year 2029.

In addition, 42 percent of people who live to the age of 70 will spend time in a nursing home before they die, half of them for two years or more.

Today, 1-in-9 people over age 65 suffer with Alzheimer's. By 2050, the number of those with Alzheimer's is expected to grow to 13.8 million.

If you include other dementias, neurodegenerative diseases, autoimmune diseases and cancers, the number of people considering an end-of-life decision is going to grow exponentially.

Therefore, something needs to be done about expanding our end-of-life choices and making our end days more comfortable. A survey done a few years back of Oregon hospice and palliative care doctors and workers noted that

patients that had their Death with Dignity Provisions in place had a much more comfortable quality of life.

Just the knowledge they had that they would not have to suffer was a great comfort to them and their families.

In 2019, there will be a couple bills in front of the Oregon legislature to expand Oregon's end-of-life choices.

Non-profit organizations like End Choices were created to educate Oregon citizens on the restrictions of the current death-with-dignity law, advance directives and the need to expand them.

I encourage everyone to educate themselves on how they can help make Oregon more compassionate.

Cottage Grove Sentinel

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