APRIL 2025

PAPERCLIPS

the official newsletter of Midwest Free Community Papers

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Check out some of our Conference photos here!

We are proud to announce our recipient for the 2025 Presidents' Memorial Award for Distinguished Service- Joyce Frericks! Congratulations Joyce from all of us at MFCP!!!

President's Corner

MFCP 70th Anniversary Recap

Celebration, Awards, Graphics, Sales, Editorial, and so much more!!!

At our gala, I was honored to present this year's recipient of the Presidents' Memorial Award for Distinguished Service to Joyce Frericks.

And all the planning is over … but 70th anniversary memories will last a lifetime.

The 70th anniversary conference in Sioux Falls was a true celebration. We had our largest conference in over 5 years. We had three full tracks of training including editorial, sales and graphics. All of the sessions were informative and well-attended.

We had a tour of the Forum Communications printing plant in Sioux Falls. And, of course, our annual idea exchange was one of the largest with over 18 presenters.

MFCP started three new awards this year — Graphic Artist of the Year, Journalist of the Year and Unsung Hero of the Year.

We honored Lindsey Young of Kansas Publishing as MFCP's Journalist of the Year. The criteria for the Journalist of the Year award are the recipient must produce high-quality, engaging and impactful content; demonstrate journalistic integrity and a commitment to storytelling; cover community news with accuracy, fairness and depth and help strengthen the role of local publications in informing and engaging readers.

Beyond her own work, Young has made a lasting impact by mentoring others, sharing her knowledge, and strengthening the future of journalism. Her leadership and contributions have not only elevated her own publications but have also enriched the entire free community paper community through a program we all know as My Press Pass.

Jayde Vogeler was honored as this year's Graphic Artist of the Year. The criteria for Graphic Artist of the Year are the recipient must consistently produce eye-catching, effective ad designs; demonstrate creativity, technical skill and attention to detail; work well under deadlines and adapt to client needs, and play a key role in enhancing publication quality and engagement.

Our 2025 MFCP Unsung Hero was awarded to Karen Knobloch of Star Publications. She plays a critical role in the daily success of a publication; demonstrates reliability, teamwork and dedication, goes above and beyond to support the organization.

Her nominator wrote, "Karen is not only an incredibly talented graphic designer, but she is also the backbone of her team at Star Publications. Her creativity, attention to detail and willingness to go the extra mile ensures that every project is not just completed but perfected. She consistently delivers stunning work — so much so that an ad she designed was named Best Overall Ad at the 2023 MFCP Conference."

Karen's contributions extend far beyond that. She played a crucial role in elevating MFCP's branding, single-handedly redesigning marketing materials and helping to bring our new website to life. Her fresh ideas, collaborative spirit, and ability to make the complex look effortless have made a lasting impact on our organization.

We held our annual ad award presentation at our luncheon. New this year we presented certificates to all of the first-place winners in our ad contest.

At our gala, I was honored to present this year's recipient of the Presidents' Memorial Award for Distinguished Service to Joyce Frericks.

She is small but mighty. Fair, trustworthy, positive and honest. A strong leader who puts faith and family first while always looking out for their employees. A quiet force that keeps things running smoothly, guiding us in ways that may sometimes go unnoticed — but never unappreciated.

"Her unwavering dedication and exceptional service to not only MFCP, but to our entire industry, has greatly contributed to the success of our organization and has set a high standard for all of us to follow," commented a MFCP board member.

Congratulations Joyce. You are so deserving of this award.

Finally, we honored our past presidents. Throughout the years, these individuals have dedicated their time, expertise and leadership to guiding MFCP forward. Joining us in Sioux Falls were nine past presidents who are retired and another nine who are still actively involved.

Thank you all who attended the 70th Anniversary Celebration. It was about honoring our past while shaping our future. You are the heartbeat of this industry and, together, we will continue to thrive. It is one that will always hold a special place for me! Now onto planning for next year …

Lisa

From the Office

Two New Member Perks You'll Want to Know About!

Lee Borkowski

Wasn't the spring conference a blast? It was so energizing to be together, share ideas, and celebrate the great work happening across our member papers. While Lisa will be highlighting all the award winners and conference fun in her article, I wanted to pop in with a quick update from HQ—because we've got two exciting new member benefits that you're going to love!

1. Special Sections Exchange – A Creative Goldmine!
We know many of you are producing fantastic special sections, and now there's an easy way to share and get inspired. Our new *Special Sections Exchange* is a shared online drive where members can upload PDFs of their best work, browse through ideas from others, and discover ready-to-reuse or reimagine content. Think of it as a collaborative idea vault to help you plan and profit with less stress.

Click here to learn more and access the Exchange. https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1w3R9Ak16w5IYguJhq0JO_5HkV0Yt3Uf-?usp=sharing

2. Commission for MCN Display Ad Sales – A New Opportunity for Inside Reps!
The MCN Committee (a.k.a. "the greatest committee ever!") has cooked up a great incentive to get your front office and inside sales team more engaged in selling our 2x2 Display Ad program. Starting now, inside reps can earn *direct commission* for every MCN classified they sell—$25 per ad! And yes, we take care of the payment and reporting. There's even a $250 bonus for publishers who rack up five new ads this year.

Click here to check out the full details.

Both of these programs are designed to make your life easier, your team more successful, and your revenue stream a little stronger. Because that's what MFCP is all about—supporting you with tools and resources that work.

Questions? Ideas? Want to chat about how to get started? Just reach out—I'd love to hear from you!

Until next time,
Lee

MVP at Work

Be Present, Be Intentional

By Ashley Huisman
Graphic Designer
New Century Press Publications
Rock Rapids, IA

The last number of years I've been saying to myself in certain moments – BE PRESENT, ASHLEY! I have to remind myself to be more present, be more intentional with my time. Ever since I had my first child over 8 years ago, while trying to juggle being a wife and having a full-time job, I've been striving for this goal. How intentional are we being with our time? At work, at a meeting, at home, at the dinner table, on vacation even. What does it mean to truly be present, to be in the moment?

Notifications – texts, emails, calls, appointments. They're all constantly distracting us from the moments, from our time. Technology can be a blessing and a curse in today's world. We've all made ourselves so available, so reachable that we can't get that one task done or spend that one hour in a meeting or at home with our families without being interrupted. The first step we can take to turn this around is simply prioritizing. Not everything needs attention in that moment, if you don't respond to a colleague in 30 seconds, it will be OK. A 15-minute break between tasks is OK. The work, the question, the text will be there when you are ready to answer it.

When you're at the office, take a few minutes to plan out your day so that your tasks are less random. Going into it with a game plan will always work out better than no plan. Find a schedule that works for you, it may not work for everyone but it just needs to work for you, to be the most productive version of you. Scheduling your day is a simple step to take to put more quality time into each task of the day and keep interruptions at bay.

Slow down and give your full attention to the meeting, to the project, to your goal, to your children. This will help you be less stressed, less anxious and be present in the moment. Small changes every day and being intentional throughout your day and your life will slowly become your new normal. So, turn off your email alerts for a time, silence your messages, recharge your mind. Being intentional with your time can be tough at first and trust me I am still working on it, but a more intentional, more present you will be better in the long run.

Ashley

Members Helping Members

ASK-CRM Rebrands to NewspaperCRM

Spotlight on: NewspaperCRM

If you're looking for a smarter way to manage your ad sales efforts, one of our associate members has just rebranded—and he's got something worth checking out.

NewspaperCRM is the new name and fresh face of a powerful CRM tool designed specifically with publishers in mind. This isn't a one-size-fits-all solution—it's built to help ad reps stay organized, focused, and on top of follow-ups so no opportunities fall through the cracks.

What makes it different? It’s simple, it’s intuitive, and it’s tailored for our industry. You can send targeted email campaigns’, automate goals tracking, see live churn analysis and get real visibility into your team’s activities without wading through clunky software that was made for other types of businesses.

Whether you’re running a solo operation or managing a larger sales crew, NewspaperCRM provides “tools to streamline media selling”. It helps you bring more structure to your day—and more dollars through the door.

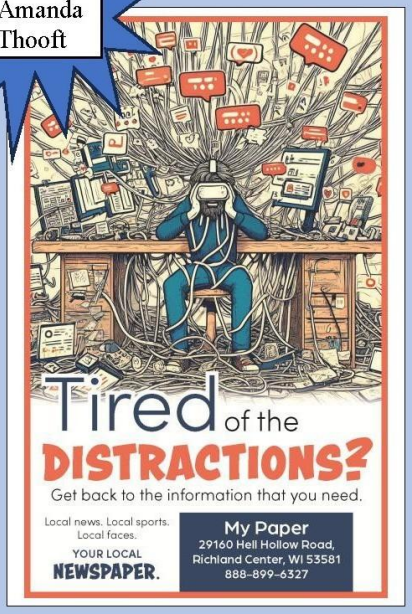
Curious? Give Robin “The CRM Guy” a call….423-430-8577 or 423-647-0877. You’ll be glad you did!

Click here for NewspaperCRM

Member News

Introducing our 2025 Ad Award Contest Winners

1st Amanda Thooft



3rd Tatum Phelps

Check out our 2025 Design Ad Award Winning Ads. All of our design ads are free for you to use. Click here to download them.

HM Heather Johnson

2nd Kathy Arndorfer

Ad-Libs

Following Through is the Thing to Do

John Foust, Greensboro, NC

Want to see something funny? Just watch me trying to hit a golf ball out of a sand trap. You've never before seen such an ugly, unathletic, uncoordinated golf swing. The Scottish pioneers of the game would be horrified.

The biggest of many problems is with my follow-through. Somehow, sand creates a faulty connection between my brain and the club, which results in stopping the swing right as I make contact. How else can you explain the fact that the ball often hits the lip of the trap and rolls right back to where it started? Sometimes I can make my second attempt without changing my position.

One time, one of the guys in my foursome ate a sandwich while I was trying to get out of a trap. That's only a slight exaggeration. He actually finished the sandwich while I was putting.

I mention my golf misadventures, because following through is just as important in selling. In fact, following through can make the difference between a completed sale and one that is hanging on the edge.

Following *through* is not the same as following *up.* Following up can refer to staying in touch after an appointment or conversation, or the start of a new ad campaign. Following up gives both the salesperson and the advertiser a chance to tweak the advertising. Following up can happen any time, right now or months into the future.

Following through refers to things that can help the prospect finalize a buying decision or be happy with the decision they just made. For example, the creative director at an ad agency once told me about selling a print advertising campaign to a local development company. The two owners of the company loved the ideas and called staff members into the board room to *ooh and ahh* over the proposed layouts. But over the weekend, one of the owners took the layouts home to show to his family. He put the boards next to the family's main television, where everyone in the house would see them each day. You can guess what happened: someone at home didn't like the ideas. On Monday, he said he was having second thoughts and suggested that they needed a different kind of campaign. His logical business brain had said "yes," but his emotional family brain said "no."

That business owner was dealing with a form of buyers' remorse – in which a buyer regrets a purchase shortly after paying for it or agreeing to buy it. It's happened to me, and it's probably happened to you (a pair of poor-fitting loafers comes to mind). Many times, it suggests that the buyer didn't have enough supporting facts before buying. That's why it's crucial for salespeople to follow through.

A golf shot isn't complete after the club makes that initial contact. And a sale isn't final after the prospect first agrees to buy. That just means the salesperson needs to follow through with reassuring and confirming information to fight off buyers' remorse.

John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training DVDs to save time and get quick results from in-house training. Email for information: john@johnfoust.com

Ryan Dohrn

Cutting Through Email Clutter

It is spring cleaning time and what a great time to listen to Ryan's tips on how to cut through your email clutter. You guessed it…. using the rule of 3!
Click the link below and find out how relevance, brevity, and consistency are the 3 magic words of the month.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5kdYLL9cQk

Listen to Ryan's ad sales podcast, Ad Sales Nation, on iTunes or on Soundcloud. Keep up to date with Ryan's ad sales training advice on Facebook at: https://www.face-book.com/RyanDohrnLIVE

Ryan Dohrn is an award-winning ad sales training coach, a nationally recognized internet sales consultant, and an international motivational speaker. He is the author of the best-selling ad sales book, *Selling Backwards*. Ryan is the President and founder of Brain Swell Media and 360 Ad Sales Training, a boutique ad sales training and sales coaching firm with a detailed focus on ad sales training, internet consulting, and media revenue generation. Ryan is also the Publisher of *Sales Training World*.

Kevin Slimp

Check Those Settings!

Getting software settings right can make all the difference in print quality

Kevin Slimp - kevin@kevinslimp.com

I wish you could have joined me on my newspaper visits over the past six weeks. I've worked on-site with newspapers stretching from the Pacific to the Atlantic Oceans and from the border of Canada to Mexico, plus several places in between. Yes, I'm tired, but I get pumped up seeing what community newspapers are doing.

As I visit newspapers, I do a lot of things. I'm generally involved in staff training, visiting with local business and community leaders, leading focus groups, and more. While with them, I'm often asked to review computer settings to ensure they get the best quality from their photos and printed pages. You might be surprised that almost every computer I examine includes essential features that haven't been set up correctly.

Over the years, presses have changed, paper has changed, and ink has changed. In addition, there have been changes to the PDF technology. Even though a newspaper will probably print okay if the settings are a little off, it will print much better if you have everything set correctly.

Much of the work related to getting a near-perfect print on newsprint happens in Photoshop. I always say there are four steps to getting great-quality photos on newsprint:

1. Set the CMYK settings (found in edit>color settings) to optimum levels for newsprint
2. Be sure the dot gain is set correctly in the color settings
3. Save the photo at the proper resolution
4. Resize the photo to match its size on the page before placing it on the page

What surprises me most as I visit newspapers is that most have their color settings in Photoshop and PDF export settings in InDesign set for magazine quality. That's fine if you print your newspaper on coated stock, but it's not so great when printing on newsprint.

I suggest sharing these settings with whoever creates the PDF files at your newspaper. If your paper is like most, some things need adjusting.

Step One: Define a PDF Preset

You'll find this under File>Adobe PDF Presets. Click on "Define" next to Adobe PDF Presets. Once the Adobe Presents window opens, click "Press Quality" on the left sidebar, then "New" on the right.

Step Two: Setup the New PDF Export Preset

After clicking the "New" button, you should see a "New PDF Export Preset" window open. First, name the Preset Name at the top of the window. The following are changes you should make under the "General" category:

- Compatibility: Should be set to Acrobat 6
- Uncheck the box that says "Optimize for Fast Web View"

Step Three: Click on "Compression" in the sidebar and make these changes:

- Bicubic Downsampling should be set to "300 pixels per inch" for images above "300 pixels per inch for both Color and Grayscale Images
- Monochrome images should be set to "600 pixels per inch" for images above "600 pixels per inch"

Step Four: Click on "Output" in the sidebar

- Color Conversion should be set to "No Color Conversion

Step Five: Click on "Advanced" in the sidebar

- Subset fonts when percent of characters used is "less than 1%"
- Click on "Done" on the right side of the window
- In the future, simply select File>Adobe PDF Presets and select your new setting from the list

I sometimes make the mistake of thinking I don't need to go over this information when speaking to newspaper designers. However, experience has taught me that most designers can benefit from reminders concerning settings now and then.

It feels good to be home after six weeks on the road. I have a couple of trips to speak at events in North Dakota and Pennsylvania over the coming weeks, followed by three months redesigning four newspapers, with more waiting to get on my list.

I've said it many times, but I genuinely love working with community newspapers.

Kevin Slimp has been a popular consultant and speaker in the newspaper industry since developing the PDF remote printing method in 1994. His upcoming webinars on design, circulation, and software can be found at newspaperacademy.com.

Kevin Slimp is former director of The University of Tennessee Newspaper Institute and founder of NewspaperAcademy.com.