Seven special awards were announced during the 2017 Honors Banquet held on July 7 at the Arkansas Press Association’s (APA) Annual SuperConvention in Little Rock.

Golden 50 Service Awards were presented to David McCollum of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, Pat Stuckey of The Saline Courier in Benton and Jimmy Robertson of The Sentinel-Record in Hot Springs.

McCollum began his career as a teenaged carrier for the Memphis Press-Scimitar, and has worked at a number of publications before serving as sports columnist/editor of the Log Cabin Democrat for 34 years. He is one of the most decorated sports writers in Arkansas history, having won more than 260 awards for columns, editorials, news stories and features from organizations such as the Texas Sports Writers Association, the U.S. Basketball Writers Association, the Football Writers Association of America, the APA, the Associated Press Managing Editors Association of Arkansas and Associated Press Sports Editors.

It was 1967 when Stuckey started her newspaper career delivering the Arkansas Democrat, adding a Benton Courier delivery route in 1968. She gave up the Democrat route in 1969, but kept the Courier. In 1970, she joined the paper full-time, working in composing when it was all paste-up, requiring a lot of time and careful hands to put the paper together. Stuckey worked at the Courier until 1983 when she went to The Sentinel-Record in Hot Springs, also in composing, a job she held for 24 years before returning to the Benton Courier to be the composing director, a position she still holds today.

As a high school student, Robertson began work at The Sentinel-Record delivering papers in the mornings. Upon graduation, he briefly worked in circulation then accepted a position in the composing department and never left. Robertson was on the ground floor of the shift from hot metal production to “cold type” offset printing in 1968, and has been involved in all aspects of production ever since. A member of the Air National Guard for more than 20 years, he was the recipient of the second-ever The Sentinel-Record Employee of the Year Award in 1990. He is now production manager and has helped put out more than 18,250 editions of the Hot Springs newspaper.

Lisa Hammersly of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette-Fort Smith Bureau, Tom Larimer, executive director of the APA and Rep. Laurie Rushing of Hot Springs were all recipients of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Award.

Hammersly has been an investigative projects reporter for more than 15 years, including five for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. She has worked on solo and team investigations into mortgage fraud and housing foreclosures, university spending, campaign finance, public records systems and SIDS. Two investigations helped

continued on page 2
free a man from prison and a woman from jail. Her team was a finalist for a 2008 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, and she has been honored by state and national groups with numerous other awards. All of those stories came to life because of records obtained through state and federal FOI Acts.

Larimer won the award for his lobbying efforts during the most recent Arkansas legislative session. This year’s Distinguished Service Award went to Brenda Blagg, freelance writer and FOI advocate. Author of “Political Magic: The Travels, Trials and Triumphs of the Clintons’ Arkansas Travelers,” Blagg began her career while in college. She worked for several publications before joining the Springdale News in 1971, remaining through its subsequent incarnations, up to the present-day Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. She covered politics, local government, schools, courts, environmental issues and more before becoming a full-time opinion writer. A long-time advocate for Arkansas’ Freedom of Information Act, Blagg is a founding member of the Arkansas FOI Coalition and has won numerous awards for writing, editing and photography.

Brian Reindl, producer and screenwriter of the movie Greater, was named Headliner of the Year. Rookie filmmaker Reindl had no money, connections or experience. But he did have a vision to tell the story of Razorback football player Brandon Burlsworth, a humble reverent young man from a small town who worked his way up from a walk-on without a scholarship to an All-American NFL draft pick. With the help of co-screenwriter and director Brian Hunt, the resulting movie, “Greater,” became a reality. Filmed in Arkansas, it opened in August 2016 in more than 400 theaters nationwide. Now available on DVD and streaming, Greater is still reaching viewers worldwide and bringing positive attention not only to a great champion – but to Arkansas as well.
Newspapers recognized with General Excellence Awards

This year’s winners of the Better Newspaper Editorial Awards were presented at the Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention’s luncheon on Saturday, July 8.

Thank you to our luncheon sponsor, the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Congratulations to these winning newspapers and individuals:

**General Excellence, Smaller Dailies**
First Place – Saline Courier, Benton
Second Place – The Daily Citizen, Searcy
Third Place – Paragould Daily Press

**General Excellence, Medium Dailies**
First Place – Batesville Daily Guard
Second Place – Harrison Daily Times
Third Place – Log Cabin Democrat, Conway

**General Excellence, Larger Dailies**
First Place – Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
Second Place – Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Third Place – The Sentinel Record, Hot Springs

**General Excellence, Smaller Weeklies**
First Place – Press Argus-Courier, Van Buren

**General Excellence, Medium Weeklies**
First Place – Carroll County News, Berryville
Second Place – Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Third Place – The Weekly Vista, Bella Vista

**General Excellence, Larger Weeklies**
First Place – The Leader, Jacksonville
Second Place – Herald Leader, Siloam Springs
Third Place – The Leader, Jacksonville

**Photo of the Year**
Stephen Thornton, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fort Smith Bureau

**I.F. Stone Award**
Lisa Hammersly and Brian Fanney, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fort Smith Bureau

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association selected the winners from 17 daily newspapers submitting 672 entries and 33 weekly newspapers submitting 982 entries.

General Excellence Editorial Award Winners

(Front Row; Left to Right) Christy Hendricks, The Leader, Jacksonville; Taniah Tudor, Press Argus-Courier, Van Buren; Angelia Roberts, Batesville Daily Guard; Lacy Mitchell, Batesville Daily Guard; (Back Row) Scott Loftis, Carroll County News Midweek, Berryville; Josh Briggs, The Saline Courier, Benton; Rusty Turner, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville; Joseph Price, Batesville Daily Guard.
Daily Newspapers - First Place Editorial Award Winners

(Front Row; Left to Right) Jamie Williams, The Daily Citizen, Searcy; April Wallace, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville; Melissa Gute, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville; Sarah Perry, The Saline Courier, Benton; Angelia Roberts, Batesville Daily Guard; Gretch Ritchey, Malvern Daily Record; Lacy Mitchell, Batesville Daily Guard; Sue Silliman, Camden News; (Middle Row) Noel Oman, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Brian Fanney, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Bruce Guthrie, The Daily Citizen, Searcy; David McCollum, Log Cabin Democrat, Conway; Joseph Price, Batesville Daily Guard; Ronnie Bell, El Dorado News-Times; Doug Thompson, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville; (Back Row) Mark Gregory, The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs; Stephen Thornton, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; John Deering, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; David Barham, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Steve Watts, The Daily Citizen, Searcy; Josh Briggs, The Saline Courier, Benton; Josh Waddles, Malvern Daily Record; Rusty Turner, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville; Les Minor, Texarkana Gazette; Jeff Brasel, Harrison Daily Times.

Weekly Newspapers - First Place Editorial Award Winners

(Front Row; Left to Right) John Hofheimer, The Leader, Jacksonville; Taniah Tudor, Press Argus-Courier, Van Buren; Jeri Shire, South Arkansas Sun, Hampton; Tammy Curtis, Spring River Chronicle, Hardy; Shannon Hahn, Madison County Record, Huntsville; Lauren Siebert, Villager Journal, Cherokee Village; Lori Freeze, Stone County Leader, Mountain View; Edie Sutterfield, Stone County Leader, Mountain View; Harold Coggins, Advance Monticellonian, Monticello; (Back Row) Byron Tate, The Sheridan Headlight; Larry Killian, South Arkansas Sun, Hampton; Tanner Newton, The Sheridan Headlight; David Scoll, The Leader, Jacksonvillle; Preston Tolliver, Madison County Record, Huntsville; John R. Schirmer, Nashville News-Leader; Rick Kron, The Leader, Jacksonville; Kent Marts, The Weekly Vista, Bella Vista; David Bell, Carroll County News Midweek, Berryville; Scott Loftis, Carroll County News Midweek, Berryville; Kelby Newcomb, Carroll County News Midweek, Berryville; Janelle Jessen, Herald Leader, Siloam Springs; Donna Lampkin Stephens, North Little Rock Times.
1) Guest presenter **Ed Henniger** offered individual design consulting sessions to newspaper representatives. 2) Members of the Little Rock Air Force Base Honor Guard with Morley Piper, a veteran and long-time newspaperman. Piper served as keynote speaker at the Friday luncheon. 3) Convention attendees enjoyed a beautiful view of the Arkansas River and the newly constructed Broadway Bridge as well as tours of the new Robinson Center at the Thursday evening dinner. 4) After a wonderful meal at Forty Two, the group toured the Clinton Presidential Library on Wednesday evening. 5) **Russell Viers** led a high-energy session named “Power of the Process” on Friday afternoon. 6) The rain cleared right at tee time for the 36th Annual Arkansas Press Association Golf Tournament which was held at the Country Club of Arkansas in Maumelle. The tourney benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. 7) **Alex McGraw**, five-year-old son of APA staffer **Rebecca McGraw**, enjoys a splash in the fountain at the Clinton Presidential Center.
Hand written thank you cards

Following up after an initial meeting with a new prospect is a crucial element in the sales process. One of the easiest ways to fail as a salesperson is to avoid follow up. Too often, we as salespeople cut the process short waiting for the next sales meeting or waiting on the potential client back.

A short follow up email or phone call helps, but it’s the make a big impact. One way to do this to follow up after a personal handwritten thank you note.

“Print journalism,” he wrote, “is extraordinarily expensive to produce. This paper that you’re paying 50 cents for? It actually costs between $8 and $10 to produce … You read that right. Eight to ten dollars. For every single copy of the paper that we sell. Believe me I know. I’ve done the math.”

Billy Reeder thought he was rescuing the Atkins Chronicle when he took it over at the end of May. A month later, he was shuttering the 123-year-old weekly newspaper, the oldest operating business in the Pope County town.

“I thought I had nothing to lose here, and that I could put some of my ideas into practice,” the Arkansas Tech University journalism professor told Arkansas Business last week. He said the previous owners, Van Allen Tyson and Ginnie Tyson, had been trying to sell it for years. “Their daughter Gail called me and said they were going to shut it down at the end of May, and I thought we [his wife, Paula, was co-publisher] would be able to take it over and reboot it.”

Reeder, who already ran a small digital marketing company as a side job, combined the Chronicle and its smaller sister paper, the Dover News, into one weekly and figured he could make them sustainable with a 50 percent budget cut and a website reboot.

But the numbers were far worse than he expected.

“After one month, we’d lost about $5,000,” Reeder said. “I teach journalism at Tech and my wife is a teacher, and we couldn’t afford to spend six months digging a deep debt. The nail in the coffin was a lack of any interest from advertisers.”

Almost nobody was buying ads, and circulation in and around Atkins, population 3,000, was down to about 1,300 a week. “I was putting about 1,000 papers into the boxes and selling about 200, at 50 cents each.

Subscriptions were down, and when “I talked to a guy at a car dealership about buying an ad, he told me that his advertising in a different paper was his biggest waste of money.”

Reeder leveled with readers in a remarkable note on June 26, a piece that felt like a letter from a literate, thoughtful friend.

“The Chronicle and the Dover Times were operating in the red for some time,” he wrote, and readership had been on a steady decline. “Our hope was that by consolidating the papers and cutting expenses deeper than the bone, combined with new energy and resources, we could at least break even … . We could not.”

The Reeders enlisted Johnny Carrol Sain, as their unpaid managing editor. A prolific freelance outdoor writer, Sain also edits About the River Valley magazine in Russellville and is interim executive director of the Arkansas Wildlife Federation.

The idea was for Sain to become a partner through his sweat equity, but he quickly found himself spread too thin. And, “as it turns out,” Reeder said, “reporters like to be able to eat and pay their bills.”

Reeder drove home the financial hurdles with one statistic. Revenue from local advertising for the final weekly Dover Times amounted to $4.50. There was one tiny ad for a local merchant to go with a smattering of statewide ads and legal notices, said Reeder, who was personally putting the Chronicle into the news racks at 1 a.m. on press days. “If the needle had moved even a tiny bit positively, we would have tried to go longer,” he said.

It was a sad end to a storied history for the paper, which was run for a century by the Tyson family.

First published on Nov. 30, 1894, by George L. Parker, the Chronicle was sold to W.F. Turner, a former teacher, in 1898. Turner sold it to another former teacher, Ardis Tyson, in 1917. Van Allen Tyson is Ardis Tyson’s grandson.

“The paper was going to be shut down at the end of May, so we took the chance,” Reeder said. “I hate that communities are losing local newspapers, and that’s the great irony.

“The only place that people are going to get local journalism is from a local outlet. The Democrat-Gazette isn’t going to cover a school board meeting at Hector. But here is the reality: If a community wants a paper, it’s got to support that paper.”

Reeder said that newspaper closings may seem to be simply “part of the continuing move toward digital and television,” but most of those outlets aren’t telling community stories. “Local news outlets like the Chronicle do. But at the end of the day, bills need to be paid.”

Source: Arkansas Business on July 10, 2017
The Sun recognizes farm families

The Sun in Jonesboro capitalized on the 70th annual Arkansas Farm Family of the Year program last month by producing a special section highlighting the county winners in the Northeast Arkansas District. Eight winners were selected from the top county families in each district. The overall state winner will be announced Dec. 7 in North Little Rock at the Farm Family of the Year luncheon.

“Each year, the Farm Family of the Year program identifies and recognizes great farmers and ranchers across our state,” said Randy Veach, president, Arkansas Farm Bureau.

“These families literally power our state’s largest economic engine, agriculture.

“Congratulations to these great farm families. We salute their success, stewardship, and commitment to Arkansas agriculture.”

Since 1947, the Arkansas Farm Bureau has held the Farm Family of the Year Program which has served as a vehicle to recognize outstanding farm families throughout the state. The objectives of the Farm Family of the Year program:

• To give recognition and encouragement to farm families who are doing an outstanding job on their farm and in their community.
• To gain recognition of the importance of agriculture in the community and state.
• To disseminate information on improved farm practices and management.

“The Arkansas Farm Family of the Year program is one of the oldest of its kind in the nation. The success and longevity of this program has only been possible because of our sponsors and partners,” said Maddison Stewart, coordinator, Arkansas Farm Family of the Year Program. “We’re honored to recognize these hard working, passionate, and resilient families who work tirelessly to provide our growing world with food, fiber, and shelter.”

The Arkansas Farm Family of the Year will represent Arkansas at the Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year where Arkansas has had two winners. The families are judged on farm production, efficiency management, family life and rural/community leadership.

The Arkansas Press Association has been a sponsor of the Arkansas Farm Family of the Year program for many years.

Send Us Your Updates!

New employees? Employee promotion?
Retirement party?

Let APA know what's new in your office.
E-mail your office updates to Ashley Wimberley, ashley@arkansaspress.org.
School bus safety opportunity for special section

With most schools across the state starting next month, Arkansas motorists will be sharing the roadways with about 5,500 school buses that will transport about 250,000 students each school day. Arkansas newspapers can play a role in encouraging school bus safety, according to Jerry Owens, senior transportation manager for Arkansas Division of Public School Facilities and Transportation. National School Bus Safety Week is scheduled for Oct. 16-20.

Ashley Wimberley, Arkansas Press Association director of marketing, said member newspapers can be instrumental in informing local communities about school bus safety. “We want to keep students who ride school buses safe all year long. Newspapers who run a special page or section reminding drivers of the law and what to do when approaching a school bus might save lives,” Wimberley said. “Plus we can inform students on what they should do to stay safe.”

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services states that nearly 100,000 bus drivers reported that 88,025 vehicles passed their buses illegally on a single day.

Following are guidelines for drivers to follow:

- Yellow flashing lights signal a school bus is preparing to stop. Red flashing lights and a stop sign indicate the bus is stopped and children are entering or exiting.
- Never pass a school bus that is stopping or stopped to load or unload children. It is unsafe and illegal.
- Stop your vehicle a safe distance of at least 10 feet from a stopped school bus.
- Once the flashing red lights and stop signs have been turned off by the bus driver, proceed slowly and with caution, looking both ways for children who may still be close to the road.
- While driving, never pass a school bus on the right. It is dangerous and against the law.

Dark clouds dissipate on public notice front

By Richard Karpel

The year began with a bang but may end with a whimper.

Legislation that would fundamentally alter public notice laws has been introduced in 21 states in 2017, and several of those bills once had real momentum. But with Memorial Day now behind us, 39 state legislatures have already adjourned, and only a few danger spots remain.

The latest threat to subside was in Maine, where a bill that would have moved public notice in the state from newspapers to a government website died last month despite strong support from Gov. Paul LePage. The clock also ran out on two bad bills in Missouri when the legislature there adjourned in mid-May. One bill would have moved municipal notices to government websites and the other threatened to shift foreclosure notices to websites operated by law firms.

Bills that would have moved most public notices to government websites also died in Texas and Florida, when the legislatures in those states adjourned sine die in May. Also, legislation that would make major changes to public notice in four other states, which have adjourned, appears to have no realistic prospect of passage even though the bills will be carried over until the end of next year’s session.

The only public notice bills that have been approved so far in 2017 introduce modest changes. At least nine states passed laws adding or enhancing newspaper notice requirements in narrowly defined circumstances, like grave relocations in Florida, mining permit applications in Michigan and new prison facilities in Arizona. At least six others moved similarly limited categories of notice to non-traditional venues, including government and radio/TV station websites.

Two states made slight changes to their main public notice statutes. Illinois revised notice requirements for jurisdictions without a newspaper and made technical corrections regarding type size and publication on the Illinois Press Association statewide public notice site. (The governor hasn’t signed the bill yet but is expected to do so.) Utah extended its eligibility requirements to publications that don’t have a periodical permit but publish at least monthly and contain at least 25 percent non-advertising content of “local or general interest.”

Many of these bills were so minor that state press associations didn’t take a position on them.

Unfortunately, some legislators are still intent on making mischief. In North Carolina, a bill that would completely revise the state’s public notice laws had passed the Senate and was still alive in the House earlier this month. And in Pennsylvania, a bill was introduced last month that would move local government notices from general circulation newspapers to government websites.

In Texas, the governor started a special session July 18, and newspapers there are worried that property tax notices could be targeted.

Public notice legislation could also still move unexpectedly in any of the states that haven’t yet adjourned this year. Last year’s epic public notice battle in New Jersey, for example, wasn’t joined until Gov. Chris Christie decided to target newspapers a couple of weeks before the Christmas holiday.
When businesses and organizations schedule newspaper advertising through Arkansas Press Services (APS), it is important that all the ads run correctly and on time. The Arkansas Press Association Board of Directors wishes to recognize member newspapers that run ads error free. APA's Perfect Performance Club – a listing of all member newspapers that have run every ad scheduled through APS this year with no errors – will run every month in AdNews.

At the end of the year, APS will reward newspapers still on the list for their staffs’ hard work and dedication to perfection.

Ashdown – Little River News
Batesville – Arkansas Weekly
Batesville Daily Guard
The Beebe News
Bella Vista – The Weekly Vista
Benton – The Saline Courier
Berryville – Carroll County News
Midweek
Berryville – Carroll County News Weekend Edition
Calico Rock – White River Current
Cherokee Village – Villager Journal
Clarksville – Johnson County Graphic
Corning – Clay County Courier
Crossett – The Ashley News Observer
Danville – Yell County Record
DeWitt Era-Enterprise
El Dorado News-Times
England Democrat
Eureka Springs – Lovely County Citizen
Farmington – Washington County Enterprise-Leader
Fayetteville Free Weekly
Fayetteville – Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Flippin – The Mountaineer Echo
Fordyce News-Advocate
Glenwood Herald
Gravette – Westside Eagle Observer
Harrisburg – The Modern News
Horseshoe Bend – Pacesetting Times
Hot Springs – The Sentinel-Record
Hot Springs Village Voice
Huntsville – Madison County Record
Imboden – The Ozark Journal
Jasper – Newton County Times
Jonesboro – The Sun
Little Rock – Arkansas Times
Little Rock – The Daily Record
Lonoke Democrat
Magnolia – Banner-News
Malvern Daily Record
Manila – The Town Crier
Mansfield – The Citizen
Marianna – Courier-Index
Marshall Mountain Wave
McCrory – Woodruff County
Monitor-Leader-Advocate
McGehee-Dermott Times-News
Monticello – Advance
Monticellonian
Morrilton – Conway County Petit Jean Country Headlight
Mountain View – Stone County Leader
Murfreesboro Diamond
Nashville News-Leader
The Osceola Times
Paragould Daily Press
Pea Ridge – The Times
Perryville – Perry County Petit Jean Country Headlight
Piggott/Rector – Clay County Times-Democrat
Pocahontas Star Herald
Rison – Cleveland County Herald
Salem – The News/Areawide Media
Searcy – The Daily Citizen
Siloam Springs – Herald-Leader
Stamps – Lafayette County Press
Star City – Lincoln American
Star City – Lincoln Ledger
Trumann – Poinsett County Democrat Tribune
Waldron News
Walnut Ridge – The Times Dispatch
Warren – Eagle Democrat
Wynne Progress

68 Papers Remain in “Perfect” Standing
August IS...

Arkansas' Tax Free Weekend is scheduled for Aug. 2-4. The timing of the event is ideal for parents who need to pick up school supplies, art supplies, clothing, shoes and other back-to-school shopping items. The Tax Free Weekend applies to clothing and footwear priced less than $100 per item, accessories priced at less than $50 per item and school supplies.

American Adventures Month. Call on any business that can be interpreted as an “adventure” provider of whatever sort, anything out of the usual daily routine...day camps, canoe rentals, horseback riding, campgrounds, martial arts classes, art and pottery classes, climbing walls, sports lessons, activity centers, go-kart tracks, roller rinks.