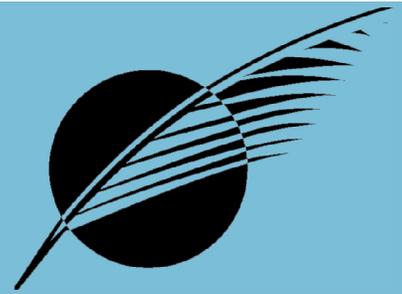


# THE KANSAS PUBLISHER



OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE KANSAS PRESS ASSOCIATION NOV. 20, 2019

## INSIDE TODAY

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The Shawnee Mission Post says its paywall is working.

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John Foust says sell differently to left brain, right brain customers.

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KPA president Travis Mounts invites members to Day at the Capitol on Feb. 13, 2020.

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Emily Bradbury encourages participation in Civics Games.

## KPA CALENDAR

### NOV. 22

Deadline for entries in the annual Awards of Excellence Contest for KPA.

### DEC. 15

The 228th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Bill of Rights.

### FEB. 13, 2020

KPA Day at the Capitol, Topeka.

### MARCH 19-20, 2020

Kansas Press Association Golf Tournament and Annual Convention, Newton.

### MARCH 21, 2020

Sunflower State Spelling Bee.

### APRIL 2, 2020

Kansas Civics Games.

### JUNE 19, 2020

President's Gala, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.



*KPA Executive Director Emily Bradbury is shown outside the Kansas State Historical Society, which will be the site of the President's Gala event on June 19, 2020. The gala takes the place of the*

*former President's Banquet. It will include Hall of Fame inductions, Clyde M. Reed Jr. Master Editor, Murdock, Gaston Outstanding Mentor and Boyd Community Service award presentations as well.*

## Most citizens want access to local news

**A question remains: Are they willing to help underwrite the cost?**

**M**ost Americans think people should have access to local news, even if they don't pay for it, a new Gallup/Knight study has found.

However, as local outlets continue to adapt to the digital landscape, Americans are divided along partisan lines on how or even whether to sustain local news organizations.

Most Americans (76 percent) say they need local and state news organizations to be informed, and 59 percent see their local newspaper as an important symbol of civic pride. But when it

comes to financial support, Americans' behaviors do not match the value they place on local news, the report, "Putting a Price Tag on Local News" found.

"Americans see local news as the consummate public good — but they are deeply divided on how to address the financial challenges local news organizations face," said Sam Gill, vice president for communities and impact and special adviser to the president at the John S. and James L. Knight

See LOCAL NEWS on Page 8

## Consider being a Civics Games sponsor

**M**embers newspapers of the Kansas Press Association might want to consider organizing a local team to participate in a new project sponsored by the association, the first Sunflower State Civics Games in 2020.

The Civics Games becomes the second outreach program for KPA after taking over man-

agement of the Kansas State Spelling Bee two years ago and a critical new revenue stream for the association.

The inaugural Kansas Civics Games is scheduled for April 2, 2020.

"Since this a new initiative for KPA, we hope our member newspapers will encourage their local schools to send a

team to the event," said Emily Bradbury, KPA executive director. "If you've got a local government or history teacher who would be interested, make sure they are aware of the games."

"Better yet, newspapers might want to sponsor a team for the games."

See Emily Bradbury's column on Page 8 for more.



*Julia Westhoff and Jay Senter of the Shawnee Mission Post.*

## Post finds local paywall works

By **Christine Schmidt**  
*Nieman Lab*

**P**aywalls are working at some (inter) national news organizations. But how are they working on the local — or even the hyperlocal — level?

Two years into its paywall, the north-east Kansas-based Shawnee Mission Post is at the forefront of smaller outlets asking their readership for money in exchange for reading. More and more are considering it, but at a panel about increasing loyalty and the audience funnel during the recent Local Independent Online News Publishers conference, one LION attendee asked, paraphrased: “That’s great, but how can we take that data back to help direct ad sales?”

Look, business models are different for different markets (and not all local models work in all local markets), but if The New York Times is seeing its digital advertising dip, advertising may not be the boat that a smaller outlet wants to tie itself to.

The Shawnee Mission Post, a member of the Kansas Press Association, currently

employs three people full-time — the husband-and-wife team of Jay Senter and Julia Westhoff and reporter Leah Wankum, with Juliana Garcia joining full-time in January. After building an audience over 10 years and growing its subscriber base, they plan to trim their emphasis on advertising next year.

“[Small publishers] just don’t really see the value in what they do. They’re not forcing others to see that value,” Westhoff said. “For us, [introducing the paywall] was at the breaking point of ‘we’re going to do this or we’re going to be done.’ We are really grateful that it did work out. For us, after having doing the site for seven years, that needed to happen.”

The Shawnee Mission Post sees success in a new formula: Paywall. More civics. Fewer restaurants.

I first wrote about the site’s paywall in the summer of 2017, soon after Senter (the editor/publisher) and Westhoff (who joined the staff full-time as director of sales

See **PAYWALL** on Page 4

## 2019-20 KPA BOARD

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Manhattan Mercury  
nseaton@themercury.com

## KPA OCTOBER NETWORK WINNERS

**T**he following newspapers sold either direct placement, Kansas Display Ad, Kansas Classified Ad or out-of-state network ads in October. If you sell a KDAN or KCAN, which run in almost 150 Kansas newspapers, you keep half the money.

Sell outside of Kansas (SDAN or SCAN) or do direct placement in other papers and keep half the commission allowed to KPA.

Call Amber Jackson at KPA to get tips on how to sell these ads.

**KDAN** — Rural Messenger, five ads for a profit of \$2,140; Humboldt Union, one ad for a profit of \$450; Ellsworth County Independent-Reporter, one ad for a profit of \$450.

**DIRECT PLACEMENT** — Eureka Herald, Hays Daily News.

# Left brain? Right brain? Yes, people are different

**D**iane was telling me about her early days in selling. “One day stands out in my mind,” she said. “I had back-to-back appointments with two different prospects to talk about a special section. The first person was interested in what his ad would look like and the importance of selecting illustrations to project the right image. The second person jumped right into the numbers and wanted to know the details of rates and tracking systems.



**John Foust**

“Both people bought ads, but it fascinated me that they arrived at their decisions in such different ways. Both cared about the appearance of their ads, but the first person cared more. Both people cared about numbers, but the second person cared more.

“That’s when I realized that there is a lot of truth in the right brain-left brain concept I had heard so much about. The left side is the logical, mathematical side and the right side is the emotional, creative side.

“Of course, no one is 100 percent on either side, but most people have a natural tendency toward one side. Tendencies usually show up in childhood. Left brain

children are better at math and right brain children are better at creative writing.”

Diane explained that these traits are clearly evident in adults. “We’ve all been in conversations where the other person seems to be on a completely different wavelength. That could be due to different thinking styles. One of the key principles of selling is to ‘know your audience,’ which goes beyond knowing their company history and marketing motives. We have to get in step with the other person’s thinking style, too.

“During a sales presentation, I try to adapt to the other person’s style. When I’m talking to left brainers, I focus on facts and figures – and I use testimonial examples with lots of statistical evidence. When I talk to right brainers, I concentrate on creative strategy, with similar testimonials. When I meet with two or more people, I make sure to include information for both types.”

What about the ads themselves? “It’s interesting to study ads that deliberately take thinking styles into consideration,” Diane said. “Look through a technical publication and you’ll see ads that are filled with product specs and statistics. The same

advertisers would have to take a different approach in a publication which appeals primarily to right brain readers. But in a general interest setting – like a newspaper – it’s smart to include ad elements that appeal to both types.

“All of this has convinced me that flexibility is one of the most important traits of an advertising professional,” she explained.

“Too many people in this business think they can make the same presentation to everybody. That just doesn’t work. We have to make adjustments and do everything possible to connect. We shouldn’t expect them to adapt

to us. We have to adapt to them.”

Diane makes a good point. It’s not always about right and wrong. Sometimes it’s a matter of right and left.

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**Diane makes a good point. It’s not always about right and wrong. Sometimes it’s a matter of right and left.**

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*John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information at [john@johnfoust.com](mailto:john@johnfoust.com).*

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## Deadline extended for AOE entries

**M**embers of the Kansas Press Association wanting to enter the Awards of Excellence news and advertising contest have until 10 p.m. Friday to complete their uploads.

This is the final deadline extension.

“The deadline has now been extended a number of times this year because we don’t want to leave anyone out who wishes to participate,” said Emily Bradbury, KPA executive director.

“But we must have this completed soon

so the entries can be sent to our judges.”

The AOE contest is a way for writers, editors, photographers, advertising designers and others to receive recognition for their best work.

One addition this year is the Journalist of the Year award.

As has been the case the past several years, most of the contest requires digital uploads.

[Click here](#) to access the website for uploading your entries.



### THIS MONTH’S QUESTION

**Q.** Can you give us an update on the Montgomery Family Fund Innovator Incubator project?

**A.** This new initiative was announced back in October and will award up to two grants (for a total of \$5,000) for new, revenue-producing innovation projects, business models and project that jump-start new revenue streams by KPA members. The application window closed on Nov. 10 and the winner(s) will be announced after Dec. 1.

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# Plan to join your colleagues Feb. 13 at Capitol

Circle this date – Feb. 13, 2020. That’s the next Kansas Press Association Day at the Capitol. We need to have you there.

Kansas newspapers big and small have a vested interest in the happenings in Topeka, as do our readers.

But newspapers’ interests in legislative happenings go beyond simply reporting on what takes place in the Capitol.

There are new rumblings that legislators could take another shot at changing or eliminating public notice. We don’t yet know how serious those rumblings are, but the financial impact on newspapers could be significant. The legal notice income that comes to some papers is the difference between closing and continuing to publish. Most industry watchers expect Kansas will lose newspapers if public notice goes away.

This also is a direct threat to open government. Newspapers have long served as the place where government shared with the public what it is doing. Public notices provide a permanent and unchangeable record of government action. Newspapers serve as independent overseers.

If public notice moves to government operated websites, what guarantee do we have that information now in public view will remain that way? And what guarantee do we have that those records aren’t changed when something becomes too

expensive, too embarrassing or too much of a hassle to fix?

Government cannot and should not be its own watchdog.

Newspapers still have the power to influence legislators and the laws they make. But to maintain that influence, we need to make sure elected officials know we are paying attention.

Many of us do a very good job of that in our own backgrounds, whether through stories and editorials, or over-the-fence conversations with our elected officials, who often also are our neighbors.

There is something to be said about solidarity and making a show of force. One of the best ways that we can let elected officials know that we’re still here and still watching is by showing up together for KPA Day at the Capitol.

This event ended for several years because participation fell so low. A turnout looked worse than not having the event at all.

Now that this has again become an annual event, we need to your participation to keep our voice heard and our presence seen.

Starting in 2020, the annual convention is moving to its more traditional spring-time schedule. That means KPA Day at the Capitol is just that – a single day. We hope

this will make it easier for publishers and editors from across Kansas to attend.

I would like to personally invite each of you to join us. Emily and the rest of the staff also want to hear from you about how this day should look. It’s a great chance to see your local legislators face-to-face, to come into their turf and see how they operate.

My experience is that my local legislators appreciate the effort to visit them in

Topeka. It can be a pleasant experience, and it’s a chance to share ideas on what matters are most pressing in the still young legislative session.

More details will come as we move into the new year. If you haven’t joined us in a while, you may be hearing from me or one of our board members to see if we can coax you to Topeka for a day.

It’s a day that’s im-

portant for us as an organization and as an industry. We hope you feel the same way.

Feb. 13, 2020 – mark your calendars now.

**Travis Mounts** is president of the Kansas Press Association for 2019-20 and managing editor and co-owner of *Times-Sentinel Newspapers*, based in Sedgwick and Sumner counties.



**Travis Mounts**

**If public notice moves to government operated websites, what guarantee do we have that information now in public view will remain that way? And what guarantee do we have that those records aren’t changed when something becomes too expensive, too embarrassing or too much of a hassle to fix?**

## Paywall

Continued from Page 1

after a previous employee left in August 2017) had launched it. In the paywall’s first three months, the Shawnee Mission Post had hit the milestone of 1,000 subscribers at \$5.95 per month — the goal Senter had set for its first year. More civic-info coverage replaced restaurant closures and car crashes, and the Post has now grown to 2,650 fully paying subscribers. That’s an annual run rate of nearly \$190,000.

“We started to look at what was converting people who just visited the page to people who wanted to pay us,” Senter said. “The accountability journalism, the Civics 101 content we put out there — that was

the kind of stuff that seemed to get people over the hump and giving us money every month... Things that were on the fires-and-car-accident side of things would get a lot of page views, but didn’t seem to have lasting impact on the way that people live their lives around here.”

The Post hasn’t tweaked its subscription price much since introducing it — though the first month is now 99 cents — and a 430-respondent subscriber satisfaction survey in January showed that a broad majority is happy with the value that the subscription provided. Senter had researched the price point of national subscriptions and that of its nearest major metro newspaper, McClatchy’s Kansas City Star, and aimed for a \$1.99 price tag.

“I had a friend much wiser than I [who said] no matter what the rate is, a lot of

people just aren’t going to pay,” he said.

Getting people over the paywall is the first problem; keeping them is another battle. Some 500 or 600 accounts have canceled their subscriptions, but Senter said it’s unclear how many of those signed up to read just one article (after using up their two free page views) and then canceled, or how many ran into their own financial constraints and decided to cut the Post.

“We have a lot of people on fixed incomes” in the community, Westhoff said. And being a two-person operation, the Post hasn’t had the time to dig into the data yet, Senter said.

But the subscription revenue has proven to be such a reliable source for the Post

See POST on Page 5

# Post

Continued from Page 4

that it will cut the quantity of display advertisements by 20 percent next year. The prices for the remaining ad slots will rise, but the user experience (which will be the same for subscribers and non-subscribers) should improve.

“Our market has enough large institutional organizations that have ad budgets that they want to reach the breadth of our audience, and we present a pretty unique opportunity to do so,” Senter said. “Markets in more rural, less affluent areas may not have enough of a volume of those organizations to make the premium-package approach work.”

Two years in, Westhoff said, “we know traffic is still increasing and our competitors [in traditional media] are folding ... we’re in a strong place to diversify our revenue streams and make it a pleasant experience for everyone.”

But again, this won’t be feasible for every publisher. A number of LION members have narrowed their focus to reader revenue, via paywall or direct public offering or more, after establishing themselves in their communities over several years. And they were also the ones that had cobbled together enough money to pull the trigger on a new idea with a hefty cost to start out. (The paywall service the Post uses comes with a \$1,500-plus setup price.)

“From our experience, having that direct financial relationship with readers [has worked],” Senter said. “I hope more LION publishers will look to it, but you have to have that established relationship.”

**IT'S BACK...WITH A TWIST!**

# KPA 4-PERSON GOLF SCRAMBLE

**MARCH 19, 2020 • 10 AM  
SAND CREEK STATION, NEWTON**

**\$60 PER PLAYER (INCLUDES CART RENTAL AND LUNCH)**  
REGISTER BY FEB. 15 FOR A \$10 EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT  
<https://kspress.wufoo.com/forms/kpa-4man-golf-scramble>

**Start your convention experience off right.  
There will be prizes, food and fun! You won't want to miss it!**

# SOLD!

***The Clay Center Dispatch***

Previously owned by Ned Valentine

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“I want to thank Ed Anderson of National Media Associates for his professional work on this transaction.”

Ned Valentine, former Publisher  
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**We look forward to speaking with you about  
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P.O. Box 849

Ada, OK 74821

## MARKETPLACE

### MANAGEMENT

**PUBLISHER** — Publisher needed for twice-weekly newspaper in Alliance, Nebraska. Family-owned for generations, affiliated with the Seaton group. Beautiful Sand Hills setting. Debt-free operation. Pay commensurate with experience, with an opportunity for ownership. Contact Ned Seaton, nseaton@themercury.com. (7-2)

**PUBLISHER**- Three newspaper paper group in southwest Oklahoma is seeking candidates for the publisher's position. Candidates should be experienced in community journalism, preferably with a background in advertising and marketing, but also with an understanding of newsroom operations and managing employees. Candidates must also be leaders with strong people skills. Please email a cover letter and resume to Scott Wesner at wesnermedia@gmail.com.

### NEWS

**ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR** — A full-time assistant editor is needed at The Chanute Tribune and Parsons Sun. The ideal candidate should have extensive knowledge of and experience in InDesign and Photoshop, have a demonstrable talent for covering local community news and uncovering special feature stories, and the ability and desire to be a team player and self-starter. Our two newspapers are independently owned and will stay that way. We are located in Southeast Kansas, two hours or less from KC, Tulsa, Wichita and Joplin. We offer health, dental and life insurance, as well as generous paid time off. Salary is commensurate with experience, and there is room to grow from this position. Send resume with references and story/photo examples to Shanna L. Guiot, Publisher, PO Box 559, Chanute, KS 66720 or email to shanna@chanute.com

**COPY EDITOR/PAGE DESIGNER** - Newspaper and digital media company in vibrant Midwestern college town is seeking a talented copy editor/designer to work on a team that edits a variety of content and designs both print and digital pages. Candidates should have excellent writing and grammar skills, as well as a command of AP style and experience laying out print pages with Adobe InDesign. The job requires evening and some weekend and holiday hours. Duties include editing stories for print and online, writing engaging headlines, designing news and sports pages and working closely with other night editors to produce a high-quality publication on deadline.

### Are your ads still timely?

**T**he Marketplace Page is how we tell each other about job openings, newspapers for sale and miscellaneous items for sale.

Ads on this page that have run for more than six months (except for newspapers for sale) are removed. Please resubmit if jobs are still open.

Please review the remaining ads on this page and indicate to ebradbury@kspress.com if they are still timely.

The Lawrence (Kan.) Journal-World operates a seven-day morning newspaper that is delivered to about 10,000 households in Lawrence and northeast Kansas. In addition, the company operates LJWorld.com, a comprehensive news website that attracts about 25,000 daily users and is supported by a strong base of digital subscribers. The company also publishes KUsports.com, which provides complete cover of athletics at the University of Kansas. Lawrence is a growing community of about 100,000 people, and is a short 30-minute drive from the Kansas City metropolitan area. Lawrence is home to the University of Kansas, and offers a host of cultural and sporting amenities to its residents.

The company offers a competitive wage based on experience and qualifications. The company's benefits package includes health insurance, paid vacation, sick leave, and 401(k) retirement plan. Applicants should send a cover letter and resume to Managing Editor Kim Callahan at kcallahan@ljworld.com. Finalists also should be prepared to take a copy editing test as part of the interview process.

**REPORTER** -The Wichita Business Journal is searching for a reporter who can build a list of strong sources, break news, write sophisticated and impactful cover stories and own their beats. Candidates should be able to mine data for stories, use social media as a reporting tool and make connections with the Wichita business community. This person will relish the opportunity to scoop the competition daily, online and in print. The Wichita Business Journal is an award-winning, highly respected source of business news in Wichita and south-central Kansas. The WBJ and its 40+ sister publications are part of American City Business Journals, the No. 1 source for local business news in the nation. Contact Editor-in-Chief

Bill Roy: broy@bizjournals.com. (5-25)

**REPORTER** - If you are an eager, hungry journalist with feet planted firmly in both the old-school print as well as the digital and social media worlds, the Great Bend Tribune, a sweepstakes award-winning daily, is looking for you. We need someone in our newsroom with a nose for news and the stories behind the stories. They must be reliable, accurate while being great communicators comfortable with the diverse platforms used by newspapers today. Job entails beat reporting, updating social media sites, and creating news content the Tribune and its special sections. If this fits you and you want to be a part of our news team, please send letter, writing samples, resume and references to Dale Hogg, managing editor, Great Bend Tribune, 2012 Forest Ave., Great Bend, Kan., 67530, or to dhogg@gbtribune.com. (3-20)

**REPORTER NEEDED** — now for western Kansas twice-weekly, near lake with state park and federal reservoir, great hunting, fishing hiking, biking. Cover city and county, schools and more, features and creative coverage. Help with page design, learn the craft of newspapering. Pay competitive, based on experience, plus benefits. Contact Dana Paxton, general manager, at dpaxton@nwkansas.com, and Steve Haynes at steve.haynes@nwkansas.com EOE/M/F/D/V (1-4)

### ADVERTISING

**VIDEO PRODUCTION** - Garnett Publishing, Inc., publishers of The Anderson County Review in Garnett and The Trading Post in Lawrence, is launching a video production department to produce fast, effective digital video advertising for our clients to be distributed through a number of online and social media channels. We need either an experienced video editor to assist in project production, or an accomplished beginner anxious to boost his/her resume who can take direction from our sales staff on behalf of our clients. You should have an understanding of deadline-focused operations, have your own equipment/software and remote work facilities. Compensation is on a project-by-project basis. If you're interested send links to some of your work, your fee structure & expectations, a description of your experience and explain how your work can help our clients succeed, to Dane Hicks at dhicks@garnett-ks.com.

## MARKETPLACE/CONT. FROM PAGE 6

**RETAIL ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE** — The Great Bend Tribune is seeking a full-time Retail Account Executive or Sales Team Leader to join their award winning team. This strategic position will be responsible for bringing innovative advertising solutions to local businesses in Central Kansas. The right candidate will be a resourceful, performance-driven professional that has the tenacity to grow sales and market our customers. Computer and presentation skills are required for this position as well as a good driving record and reliable transportation.

The ideal candidate will have experience selling both print and digital advertising with a proven track record of delivering meaningful and compelling solutions for clients. He/she must be a team player willing to inspire and be inspired by being part of a dynamic media company focused on customer service.

Responsibilities include: Develop and maintain positive and productive relationships with our clients and staff, use professional selling techniques and marketing skills to close sales or upgrade existing accounts, increase and build client base, provide client feedback to internal team as appropriate, effectively communicate sales information and opportunities internally, calculate, input and maintain records of sales, attend training and meetings as appropriate, network with local community professionals and assist in developing and growing market share.

Compensation includes a base plus commission with established account list and benefits.

To apply send your resume and cover letter to: Mary Hoisington, Great Bend Tribune, 2012 Forest Ave., Great Bend, KS 67530 or email: [mhoisington@gbtribune.com](mailto:mhoisington@gbtribune.com)

**ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE** - The Iola Register is a locally owned newspaper. We are looking for a Sales Representative to join our ambitious team. This position would offer dynamic advertising solutions to local businesses. Email [advertise@iolaregister.com](mailto:advertise@iolaregister.com) for more information.

**DESIGN**  
**GRAPHIC ARTIST/PAGINATOR/DESIGNER** - Creative individual as a full-time paginator/graphic designer. Job

involves laying out pages, working with graphics and photos, and updating the website and social media. There may be some reporting duties as well. Involves evening and weekend work. Must be reliable, quick but accurate, and have a keen eye for design and sense for details. If this fits you, please send letter, portfolio, resume and references to Dale Hogg, managing editor, Great Bend Tribune, 2012 Forest Ave., Great Bend, Kan., 67530, or to [dhogg@gbtribune.com](mailto:dhogg@gbtribune.com).

### PRODUCTION

**PRESS OPERATOR** — Accepting resumes for Press Operator at progressive, family-run newspaper in Weatherford, Okla. Experience with Goss Community press helpful. Attractive compensation and relocation packages. Contact Phillip Reid at 580-772-3301 or email resume to [PhillipReid.net](mailto:PhillipReid.net). (3-27)

**PART-TIME PRESS OPERATOR** — The Great Bend Tribune is seeking a part-time press operator to join our printing team. The ideal candidate will have previous web press experience, including print of process color and press make-ready. Good work ethics along with mechanical skills and ability to react quickly to print related problems. We are willing to train the right person. Job requirements include: • Current valid driver's license with clean driving record, ability to pass a written fork lift test and train on lift; • Color vision and depth perception; • Ability to lift a minimum of 75 pounds; • Ability to read and comprehend written and/or oral English instruction along with ability to communicate effectively with team members. To submit a resume with references or request an application contact [jaudus@gbtribune.com](mailto:jaudus@gbtribune.com).

### NEWSPAPERS FOR SALE

Rawlins County Square Deal, weekly newspaper in northwest Kansas. Official city, county and school publication. Only newspaper in county. Strong subscription and advertising base and supportive community. Sale includes building, up-to-date equipment and software, archives and active e-paper. Call 817-805-3600 or email [editor@squaredealnews.com](mailto:editor@squaredealnews.com) for more information. (7-5)

136 year old weekly newspaper in southeast Kansas. Owner wishing to sell publication, which he has owned for 39 years. Steady subscription base, located in historic Kansas town. Inquire through KPA by emailing [ebradbury@kspress.com](mailto:ebradbury@kspress.com). (6-14)

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# Let's work together to raise civics learning bar

**W**ant to win a free KDAN for a local advertiser while promoting civic engagement and learning? Read on, friends.

In September, the Annenberg Public Policy Center released the results of the 2019 Annenberg Constitution Day Civics Survey.



**Emily Bradbury**

The study revealed many blind spots for Americans when it comes to the civic knowledge but the one that stood out to me was this – only 39 percent of Americans can name the three branches of government.

And 22 percent of Americans couldn't name even one.

We want to be a part of the solution. We, as an association of news publications, have a vested interest in having a civically engaged readership.

The survey found a link between high school civics classes and civics knowledge.

A regression analysis showed that people who said they took high school civics were more likely to know the answers to six survey "knowledge" questions, including naming the various

branches of the U.S. government.

The same held true for people who said they were greater consumers of the news, whether print, television or online.

"While this marks an improvement, the overall results remain dismal," said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center.

"A quarter of U.S. adults can name only one of the three branches of government and more than a fifth can't name any.

"The resilience of our system of government is best protected by an informed citizenry. And civics education and attention to news increase that likelihood."

Earlier this year, the Wisconsin Newspaper Association held its first ever Wisconsin Civics Games.

With the WNA staff's help, we put together a plan to host the first Kansas Civics Games on April 2, 2020 in Topeka. We are limited to 26 teams and our registration deadline is Jan. 5, 2020.

This is where you come in.

Reach out to your local social studies

and government teachers. If you, as a KPA member, sponsor a local team by paying their \$150 registration fee, you will be listed as an official sponsor of

the Kansas Civics Games and will receive the official Kansas Civics Games 2020 T-shirt.

If your team ultimately wins, you will receive a free KDAN network ad for the advertiser of your choice (a \$1,800 value).

And you will earn one year of bragging rights among the membership and, let's be honest, that's the best prize of all.

So let's work together to raise the civics learning bar while engaging your local high school by sponsoring a team in the first ever Kansas Civics Games.

The \$150 registration fee is a small price to pay to help raise civic awareness and engagement in your community.

[Click here](#) for more information on the Kansas Civics Games and how to register.

**Emily Bradbury** is executive director of the Kansas Press Association.

## Local news

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Foundation. "It's time to ask searching questions of ourselves as a society about how much we value local news, and what we're prepared to do to ensure its future."

With just one in five Americans subscribing or donating to local news organizations, the financial base for the industry is limited, the report found. Americans believe that individuals, philanthropic organizations and tech platforms should help close the financial gap for local news.

Americans are deeply divided on whether subsidies are appropriate, even as some experts have argued that they are a key part of the funding puzzle: 66 percent oppose support from the federal government for local news, and 60 percent from the local government.

Views on subsidies vary greatly by political affiliation, with most Democrats (53 percent and 61 percent) saying they favor federal tax funds and local tax funds, respectively, to support local news organiza-

tions, while most Independents (30 percent and 37 percent) and Republicans (8 percent and 14 percent) do not.

One of the challenges is that Americans still believe local news is doing well financially. Yet as news publishers compete with search engines and digital platforms for advertising revenue, the financial strain on local news organizations – especially newspapers – has hollowed out newsrooms, leaving some communities without a fundamental democratic institution.

While the study's results are sobering, the research did uncover potential solutions. Educating the public on the benefits of local news for American democracy, and its current financial straits, increased Americans' likelihood of financially supporting local news, the study found.

In addition, the Gallup/Knight report found:

☐ Americans take pride in their local newspapers. Six in 10 Americans consider

the local newspaper in their community an important symbol of civic pride (44 percent) or the most important symbol of civic pride (15 percent).

☐ The subscriber base for local news has shrunk dramatically: 34 percent say they have at one point paid for local news, and only 20 percent have paid in last year.

☐ No one type of content will help news organizations regain subscribers: When asked what would make news consumers re-up their subscriptions, no common themes emerged, though special content and discounts were the most often chosen responses, each by 31 percent.

☐ There's little consensus on how – or whether – to sustain local newspapers. Nearly half (47 percent) of Americans say local newspapers are vital and should be preserved, but there is a deep partisan division about whether those newspapers should be allowed to fail if they can't sustain themselves.

[To read the full report, go here.](#)

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