

# Success in newspaper industry means promoting our story to all

By Ron Wassink  
OCNA President

In June of 2003, a newly formed task force met to map out the future direction of the Ontario Community Newspapers Association. The task force, which I headed and included directors of the association, used a vision statement that was formulated in 2000 as its framework. Data from the latest membership survey was also valuable to the task force. Consistently topping the annual survey is a simple and straightforward request from members that Ad\*Reach sell more national advertising.

The task force determined that if Ad\*Reach was to continue to grow our share of the national advertising dollar, it would be imperative to embrace a strategy that focused on promoting our industry and to lobby/educate provincial government politicians and bureaucrats on who we are, what we stand for, our strength in numbers and our excellent circulation/readership. The message we

want to convey to the province is the government should be using community newspapers more in its advertising strategy.

Promotion and government lobbying equate to more national advertising. A greater emphasis will be placed on both aspects of the strategy in the coming months and years. If we are to succeed in selling our industry, we have to tell our story. But, it's not only the advertising agencies and government politicians who need to hear about Ontario community newspapers, but also our local advertisers and readers.

To that end, OCNA staff will be implementing an advertising campaign geared to our newspapers.

Our members will be asked to run the



RON WASSINK

ads.

It should be no secret OCNA represents 273 newspapers. It's a membership that continues to grow. Our combined circulation cannot be rivaled by any other media. Our readership, which the latest ComBase readership study shows to be an average of 70 per cent across the province, is higher than any other media.

That's the message we're taking to the provincial government this year as OCNA representatives meet with Premier Dalton McGuinty, various ministries and government staff. For too long, the community newspaper has been misunderstood. Throughout 2003, Don Lamont, OCNA directors and staff have been conveying that message of who we are to those who need to know.

Provided we continue on this path as outlined by the task force, that of promoting our industry and lobbying government, we will see results where it counts most—more national advertising for our members.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Shaking things up for Spring convention

By OCNA Staff

While we can't give you an official theme for the 2004 OCNA Spring Convention, the unofficial one could be "Shaking Things Up." With an earlier date, a new venue and a streamlined schedule, you have to look twice to see the old favourites (but don't worry, they are there).

The convention is set for March 5 and 6 at the Inn on the Park, on Eglinton Avenue East in Toronto. While the awards components will be front and centre again, including the Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year Awards Friday night and the

Better Newspapers Awards Gala Saturday night, the daytime action has shifted around slightly from previous conventions.

Here are some of the highlights:

- If you are interested in having layout and design guru Tony Sutton critique your newspaper, e-mail Laraine (l.hall@ocna.org) with your newspaper name, referencing Tony's critique session at the spring convention. Ten entries will be chosen in a random draw Jan. 19, 2004. Those chosen will be notified and must immediately forward two (different) copies of their newspaper to Tony Sutton (address will be provided). Please note, all critiques will be done verbally by Tony

*Continued on Page 4*



# Just a thought

by Don Lamont

## Happy New Year

Best wishes to friends and family in the newspaper industry from everyone here at OCNA for a happy and prosperous new year. This year produced so-so results for many newspaper publishers much dependent on their market and product mix — reliance on ROP, flyers, special publications, etc. We look forward with anticipation to next year but hear mixed opinions about just how well the economy might do. Internal demand from consumers and companies could grow nicely but the economic recovery in the U.S. could be counterbalanced by the higher Canadian dollar — perhaps in the \$.80 US range by next year.

One thing is for sure, 2003 reminds us just how much unforeseen events can change our lives dramatically. The Canadian economy is thought to have grown by a tepid 1.7 per cent this year, held back by the rising dollar and shocks to the economy from SARS, mad cow disease, the Ontario blackout and BC's forest fires.

Clearly 2003 was one of the most confusing and difficult years for newsprint manufactures in memory, in a market with excess newsprint supply. The Internet continues to grow and there is more demand for brighter newsprint for preprinted inserts and specialty publications.

## Benchmarking

This Fall's Publishers Conference included an interesting presentation from the Inland Press Association about its annual survey of weekly newspaper operations. There was real interest in the room for starting to build Canadian data about newspaper operations to help publishers manage their operations better. We're looking for interested volunteers to join the Inland program.

There is an old saying that you can't manage what you can't measure. In other words, if you don't know how well you are doing, you can't manage or change things to make them better — and if you do make changes in your operations you may not want to know the real results, beneficial or not. It's like flying blind.

When you compare your operation with some other like company this activity is called benchmarking — measuring and learning from the standards held by others.

Each year, the Inland Press sends out a comprehensive, confidential survey about newspaper operations, covering income and expense by category, including salaries, news hole, page size and count, rates, circulation, etc. The publishers participating in the survey receive data back for newspapers in their category and they use these benchmarks to evaluate their own operation and answer pressing questions like:

- What should my labour costs or printing costs be, as a percentage of all costs?
- What's the average salary for an editor in a paper with my circulation?
- How do my newsroom and distribution costs compare with others in my group?
- Are we over/understaffed? In what departments?
- What's the average newshole for like newspapers?
- Are we over or under performing re: classified ads sales?
- Are my productions costs per page competitive?
- What about my costs per subscriber?

The representative from Inland distributed sample results during the fall conference to demonstrate the value and it was interesting to watch publishers scramble to get the information. You can always tell when publishers get their hand on something really useful.

After analyzing a sample newspaper and making a diagnosis, everyone had clear ideas about how to fix the newspaper to increase profitability, e.g., loosen the news-hole, adjust circulation.

While Inland Press is an American organization, several OCNA members participate but the sample is too small to produce a separate report for Canadian newspapers. Because of important differences in the Canadian and American market, it is very important to make comparisons using Canadian data.

*Continued on Page 3*

send ideas to [don.lamont@ocna.org](mailto:don.lamont@ocna.org)

# OCNA hosting the nation for June convention

## *Continued from Page 1*

I look to 2004 with anticipation. Our annual convention has been moved ahead one month, in early March. In June, we are the host province of the annual national Canadian Community Newspaper Association convention, which will take place in the Greater Capital Region of Ottawa in early June.

The fruits of our labours will bear forth. In December 2003, the OCNA hosted a luncheon with ethnic community newspaper representatives. Similar to our initiative to talk to the provincial government about our industry, this too was an opportunity for the OCNA to talk about strength in numbers, of the benefits of joining our association, and of our commitment to quality and credibility. Our desire is to see more ethnic newspapers join the association, with the ultimate goal of proving to national advertising agencies and government that it pays to advertise with the OCNA — that we truly are representative of the Ontario populace.

I commend and thank OCNA staff and committees for their work in bringing solid conferences and training sessions to our industry. Examples of excellent training sessions were enjoyed by publishers and managers attending the Spring Convention, the Fall Conference and the Leadership Conference. Add to that a computer software information session in October that saw newspaper participation from as far away as Wawa.

On behalf of the directors, I wish for all of us to enjoy much success in 2004. Happy New Year.

member letter

# Reader loyalty about content, not 'beauty'

**T**he December Just a Thought column by Don Lamont in News Clips about beauty in the eye of the beholder reminds me of a lesson I learned many years ago from the two most popular newspapers our area.

When I was a hotshot kid studying journalism at Ryerson, I was embarrassed by my hometown newspaper. It was everything people made fun of at J-school.

The editor seldom covered any news and never wrote editorials. But if you grew up in that town and did something 30 years later, there'd be a little item in the newspaper. The front page was made up of a dozen tiny stories and no real feature photo.

Yet my hometown newspaper probably had the most successful newspaper in

Ontario in terms of paid subscription base and reader loyalty (they had 2,500 subscribers in a town of 1,000).

Later, the owner sold to a small chain and a professional editor was brought in to run the paper. The quality of the paper instantly went up, but my relatives and their friends hated what had happened to "their" newspaper.

The other successful newspaper broke every rule I ever learned about photography at an OCNA seminar. A broadsheet, it ran probably six "grip and grins" on every page with an average of five people in each picture. That meant 30 local people had their pictures on each page of that newspaper, and people loved it.

I didn't appreciate these papers as a journalism student but, when I became a publisher, I realized they had something going for them that the other newspapers

in our region, that looked a lot more professional, didn't. I don't want my newspaper to ignore news and never run an editorial, but I also realize the readers don't care as much about what happened at town council as they do about what happened to their neighbour or their neighbour's daughter.

Maybe our limited resources need to be spent on fundamentals of good readership. Even those of us who can't afford to run process colour every week can make sure we cover both the hard news and the people news.

Hopefully, by doing that, we can continue to have the kind of reader loyalty that made people love those other papers so much.

**Keith Roulston**  
Blyth/Brussels Citizen

## PDF standards on 2004 industry wish list

*Continued from Page 2*

You have to buy a ticket to play. In other words, you have to give data to Inland to receive data - and that's why we are interested in signing up more volunteers to participate in the Canadian sample. If you are interested in making your business better, just call Anne Lannan at 905-639-8720, ext. 228.

### PDF Standards

Have you ever heard the following statement just as you paper's going to print — "the fonts won't print!!!"

Just about everyone in our industry understands all too well the havoc that can be caused by problematic pdfs. The trouble is that the ingredients people use to make pdfs are so different there really are no standards for them. Therefore

when you receive a pdf from someone else the chances are your approach won't match theirs and then the fun starts.

That's understandable during the early days of any technology, but the problems have gone on far too long in the newspaper industry and it's time for action. Luckily, the solution is within our grasp with the advent of Adobe Acrobat 6.0 Professional, which makes it easier to make PDF/X.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has accredited the PDF/X standard, which makes provisions for embedded fonts, colours, mechanical specifications and print conditions, etc. The Committee for Graphic Arts Technologies Standards (CGATS) originally developed PDF/X according to

requirements established by the Digital Distribution of Advertising for Publications association (DDAP), and it is growing in popularity. It eliminates many of the colour, font and trapping variables that lead to printing problems. Hallelujah.

Lead by the magazine industry, more companies are adopting the standard and prescribing PDF/X as the format for receiving digital advertising materials. Now it's time community newspaper members individually and collectively came together to encourage advertisers to adopt the PDF/X standard for digital materials.

We should put our heads together and figure out how to get the job done for everyone's benefit.

• TV LISTINGS • EDITORIAL • PAGINATION • AD SALES • TV ONLINE •

**THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT**

*We thank you for 10 years of success.*

info@tvmedia.ca  
1-800-205-7471

**tvmedia.ca**



## convention

# Don't forget to pack your goodie bags

## Continued from Page 1

at the Inn on the Park March 5, and will be open to all OCNA members who register.

- To help share our community spirit with each other, we are asking delegates to prepare and bring to the convention five to 10 "goodie bags." These bags could contain souvenirs, products, postcards, pins, copies of your publication, the sky's the limit—as long as the contents represent the community your newspaper serves. Leave your bags at the registration desk when you arrive—we plan to distribute them to other delegates over the course of the convention. What a great way to show off your pride in your community and get to know what happens in other communities.

- The Trade Show and registration area will again be combined, offering answers to all your industry questions, and weekend questions.

- The 'New & Improved' sessions promise to be more interactive, including more group interaction (through small-number activities and role-playing), plus more real-life examples and 'put-more-money-on-the-bottom-line' success stories from other papers.

### Advertising

Those in **advertising** will hear presentations and then have a chance to discuss Big Boxes, Smaller Markets & Local Dollars through a Friday panel and an interactive session Saturday. We will have a professional moderator and have invited reps from Home Depot, Staples, Rona, Wal-Mart and Future Shop to discuss retail trends and advertising. On Saturday, we'll devote the morning to a larger, more encompassing workshop on Big Box retailers. This session will look at

two areas:

1. How can newspapers, especially those in smaller markets, not only compete for ad revenues and, at the same time, help local advertisers, themselves to compete? We'll look at strategies being used by other papers to tap into a hidden revenue stream of state/provincial and even local dollars available because of the buying structures used by the Big Boxes own design. Participants will learn new ideas for building relationships and partnerships with key personnel in order to tap into those streams.

2. Customized to dovetail on the previous day's session with the retail representatives, we'll go over step-by-step strategies to help smaller market papers gain a share of the Big Box budget.

Saturday afternoon will bring a chance to enroll in Streetfighter Selling. It's not twisting arms; it's throwing away the old peddlers hat, maximizing your time and account penetration. It's throwing away the ad rep vendor's hat and becoming a full-fledged advertising and marketing consultant who brings ideas, solutions and expertise. Does it fit small towns, their newspapers and their advertisers? Absolutely. With interactive participation and group activities, we'll go through a typical sales day. Several topics are included, along with building individual Sales Action Plans throughout the day. Participants don't just leave with ideas, they leave with a game plan!

### Editorial

Friday afternoon for those in **production and editorial** includes the Newspaper Critiques with layout & design guru Tony Sutton of News Design Associates. Ten papers will be chosen by lottery, while everyone is invited to sit in on the discussion.

A Media Law Primer for Journalists is scheduled for Saturday morning, including legal limits on news reporting, practical advice on access to courts and invasion of privacy issues.

In the afternoon, an editorial panel will discuss the state of the industry. So far, we have representatives coming from the Ontario Press Council and Lou Clancy, Vice-President of Editorial for Osprey Media, but we have also invited reps from the Canadian Association of Journalists and the Senate Committee reviewing the role of the media.

### Technology

If you are interested in the future of the industry, from a **technological** point of view, you won't want to miss Saturday's morning session with Adobe and Quark representatives. They will talk about their latest products and operating systems, moderated by Kevin Slimp, Director of the Newspaper Institute of Technology.

In the afternoon, Slimp will focus further on new technology and its challenges.

Doug Wicken, from Loyalist College, has confirmed his participation for Saturday morning, when he will lead a session on digital photography. Participants are asked to bring their digital camera and will be assigned shots to take. They will return to the session, download their shots into a computer and the individual shots will be critiqued by Doug and other participants, with emphasis on improved technique, etc.

In the afternoon, CCNA staff will be on hand to assist newspapers with the Verified Circulation auditing program.

Stay tuned to [www.ocna.org](http://www.ocna.org) for highlights and to learn about registration.

## THINKING OF SELLING YOUR PUBLICATION?

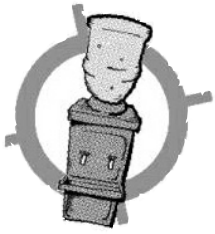
We specialize in serving the needs of small and intermediate independent publishers.

**All inquiries confidential**

**(877) 670-1085**

**WATERSHED PARTNERS**

*Traditional and New Media  
Investment Banking*



# Water Cooler

compiled by  
Carolyn Mullin

- **The Napanee Beaver** welcomed new reporters Adam Bramburger, graduate with a Bachelor of Journalism degree from Carleton University in June 2003, and Fiona Isaacson, 2002 graduate with a B.A. degree from the University of Toronto and Bachelor of Journalism degree from the University of Kings College, Halifax this year.
- Aaron Cooney has joined the **Hanover Post** and its associated publications as the Ad Manager. Aaron has been with The Post for about a year, prior to which he worked in advertising with Saugeen City News. Aaron was born and raised in Hanover.
- **Ajax & Pickering News Advertiser** news editor Jacquie McInnes has accepted a position in the corporate public relations department at Ontario Power Generation. Jacquie has covered nuclear issues extensively in the past two years, including overseas trips to Moscow and France covering Iter.
- Long-time **Oshawa-Whitby This Week** sports editor Brian Legree has left the world of journalism behind for the classroom. Brian is teaching first-year journalism at Durham College. The paper welcomes photographer Jason Liebrechts to the staff. Jason replaces Andrew Iwanowski, who recently retired after 18 years with Metroland and has returned to his homeland of Poland.
- Sara Campbell has joined the **Seaforth Huron Expositor** as a reporter after graduating from the print-journalism program at Niagara College, and gaining experience at the Lucknow Sentinel and Goderich Signal-Star.
- The **Almonte Gazette** reached an office sharing agreement with My Upholstery Shop, Decor and More business to continue doing business on the town's main street. Customers may now call on the business at 56 Mill St., Suite 102.
- The North Renfrew Times has entered the digital age by having nearly all of its pages created electronically and transferred on CD to the printer.
- Kristin Cornish as been appointed Director of Distribution for Metroland's **Simcoe County** regional newspapers. She is the former general manager of the Midland/Penetanguishine Mirror and distribution manager of The Barrie Advance.
- Marney Beck will take the editor's chair at the **Caledon Enterprise** with the retirement of Bill Whitbread, while Grace Peacock has joined the staff as a reporter. Beck was the Enterprise reporter, while Peacock has recently graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University with an Honours BA in communication studies and political science.

send gossip to [c.mullin@ocna.org](mailto:c.mullin@ocna.org)

## Cadogan's play well-known in nation

Journalist, poet, playwright and short story writer Elda Cadogan passed away in Miramichi N.B. at the age of 86.

As a playwright, she was best known for her one-act-play, Rise and Shine, which has the distinction of being one of the most frequently performed Canadian plays ever written. It has been staged in every Canadian province, in 47 U.S. states, and in England, Ireland, and South Africa.

Born in Mount Forest, she grew up in Woodstock, where her writing was first published—a story and poem in the Woodstock

Sentinel Review—when she was eight. In 1939, she married George Cadogan, of Woodstock. The couple purchased newspapers in Durham, Ont., Pictou, N.S. and Oromocto and Newcastle, N.B.

George Cadogan died in 1996. She is survived by sons, David (Michelle) of Miramichi, N.B., and Michael, of Scarborough; daughters Katherine Hilder (Stephen) of Prince George, B.C.; and Elizabeth Jean Morgan (Dan), of Fredericton, N.B., as well as six grandchildren.

**Keep  
in  
Touch...**

OCNA has more than 260 member papers, so it's hard to keep track of all those e-mail addresses. Please remember to keep us updated when you change any of your e-mail addresses.

Thanks!

**Send changes  
to  
[gayle@ocna.org](mailto:gayle@ocna.org)**

## Powerful Tools for Ad Sales

By subscribing to Media-Pros multi-faceted co-op recovery system...your ad sales team will build extraordinary relationships

with prospects and advertisers alike...and undoubtedly increase ad sales revenue and volume. No other product or service will have such a profound effect on sales outcome! What could be better than helping your advertisers find, manage and ensure they receive every possible supplier dollar they are eligible to...in order to advertise with you? They win...you win!

Media-Pros provides many tools for ad sales departments all of which are focused on providing maximum advertising exposure for each brand in a twelve month cycle.

Services include:

- online supplier databases for co-op information like accrual, ratio, contacts, eligibility information etc.
- monthly co-op accrual ending periods. When you know that Honda, Pentax etc. accrual periods end on the 31st of a particular month, you know that any and all eligible funds that the supplier makes available to dealers will end without exception! Going in to see the dealers in your area and making them aware of this important date could save them hundreds or thousands of dollars!
- Lead of the Week sent out every Monday morning 6am for sales meetings along with accompanying sales idea and supplier logo.
- AF Authorization Program verified co-op dollars-to-date
- Sales Ideas/Planners
- Tracking System
- Logos (15k Illustrator EPS)
- Event Planning
- Training

To find out the full extent of services visit our web site.

**Media-Pros**  
Brand Management Sales &  
Support Programs  
[www.media-pros.com](http://www.media-pros.com)

## member news

# Editor committed to printing certain names

By Mark Cripps  
Stoney Creek News

I'd like to applaud my fellow community newspapers who take part in publishing names of impaired drivers charged during the annual Christmas RIDE programs taking place across the province.

There's no greater deterrent to this crime, which claims so many innocent lives each year, than to see the names of those caught drinking and driving published in the local hometown newspaper.

But I am left to wonder why initiatives to raise awareness regarding impaired driving only take place one month out of the year?

Every little bit helps in the battle to stamp out impaired driving. But why not make it a year-long commitment? As editor of the Stoney Creek News, I have published every name of every drunk driver charged by the Hamilton Police Service in my community over the past five years. When I was the editor of The Prescott Journal, my publisher John Morris also supported my desire to print names of those charged with impaired driving in the newspaper.

In 1988, my 14-year-old brother was killed by a drunk driver. Just one month away from his first day in high school, Jason's life was taken away by a man who had been charged with impaired driving on numerous occasions.

Following the death of my brother, I made a pledge as a journalist to do my part to help in the fight against impaired driving.

This included speaking to thousands of high school students about the dangers of getting behind the wheel while intoxicated, and publishing the names of those charged in the newspaper.

I wasn't looking for accolades or recognition. I felt it was my duty. Some would argue that if you cannot follow up the charges through the courts, then you shouldn't publish names. Once a person is charged, their name is a matter of public record. We all know that.

Police do not wantonly hand out impaired driving charges. They have sophisticated equipment to test blood alcohol levels, and practise due diligence in pressing charges.

In the odd case where a charge is thrown out of court, it has been my experience this happens not because a person didn't commit the crime, but rather their lawyers were able to convince a judge to dismiss the charges based on a technicality.

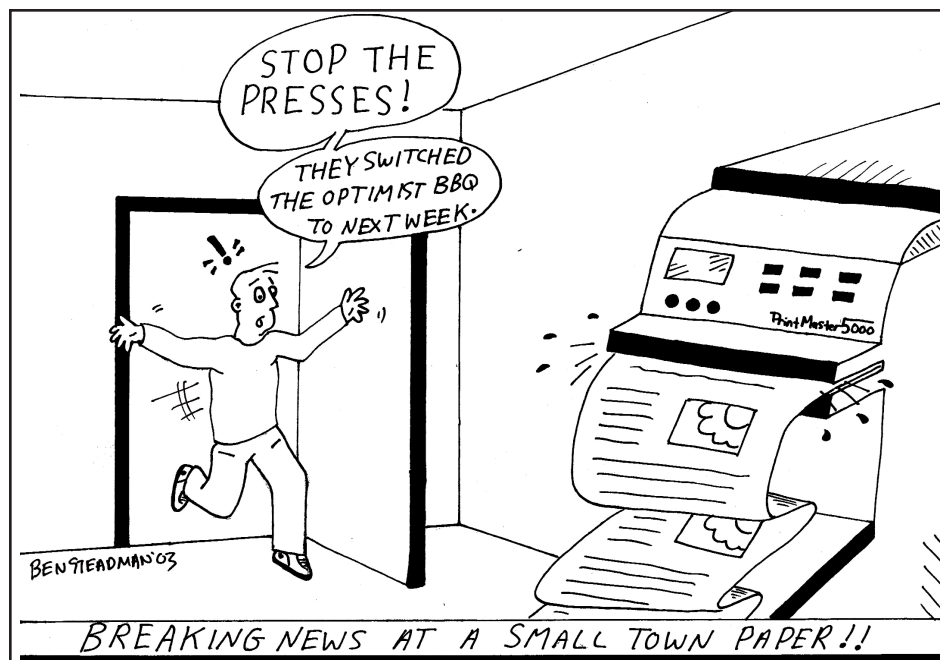
In 1996, I was interviewed for a job

with a newspaper in eastern Ontario. I told the publisher of my feelings about impaired driving, and my commitment to publish names. She asked me what I would do if it was a major advertiser? I told her there were no exceptions. She asked how I would react if I was told not to publish the name. I told her I didn't want the job.

Community newspapers can play a huge role in helping to continue the downward trend in the number of impaired driving charges and fatalities each year.

By publishing names of those charged, not just at Christmas time, we can save lives year-round.

The effects of this policy are intangible. But I know in my heart we can make a difference.



Ben Steadman provides editorial cartoons for Petrolia Topic.

**Supplier of Toners and Inks to Canadian Newspapers!**

*with over 80 manufacturers, we have what you need*

for orders or quotes  
e-mail or call us @

supplies@news-net.ca  
**905-844-0524**

**NEWS-NET®**  
Dedicated to the Newspaper Industry



ad\*reach

# CommunityMedia Canada web site humming

By Margot Anderson  
Ad\*Reach

**H**appy New Year! 2004 promises to be a very interesting year for Ad\*Reach with the results of Ad\*Reach now in hand.

In fact, we have already started to see some results from all our constant promotion of ComBase.

For example, it looks like we've secured new business from the Ontario Medical Association, Arthritis Society, Physiotherapy Society of Ontario and Manulife largely due to ComBase. Some of these orders are still in the works and we'll confirm them in the next edition of NewsClips.

This month, we are scheduling special presentations with key advertising agen-

cies and we'll be partnering with Elena Dunn, ComBase President. These agencies include FCB Canada, MBS, Flavour, M2 Universal, PHD Canada etc.

About one year ago, the CommunityMedia Canada web site came on stream to enable advertisers to examine our media and to draft quotes (see [www.communitymediacanada.ca](http://www.communitymediacanada.ca)).

This web site is really starting to kick in now and we are receiving many enquires from new advertisers. The CMC site also enables Ad\*Reach sales staff to quickly send tentative quotes to potential customers.

In December, we produced a new map of Ontario pinpointing all of our member papers and it has also been a big hit. It's a great tool to start the discussion. And, it makes purchasing space in community newspapers easier for advertising agen-

cies and national clients because they now have a better visual picture about where all the papers are located in Ontario.

A new year also means we are back on the door step of the provincial government both directly and to their agencies. Governments are spending less these days but we are working to increase our slice of the pie through various strategies including more regular usage and larger-sized ads.

The 2004 rate card is now ready for the provincial government, GM, Chrysler and Ford. We need member cooperation to deliver the rate card on time.

The sooner we have it the better it is for members.

Accounts we are currently working on include CBC, Enbridge, Ontario Power Workers Union, Petro Canada, Sportsman Show and Elections Canada.

## Chuckle over them, don't do them yourself

**S**tart the year off right by telling yourself you won't get caught in one of these headline traps.

### Some are just slips of the tongue:

- Grandmother of eight makes hole in one
- Deaf mute gets new hearing in killing
- Police begin campaign to run down jaywalkers
- House passes gas tax onto senate
- Stiff opposition expected to casketless funeral plan
- Two convicts evade noose, jury hung
- William Kelly was fed secretary
- Milk drinkers are turning to powder
- Safety experts say school bus passengers should be belted
- Quarter of a million Chinese live on

water

- Farmer bill dies in house
- Iraqi head seeks arms

### Grammar often botches other headlines:

- Eye drops off shelf
- Squad helps dog bite victim
- Dealers will hear car talk at noon
- Enraged cow injures farmer with axe
- Lawmen from Mexico barbecue guests
- Miners refuse to work after death
- Two Soviet ships collide—one dies
- Two sisters reunite after 18 years at checkout counter

### Once in a while, a botched headlines

takes on a meaning opposite from the one intended:

- If a strike isn't settled quickly, it may last a while
- War dims hope for peace
- Smokers are productive, but death cuts efficiency
- Cold wave linked to temperatures
- Child's death ruins couple's holiday
- Blind woman gets new kidney from dad she hasn't seen in years
- Man is fatally slain
- Something went wrong in jet crash, experts say
- Death causes loneliness, feeling of isolation

-- reprinted from the QCNA Connector

# GAULIN MEDIA



## Online Recruiting

"A job for every journalist."

[jobs@jeffgaulin.com](mailto:jobs@jeffgaulin.com)

[www.jeffgaulin.com](http://www.jeffgaulin.com)

Fax: (403) 374-0625

## member news

# Did legal action play role in election outcome?

By Gerald Tracey  
Co-Publisher/Editor  
The Eganville Leader

**B**onnechere Valley Township is one of those new municipalities born during the flurry of amalgamations that occurred across the province between 1998 and 2000.

Located in central Renfrew County, the new township is comprised of the former Village of Eganville (pop. 1,300) and the neighbouring townships of Grattan, Sebastopol and South Algona.

When the municipality was established by an order-in-council, it was divided into four wards, with each of the former municipalities representing a ward.

## Majority

It was not surprising then in the elections of 2000, the electorate chose a former township reeve for the top position over the former village reeve. The rural population is larger and supporters of the rural candidate spread the message if the reeve of Bonnechere Valley was to come from Eganville, the rural areas would be forgotten—even though with three of the four elected councillors representing rural wards they would still comprise a majority on council.

And so, the first-ever reeve of BV Township was Arlene Felhaber, who had previously held the same position in Sebastopol Township. She defeated Eganville's reeve, Zig Mintha, by some 75 votes.

Amalgamations are unions, much like a marriage. Except, here we were dealing with four entities, not two.

The new council faced challenging times, particularly in its first 18 months in office. Many of the decisions it made angered ratepayers throughout the entire township, resulting in a regular flow of letters to the editor criticizing their

actions.

As council floundered on many issues, morale among the township's 20 or so employees hit an all-time low. At one point, four of the five employees working in the municipal office were under so much stress they were taking turns visiting paramedics, who worked out of the same complex, to have their blood pressure checked. There were illnesses. Two staff members were fired. Eventually, the clerk-treasurer resigned on the advice of her doctor.

Meanwhile, the eight roads' employees became disgruntled with the way they were being treated by council members. All of them had worked in the municipalities that formed the new township and all were respected workers in their former domains.

This group of employees became so disgruntled with council they voted to join the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

In its first year, council decided to sell a very valuable piece of land in the community for the paltry sum of \$5,500. The land consisted of an old two-storey surplus school building from the 1940s era, and four acres of prime land in an area surrounded by a church, an elementary school and a former convent.

A group in the municipality had been working on establishing a long-term care facility in the community for 10 years.

Made up of municipal representatives and others interested in establishing such a facility for the area's elderly folk, the group had an option

to purchase this site for \$25,000 but let it expire when the individual who had put up the money asked that it be returned. However, there was never any indication the land was no longer wanted. The property was sold to an outsider before anyone knew

what had happened.

That brought on more letters.

But it was a letter written by a former member of the village council and printed in the paper

that broke the proverbial camel's back. The author criticized council over the issue of the road workers joining a union. He did not hold back in attaching all of the blame to council, saying: "What led to the union being approached is very plain and simple—an incompetent council," he wrote.

## Legal action

Bonnechere Valley Township council initiated a legal action against the letter writer, the publishers of the Eganville Leader and the newspaper itself in the spring of 2002.

That led to the involvement of Stuart Robertson and Jennifer Guy of the firm of O'Donnell, Robertson and Sanfilippo, which represents CNRIE insured newspapers. Both Mr. Robertson and Ms. Guy were excellent to work with—very accommodating, very supportive and extremely knowledgeable in this area of law.

Five months after the action was commenced, all parties met in Ottawa with a court-appointed mediator. By this time, it had been long established the plaintiffs did not

have a case. After a full day of talks, we came close to an agreement but discussions fell apart at the last moment when the newspaper decided the plaintiffs were not trying hard enough to settle the claim.

The matter continued to drag on for several more months, during discussions with myself and the township's new CAO, who had been hired after the legal action was commenced, it was agreed he and I, my brother/partner Ron, the reeve, and the letter writer would sit down and attempt to work out a settlement.

This we did in February 2003, and at the end of a two-hour discussion, and several consultations with our lawyers and insurer, a settlement was reached whereby the township agreed to pay \$12,000 to the author of the letter, the amount required to cover most of his legal expenses, and also \$12,000 towards the newspaper's legal costs, which were estimated at about \$24,000. Of course, the township had to pay all of its own legal expenses and when the bills were tallied, that amounted to about \$65,000.

In the most recent municipal elections, Zig Mintha went for the position of reeve again. His main opponent was Gerry Bimm, a member of the current council who was instrumental in the decision to launch the legal action. Mintha won by an almost 2 to 1 vote. Only one other member of the incumbent council sought re-election. She was soundly defeated.

Did the legal action play a role in the outcome of the 2003 municipal elections in Bonnechere Valley? You be the judge.

**“What led to the union being approached is very plain and simple—  
an incompetent council.”**

*—from a letter which sparked legal action against the author and the Eganville Leader*



advertising

# Good salespeople spend their time—selling

By John Foust  
Raleigh, N.C.

One of my favourite philosophers, Elbert Hubbard, once wrote, "Don't sit down in the meadow and wait for the cow to back up to be milked. Go after the cow."

Reminds me of the time I

played golf with H.C. and heard how his company had developed a weekly niche publication. Six months after the first issue, they were averaging 52 pages a week — in the midst of what was reportedly a slow economic period.

How was H.C. able to build the publication so quickly?

"We never stop selling,"

H.C. told me. "Do you know how many advertisers have

called to say their ad is ready to be picked up? None. Not a single one has volunteered to bring business to us. We've had to go after it."

I asked how the economy impacts his selling strategy. "It's like golf," he said. "Being in the rough affects how you play your next shot, but it usually doesn't mean that you've lost the match. You make adjustments and move on. It's all part of the game. Of course, you've got to have the basic skills, but you won't find out what kind of golfer you are until you're faced with a difficult shot."

"When you're on the golf course, you're supposed to play golf," H.C. explained. "And when you're a salesperson, you're supposed to sell. I've seen a lot of sales people come and go. And I believe the main thing that separates the good from the mediocre is that good sales people spend their time selling. The others are looking for reasons to sit around the office."

## Pavement

What is H.C.'s advice for people who sell advertising?

"It's simple," he said. "Take your feet off the desk and put 'em on the pavement."

It's hard to sell without initiative. The famous German poet and scientist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote, "Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world."

How many sales people

think it would be a good idea to call on that tough client, but always seem to find a reason to put it off until tomorrow? How many are too busy thinking about the economy to make any calls this afternoon? And how many have decided to become order takers, just waiting around for business to walk through the front door?

"Things may come to those who wait," Abe Lincoln remarked, "but only things left by those who hustle."

People like H.C. are making sales and building their clientele. People who take orders are getting the leftovers.

In Emerson's day, maybe the world would beat a path to the door of someone who invented a better mousetrap. But things are different in today's media marketplace. Advertisers have more choices than ever before. And your paper has more competition than ever before.

"As long as I have to get my shoes re-soled more often than my competitors, I'm happy," H.C. laughed. "That means I'm making sales."

(c) Copyright 2004 by John Foust. All rights reserved.

*John Foust conducts on-site advertising training for newspapers, associations and advertisers. His "Basics of Layout and Copy" video is being used by newspapers from coast to coast. For information, contact: John Foust, PO Box 97606, Raleigh, NC 27624 USA, E-mail: jfoust@mindspring.com, Phone 919-848-2401.*



## NewsMakers

compiled by Carolyn Mullin

- The **Mid North Monitor** keeps up its subscription rates by sending 100 or 200, depending on the time of year, six-week free promotional subscriptions to a list of non subscribers (using the phone book). They have done a poll to see who generally does not buy the paper every week as well, so this offer is introducing the weekly Monitor to 100 extra homes per week. It increases the circulation for advertisers, and a flyer is sent in the first paper telling the household of the six-week offer and the number to call if they do not want the Monitor for the next six weeks. A special subscription is also offered at the end of the six weeks. This is an inexpensive and organized way to keep a subscription drive going; they says they so sign up several people at the end of each six week promo.
- Connie White, **Cobden Sun** editor, was recently honoured when her office was named (in fun) Fire Hall # 6 by the Whitewater Region Township fire department. The fire chief presented white with a licence plate and T-shirt, proclaiming her an honorary member. Officials said the paper always treated the department fairly, and they knew she wanted to be a firefighter but couldn't because of a conflict.
- Several Sun Media titles increased their single copy to sales to \$1.25 per paper this autumn, citing newspaper prices and an increase in expenses as the main reasons. The **Mitchell Advocate**, **Clinton News Record**, **Shoreline Beacon**, **Goderich Signal-Star** and **Huron Expositor** all announced the increase to readers. Some hadn't had an increase in price for three years, while others had not upped the cost in nearly a decade.
- The Toronto **Annex Gleaner** celebrated its 100th issue anniversary in October with a meet and greet party at a local watering hole. Since starting in May 1995, the paper has increased its circulation from 23,000 to 33,500, and the coverage area has expanded to St. Clair Avenue, Bay Street, College and Christie streets.
- Metroland's **Durham Region website**, [www.durhamregion.com](http://www.durhamregion.com), celebrated one million page views for the month of September. While they came close several times, seeing as high as 900,000 views in previous months, they knew it was only a matter of time before hitting this big milestone. Future developments on the site include a 411 business directory, a local personals/dating service and a youth channel.

send gossip to [c.mullin@ocna.org](mailto:c.mullin@ocna.org)

GET THE LATEST INDUSTRY NEWS ON THE WEB:

[www.ocna.org](http://www.ocna.org)

## editorial

# Pick a hero, cover your creative tracks

By **Jim Stasiowski**  
Writing Coach

If you want to write better, get a hero. Now, when I talk about a hero, you probably think I mean a writing hero. And, in fact, that's a good idea. Find someone whose writing you like, then copy how he or she does it.

As Ned Rorem, a renowned author and composer, says: "All art is clever theft. Conscious that he is stealing, the artist seeks to cover his tracks ... The art of covering one's tracks is the art of creation."

But not all heroes have to be writers. Of my three heroes, only one was a full-time writer.

My writing hero is Dan Jenkins, who in the 1960s and '70s invented modern sportswriting. (Hey, he's my hero, and this is my column. If I want to exaggerate, I'll exaggerate.)

Hired by Sports Illustrated in 1962, Jenkins created a style I call smart-aleck journalism. See, Jenkins wasn't merely the superb reporter who saw things no one else saw. He also thought about what he saw, and he had the sense of humour to turn reporting into entertainment.

A masterpiece he wrote about the Nebraska-Oklahoma football game of Thanksgiving Day in 1971 in Norman, Okla., focused on a single play. Nebraska won 35-31 in what many observers call "The Game of the (last) Century," and the key, in Jenkins' mind, was a 72-yard punt return for a touchdown by Johnny Rodgers, Nebraska's superstar.

Everybody saw the punt return; but Jenkins kept watching, and he saw something more, so he wrote: "And afterward, back on the Nebraska bench, (Rodgers) did what most everybody in Norman, Okla. probably felt like doing: He threw up."

That reminds me of a quotation attributed to Edgar Allan Poe: "I have never had a thought which I could not set down

in words, with ever more distinctiveness than that which I conceived it."

In other words, Jenkins knew the vomiting was a superb fact. But then, he made himself think: "Hmmmmmmm, how can I give that fact 'ever more distinctiveness than' just the act of throwing up? I got it: I'll connect it to the way the Oklahoma fans felt."

## FACTOID

To be an excellent writer, you have to give readers what they have not seen.



For a spellbinding book called "The Franchise: A History of Sports Illustrated Magazine," Michael MacCambridge, the author, interviewed Jenkins. His swaggering style, Jenkins said, came from the philosophy of his first editor at Sports Illustrated, the revered Andre Laguerre.

"I was the college football writer," Jenkins said. "And Andre's stance was, 'This is what my guy thinks, and therefore he's right, and you are an idiot if you don't agree with him.'"

Not exactly traditional journalism, is it?

And that's the point: To be an excellent writer, you have to give readers what they have not seen. Sure, we have legitimate rules about accuracy, fairness and language. But too often we use spurious rules as boundaries that prevent us from reaching for the best story. Let us at least think about breaking rules, for such thinking opens new opportunities to write well.

Jenkins describes his style as "exaggerated outrage grounded in truth."

That is what we all should be doing, we should be thinking of such strong emotions as outrage: What makes us angry, what makes us laugh and weep? Those are the things that grab our readers, the things

they care about, the things we should be writing about.

Another of my heroes is Winston Churchill, the nonpareil leader who guided his beloved, beleaguered British Empire through the Second World War. Churchill had two traits every writer needs: He fought back from every setback, and he had boundless faith in his ability to succeed.

We writers constantly confront a shadowy enemy whose weapons include unforgiving deadlines, unreturned phone calls, convenient excuses, acceptable mediocrity.

Churchill is that maddeningly demanding editor, even if he or she exists only inside our heads, who, in our darkest moment, challenges us: "No bloody excuses, mate, no cutting corners. If we're to win this war, we'll do it not by feeling sorry for ourselves, but by reaching outside what is comfortable for us, by surprising the enemy, by never giving up."

My third hero is my dad. He is 95 now, and slower than he wants to be. But in our 55 years together, he has taught me this every day: To hell with everybody else, do what is right.

My dad is a loner. He clutched tightly his family, his faith and his country, but otherwise, he belonged to nothing, no clubs, no cliques, no committees.

He instilled in me the equivalent of the glowing, radioactive core of a nuclear reactor: Individuality. He wanted me to succeed, but only if I did so on my own terms.

I have failed. Often. But that's why we need heroes, to guide us back.

Go ahead, get heroes. Take Dan Jenkins, if you want, or even Churchill.

But leave my dad alone. He's all mine.

*Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at 410 247-4600, or write to 5812 Heron Drive, Baltimore, Md. 21227.*

# ADV

Advantage Marketing & Training  
www.gettheadvantage.ca

## UNLOCK THOUSANDS OF ADVERTISING DOLLAR\$ IN YOUR MARKET!

*I will come to your site and show your sales reps how to do it!*

### 519 • 401 • 1493



## redesign

# Info boxes, sharp graphics best trends for '04

By Edward F. Henninger  
OMNIA Consulting

**O**bla-di, oobla-da. Another year near its end and a new year on its way. As 2003 turns to 2004, it's a good time to look at some of the events and trends we can anticipate in our industry in the new year.

I do not pretend to be a fortuneteller. These are educated guesses. Some may be obvious. Others may make you wonder. With any luck, a few will make you squirm.

Here goes:

**1.** When newsprint prices shoot up in 2004—industry analysts say the hike will be about 15 per cent—you can kiss your stocks pages goodbye. Those dailies that still kill trees to duplicate stock price information available elsewhere will see the wisdom in using valuable newsprint for other purposes. One editor friend of mine is already placing honour rolls on his newspaper's web site—and has heard very little squawking so far. His reasoning: 1) it saves him valuable news space; 2) it makes his web site more important to his readers.


**2.** The impact of "impact," the readership study from the Readership Institute at the Media Management Center of Northwestern University ([www.readership.org](http://www.readership.org)). If you aren't aware of this study and its findings and recommendations, you need to be—now. The study looks at the total newspaper and covers such topics as customer service, advertising content, promotion and local news. When it refers to design, its focus is on ease of reading and navigation—what a radical concept: Making the paper easier to read!

**3.** OS X. If your newsroom and all other departments are totally Windows, you can skip this one. Otherwise, the impact of the new Macintosh operating system will soon spread throughout your operation. OS X is much more powerful and packed with features that will improve staff efficiency many times over. It's much faster and its networking capabilities are stronger and much more stable. What's more, key OS X-level soft-

ware is also more powerful. If your Mac newsroom doesn't have OS X yet, it will soon—there's no such thing as a new Mac without it. Yes, this will create initial expenses but: 1) there's no avoiding the

**FACTOID**

Focus on visuals: Designs, charts, graphics, photography. Readers continue to tell us these elements make their papers come alive.



future; 2) the outlay will quickly be recouped in improved efficiency and capabilities.

**4.** InDesign. Here's a piece of software that fully captures the capabilities of OS X. QuarkXPress version 6, disappointingly, is a makeover of Quark 5—which was a universally ignored and unpurchased makeover of Quark 4. Many publishers are giving Adobe InDesign a close look. In its latest CS (Creative Suite) version, InDesign is now even more tightly integrated with Adobe's Photoshop and Illustrator software. Adobe has provided me with a copy of InDesign. Put InDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator together with InCopy and you have everything you need to create a total publishing system for your newsroom. Adobe's forums are excellent—as is their customer service. Quark, instead of updating its user forums, it appears Quark has done away with them altogether. Again, the initial outlay may be greater but the trend I see is clearly toward InDesign.

**5.** The death of "retro." I've seen retro as a fad, not a trend. In the early '90s, the fad was ovals and graduated screens. Why? Because pagination software allowed us to create these elements. Most times, they served no useful purpose—but we could do 'em. Retro was chic—emphasis on "was." I won't miss it and think readers won't, either. Readers don't want "chic" or "hot" or "in"—they want a newspaper that's easy to navigate and easy to read, a newspaper that focuses on content.

**6.** The birth of some other design fad.

Count on it.

**7.** Fewer jumps. Most readers hate 'em. Most editors apologize for them yet continue to use them. Most writers couldn't care less as long as they can continue to write long. Slowly, that is changing. Want to make your paper immediately more reader friendly? Half the number of your jumps. I won't hold my breath.

**8.** Shorter stories. I recently advised a client editor the two most important advances he could make for his newspaper—long before the introduction of our redesign—was to set a length limit for stories and to demand an infobox with each story. So far, those changes are working well. We haven't announced them to readers but I'm confident they'll react positively when we do.

**9.** More info boxes. Readers love 'em and they're so easy to create once you get into the habit. There's no good reason for not making these a must.

**10.** More graphics. New software is making these easier to conceptualize and create. Still, someone has to think of them. See the next item.

**11.** Additional staffing. As the economy continues to gain momentum, publishers who have had to make severe staff cuts will see they cannot grow their product without regrowing their newsrooms. And they will be looking for more than another writer or editor. They will search for editors schooled in InDesign as well as Quark. They will look for reporters who can think visually. They will look for editors who talk more about packages than they do stories. They will look for editors who talk more about reading than they do about writing.

**12.** Continuing focus on visuals: Design, charts, graphics, photography. Readers continue to tell us these elements make their papers come alive. We are finally getting the message—and reacting positively to it.

And that may be the most encouraging trend of all.

*Edward F. Henninger is an independent newspaper consultant and the Director of OMNIA Consulting. You can reach him at 803-327-3322. E-mail [go2omnia@aol.com](mailto:go2omnia@aol.com)*



technology

# Keep spam at bay with these simple hints

*“These people are organized; it is big money for them and they will take advantage of any opening to screw the end-user.”*

Neil Schwartzman doesn't mince words when it comes to spammers, those vile and anonymous junk e-mailers who fill your inbox with unwanted ads for herbal Viagra and low, low mortgage rates from banks in Sierra Leone.

As chair of the Canadian branch of the Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial E-mail (CAUCE), Schwartzman battles spam artists on the legislative level, and is currently working with Industry Canada to address the problem (check out [www.cauce.ca](http://www.cauce.ca)).

While there may well be legislative or self-regulated relief on the way, Schwartzman says, there are some simple ways spam-plagued businesses can cut the

crap right now:

- Instead of providing your contact information in the form of an alphanumeric address on the company web site, post it as a GIF or jpeg file that does not have a hotlink.

Humans can read the address, but those web-crawling “spiders” that compile spam lists won't be able to detect it.

- Set up both public and private e-mail addresses. Use a generic Hotmail- or Yahoo!-type address for things like contest submissions or posting to discussion groups. When the spam gets thick, ditch that address and pick up a new one. Give out your private address only to legitimate contacts.

- Never, ever reply to spam. Doing so tells spammers your e-mail address is valid.

- If you have your own mail server in-

house, you can either outsource your anti-spam efforts or take them in-house with anti-spam technology from companies such as AmikaNow! or Active STATE, which you have to maintain.

Mail-filters.com is just one Canadian company that lets you rely on its specialized expertise to slice spam.

You can use it as an ISP or simply point your incoming e-mail to its site and let them do the filtering.

David Zimmer, who compiled the above information for Profit Magazine, recommends [www.spamcon.org](http://www.spamcon.org) as a site with useful anti-spam information and services.

Profit magazine online, at [www.profitguide.com](http://www.profitguide.com), also provides several articles and links for further information about this nuisance and how to keep it at bay.

## Reach out to OCNA members

Please remember, member newspapers receive complimentary word classifieds in News clips. Whether you are looking to buy or sell items, or hire new staff, your association can help you get your message to more than 265 community newspapers across the province.

The deadline for the February issue is January 16, 2004.

E-mail your copy to [c.mullin@ocna.org](mailto:c.mullin@ocna.org)

Don't forget to send staff changes, innovation and awards news as well!

Coming  
Next  
Month:

2003 Mary Knowles  
Award recipient



### MetroCreativeConnection

The online solution you can count on to truly fulfill your creative needs!

Your Resource For:

- Photos, Images & Ideas
- Auto & Real Estate Ads
- Themed Spec Ads
- Themed Editorial Features
- Inspirational Tearsheets

Call now for your free MCC trial.

Metro Creative Graphics, Inc.  
[metrocreativegraphics.com](http://metrocreativegraphics.com)  
800.223.1600



Published monthly by the  
Ontario Community  
Newspapers Association

3050 Harvester Rd. Ste 103  
Burlington, Ontario,  
L7N 3J1

Tel: (905) 639-8720

Fax: (905) 639-6962

<http://www.ocna.org>

E-mail to:

[c.mullin@ocna.org](mailto:c.mullin@ocna.org)

#### OCNA TEAM

Don Lamont, Executive Director; Anne Lannan, Member Services Manager; Shelley Ford-Kohler, Director of Financial Services; Lucia Shepherd, Accounting/CNRIE; Jessi Rushton, Accounting; Nancy Burman, Newsprint; Holly Ball & Laurie Mota, Microfiche; Gayle Cruikshank, Customer Service; Lynn Fenton, Carolyn Press, Ray Padley & Margot Anderson, AdReach; Carol Lebert, Sales Coordinator; Rachel Aback, Network Classified/Press Service Program Clerk; Laraine Hall, Education Coordinator; Ian Youseman, IT Technician.

#### OCNA OFFICERS

Ron Wassink, President, Kincardine News; Cam McKnight, First Vice-President, SunMedia Group/Annex; Dave Armstrong, Second Vice-President, New Liskeard Temiskaming Speaker; Mike Williscraft, Treasurer, Grimsby Lincoln News; Fred Heidman, Past President, Parry Sound North Star

#### OCNA DIRECTORS

Joe Anderson, Metroland Newspaper Group; Marie David, Hanover Post; Linda Plumridge, Fort Frances Times; Keith Roulston, Blyth/Brussels Citizen; Rick Shaver, Cornwall Seaway News; Doreen Sykes, Collingwood Enterprise-Bulletin, Gerald Tracey, Eganville Leader.