# ONTARIO COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION'S MARCH 2004

# Premier McGuinty to headline OCNA annual Spring Conference

By OCNA Staff

lvis may still be in the building. Premier Dalton McGuinty is certain to be there. The CBC's Bill Cameron has also signed on to participate. Just what is this diverse group of happening people signing on for? The OCNA Spring Convention. And it's not too late for you to sign up too to be All Shook Up March 5 and 6 at the Inn on the Park in Toronto.

Some highlights from the program:

• Thirteen deserving young people will be honoured as the 2003 Junior Citizens of the Year with the help of Lieutenant Governor James K. Bartleman Friday, March 5.

• We celebrate the best of our best at this year's Better Newspaper Awards Gala Saturday, March 6. Our host is wellknown broadcaster and writer Bill Cameron.

Premier Dalton McGuinty has confirmed he will be our keynote during the ALL SHOOK UP at OCNA's Annual Spring Convention March 5 & 6, 2004 Inn on the Park Toronto

For full details and convention registration, go to http://www.ocna.org/Events and click on "Spring Convention"

Saturday morning breakfast, which is sponsored by Tembec Paper Group.

Our selection of educational sessions has never been better. Take your pick from Streetfighter Selling with Joe Guertin; Media Law Primer for Journalists with Dean Jobb from Halifax; Newspaper Critiques with Tony Sutton; Big Box Panel which will discuss retail trends, moderated by Anthony Stokan; Adobe and Quark representatives will talk about the latest in technology, including OSX; Digital Photography with Frank O'Connor, photojournalism coordinator at Loyalist College; CCNA will guide you through the VC program; ComBase training (how to read and understand the ComBase data) and an Editorial panel which will address the State of the Industry.

Don't forget to bring:

1) a bundle of newspapers for the Great Ontario Newspaper Exchange

2) special sections

3) lots of business cards

4) five to 10 Goodie Bags filled with items from your community. Show your pride in your community by including items produced there, souvenirs, tourism items, pins, etc. and we will distribute them at meals during the convention.

**Continued on Page 3** 

# OSX comes of age with latest version

#### By Kevin Slimp

began using OS X as a last-ditch effort to resurrect a sinking composition room almost four years ago. We were going about our business, laying out a newspaper, when the drivers for our peripheral devices quit working. Scanners wouldn't scan, printers wouldn't print and CD writers wouldn't write. We reinstalled the system software and tried everything normally tried in such a crisis. We were at wits end when I made the decision to upgrade the operating system from 9.2 to 10.1. We had to download new drivers for our Epson scanners and Xante printers. Within minutes, we were running smoothly again.

No one can promise that your transition to OS X will go as smoothly as mine, but there's no reason to be alarmed about upgrading from an earlier operating system. Do your homework: Be sure your computers are up to the task. Most Macbased newspapers are equipped with G4s and G5s for pagination these days, with a few G3s sitting around for word processing and other less intensive tasks. After being sure the machines are equipped with adequate hard drive space and memory, the move to OS X may be less painful than anticipated.

Apple recently released the latest incarnation of its operating *Continued on Page 2* 

# Latest incarnation best known as Panther

Continued from Page 1

system, OS X.3, better known as Panther. I've been teaching quite a few Panther classes over the past two months in the U.S. and Canada, so I've been forced to become quite familiar with its operating environment. Frankly, I'm glad I have. OS X.3 is extremely smooth and easy to navigate. Many of the changes from X.2 are quite subtle, yet users experimenting with OS X for the first time will be in for some pleasant surprises.

My favourite new feature in Panther is the Sidebar, found on the left edge of the Finder. With the Sidebar, I'm always one click away from the areas I use the most. By default, these include the hard drive, network and desktop, plus the home and applications folders. In addition any CD or external drives will also be found on the Sidebar. Speaking of CDs, users will quickly become addicted to the ability to burn a CD directly from the sidebar. When a blank CD is inserted in the drive. it appears as an external drive on the Sidebar. Files can be moved to the CD just as they can be moved to a folder. When all the files are in place, a simple click of the burn button on the Sidebar (located next to the CD icon) is all it takes to burn a CD.

Font Book is another welcome addition in Panther. Font Book is a font management application which allows the user to quickly install and activate fonts. While not as feature-rich as Extensis Suitcase or Font Reserve, Font Book will serve the needs of many users by allowing them to quickly peruse a list of fonts and activate those which might be used.

It's been a long time since I've heard people "ooh" and "ahh" during a training session. But that's what I've heard every time I've demonstrated a new feature in Panther called Expose'. By pressing the F9 function key, all open documents – in all open applications – are immediately minimized and arranged throughout the screen. The user simply clicks on a window and that document appears in fullsize. It's a very quick way to move between applications and documents.

#### Long names

Back in the days when Windowsbased machines were limited to eight characters, Mac users would brag about the ability to save files with longer names. With Panther, the ability to save files with really long names has become a reality. Any length is OK, as long as it doesn't exceed 256 characters.

I've become addicted to another new feature of Panther. The ability to create an archived file is now available without the use of additional software. Simply control-click (or right-click with a two-button mouse) on a file and a list of options appears. One option is "Create Archive of File." Selecting this option immediately creates a ZIP file in the same folder as the original file. By selecting several files, then choosing the archive option, a ZIP file can be created which contains all the selected files.

Current users of OS X.2 shouldn't have many problems moving up to Panther. While there have been several additions, including those mentioned here, most functions are similar enough to X.2 to lessen the learning curve.

#### Moving up

Most newspapers I've visited are currently in the process or have already moved up to OS X. If you're getting ready to make the move, these are the steps I would suggest:

1. Select one computer to upgrade for testing purposes. First, back up all the information from this computer to an external hard drive – in case things don't work as planned.

2. After installing OS X, download the drivers for printers, scanners, etc. and install on this computer. In addition, install any OS X native applications (programs that wouldn't work on the older operating system).

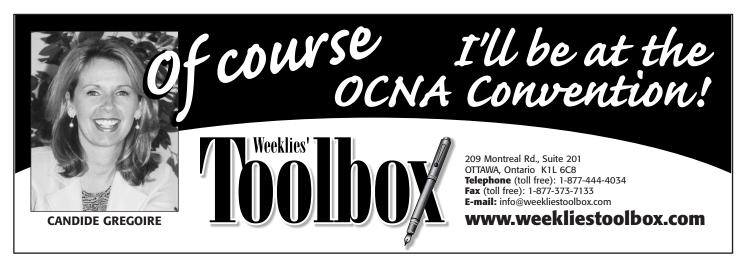
3. See if any problems crop up using the new operating system. If all goes smoothly, upgrade additional computers individually. Test each computer for a few days before upgrading the next.

Once you've moved up to OS X, it's time to start thinking about new software. Older programs will run in "Classic" mode, but newer (OS X native) programs will run much more smoothly and offer significantly more features than older applications. If your newspaper uses some type of proprietary system, a software application developed just for your operation, be sure to talk with the developers of the system before upgrading your operating system.

For more information concerning Panther, visit

http://www.apple.com/macosx/.

Kevin Slimp serves as director of the Institute of Newspaper Technology, a training program for newspaper professionals sponsored by the University of Tennessee and Tennessee Press Association. In addition, Slimp speaks at newspaper conferences throughout the United States and Canada. His previous columns can be found at www.kevinslimp.com.



# member news Echo gets five seconds international fame



# Still time to shake it up

#### Continued from Page 1

Help support the Ontario Community Newspaper Foundation through the Silent Auction. Solicit items from your community and offer those donating items valued at \$125 or more a complimentary Ontario Network Classified ad (worth \$395). For details talk to Carol Lebert at 905-639-8720, ext. 229

n the Feb. 10 taping of Late Night With Conan O'Brian, shot in Toronto, well-known actor Mike Myers brought with him a copy of the Dec. 27th edition of The Haliburton County Echo and told everyone about Haliburton. Echo Editor Martha Perkins told us the star with proud Canadian roots had spent part of the Christmas holidays visiting friends in the Highlands and he had dropped in for breakfast at local restaurant. The owner had her picture taken with him and the Echo put the image on its front page.

The image shown here was taken off the television by an Echo reader and was to be included in a February edition of the newspaper.

Those who are attending the digital photography session, don't forget to e-mail your digital images to l.hall@ocna.org as soon as you can.

It promises to be a great convention so register NOW ... you never know, Elvis may still be in the building. **See list of auction items on Page 5.** On the Web:

www.ocna.org/Events/SpringConvention.htm

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# ad\*reach ComBase key tool for presentations

By Margot Anderson Ad\*Reach

d\*Reach activities these days continue to revolve around the use of ComBase data as a sales tool. The object of these activities is to use the data to generate advertising for members participating in ComBase, as well as non-participants. We are trying to extend the halo generated by ComBase to all community newspapers.

We are now seeing advertisers use ComBase data to place advertising in community newspapers because of recent sales calls. One advertiser recently doubled their order largely because of ComBase; while another used community newspapers for advertising about a chain of retirement homes because community newspaper readership was high among females aged 35-60. This customer knows daughters and/or daughters-in-law plays a substantial role in picking retirement homes. And, we just responded to a request for a quote from a fast food chain that was generated by ComBase data.

With Elena Dunn of ComBase, and on our own, Ad\*Reach staff are making presentations to the top advertising agencies in Toronto. Some are technical presentations involving the agency's research department.

The objectives of these sessions are to answer the agency's technical questions about ComBase and to get the advertisers to use IMS or Harris software to analyze ComBase results, e.g., do reach/frequency comparisons between community newspapers and other media.

For example, one recent presentation was directed at PHD Canada. The discussion with this agency was spirited to say the least and it made for some good dialogue. They challenged us on our

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Send changes to anne.lannan @ocna.org methodology; however we were able to respond and substantiate our findings with confidence. At the end of the talks they were amazed by our results and how similar the methodology was to NADbank (the readership study for daily newspapers). The similarities with NADbank makes our readership study easier for the agencies to understand.

We will be setting up a follow up meeting with the Director of Research at PHD to further promote and discuss ComBase and to get his input about how it should be used to promote the community newspaper industry.

Other presentations with research departments also went well. For example, GJ & Partners, with clients in the automotive sector, was also impressed with our reach/frequency numbers. During presentations to OMD Canada and Initiative Media, advertisers said ComBase was helping them to measure and community newspapers on the same plain as other competitive media.

The feedback we are getting from these presentations bodes well for the future.



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# Halladay in action one of auction items

hile much of the spring convention has been skaken up for variety and timing reasons, one old favourite will return. The annual silent auction always includes a grand variety of objects, certificates and prizes for convention participants eager to shake off the drab feelings of winter and welcome the warmth of spring.

Each year, the auction raises funds for the Ontario Community Newspapers Foundation, the charity that offers journalism and advertising scholarships and funds the Mary Knowles Award for Community Service.

We have already received a number of items, with more coming in daily. Some will be brought by our members directly to the convention March 5 and 6 at the Inn on the Park in Toronto. It's never too late to make a contribution. We are asking members to send us an e-mail with details on the item, but if it's last minute, we won't turn it or you away at the door.

As of press time, some of the confirmed items include:

Helicopter Company	Vouchers
Fabutan	100 minutes Gift
	Certificates
Marineland	Admission passes
Drayton Entertainment	Gift Certificates for Tickets
theatre company	
National Ballet of Canada	Pair of autographed slippers
Best Western St. Jacob's	Overnight Accommo for 2
Jungle Cat World	Family Passes
Casa Loma	Family Passes
Wilderness Tours	Guest pass for
	White Water Rafting
Kacaba Vineyards	VIP Tour & Tasting
Medieval Times	Dinner and Show passes
Mountain Springs Lodge	Two nights for 2
Guelph Tribune	4 hockey tickets - Guelph Storm
Toronto Blue Jays	Autographed photos of
	Vernon Wells and Roy Halladay
Skydive Toronto Inc.	Gift Certificates

If you have something to contribute, contact Carol Lebert at c.lebert@ocna.org, or call 905-639-8720, ext. 229.



• Brad Holden and David Loopstra joined the **Collingwood Enterprise-Bulletin** in January as reporters. From Ontario, both were out in British Columbia: Brad was with the Valley Sentinel in Valemount, while David wrote for several online publications and newspapers. They replace Raymond Bowe, who headed to the E-B's sister paper, the Midland Free Press, as senior writer, and Rachel Punch, who went to the Timmins Daily Press (another member of Osprey Media) as a reporter.

• Ron Laurin, Regional Manager, Osprey Central Region is pleased to announce the appointment of Ken Koyama as Publisher of **Kingston This Week** and **The Napanee Guide**. Ken has been the publisher of The Orillia Packet and Times since 1998 and has more than 30 years of publishing and printing experience. Prior to his position at The Packet, Ken was publisher of The Orangeville Banner, president and publisher of Citizens Communication Group Inc., publisher of The Scarborough Mirror and The Richmond Hill Liberal and ad manager of The Brampton Guardian.

• The Fort Erie Times welcomed Joel Hoidas, an honours graduate of Humber College's Journalism program, in late February. In addition to the work he has done on college publications (for which he has won numerous awards), Joel has also interned at the Toronto Sun.

• Aaron Cooney was recently appointed ad manager at the **Hanover Post**, Saugeen This Week and associated publications. Cooney has been with the Post for about a year, having worked previously with Saugeen City News.

• The **Grand River Sachem** has boosted its advertising sales departments with two new sales reps, Nan Stravatto and Sherry Pelkey.

• Marcus Tully was recently appointed News Editor for the **Kawartha Media Group** division of Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing. Tully has been working for Lindsay This Week since 2001 covering several beats as a reporter.

• Orangeville Banner seniors correspondent Marjorie Davidson recently left her post to be closer to her family. Nina Conway has taken up the task of writing about the events from the seniors centre.

• Jennifer Vandermeer has joined the staff of the **Ingersoll Times** as editor. She brings with her 14 years of experience with newspapers in Norwich and along the shores of Lake Huron.

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# advertising Broadcasters moving in on classified turf

#### By Peter M. Zollman Classified Intelligence

ine by line, step by step, (column) inch by (column) inch, broadcasters are slowly muscling in on classified advertising, a business that has long been owned by newspapers.

It's having a significant effect in just a few markets. But watch out: This trickle will become a stream, and then a river and then a flood.

What should you do about it?

The first step is simply being aware of the threat, which like so many others is also an opportunity. If you understand broadcasters now have the capability like never before to offer classified advertising services, on-air and online, you can decide to work with them or against them.

If you plan to work against them, be prepared for a formidable battle – and not just in major markets, as with Monster.com and other giant dot-coms. In many ways, it's easier for a small-market broadcaster to break into classifieds than it is for a large-market broadcaster to do so.

If you plan to work with them, figure out what they have to offer that you need – promotional power, demographically diverse audiences, freedom from legacy thinking – and align yourself with the best broadcast partner or affiliation in your market. And make it work. For the long term.

Our consulting group, Classified Intelligence, issued a major report in mid-February about the surge of broadcasters into classified advertising. The report, Broadcasters and Classifieds: The New Revenue Stream, highlights some of the moves made by radio and television stations in the United States in automotive, employment and real estate listings, along with personals and merchandise ads. (We didn't look at international markets, because while this is a growing trend in the U.S., we've found just a few cases internationally of broadcasters offering classifieds.)

Here are a few highlights:

• A company with just five employees built a relationship with NBC Television for employment sites in several markets, including South Florida – where it also works with local TV and radio stations and a movie theatre chain. It has captured hundreds of listings.

• A radio station group in Denver developed a million-dollar annual revenue stream with recruiting advertising. Although revenue has fallen considerably due to economic conditions, its dropoff of 50 per cent is considerably lower than that at many newspapers.

• A Kentucky television station affiliated with the Greater Louisville Association of Realtors for an online real estate service. In a recent check, its site included 5,741 residential listings; the newspaper's site included just 3,295.

• Two TV stations in Seattle offer more real estate listings on their websites than the local daily newspapers. One station had 12,225 listings, another 2,964 on the day we checked; the newspapers' site had 1,704.

• CarSoup, a Minnesota-based site working with broadcasters, generated high six figures income online for one television group and an additional million-dollars plus in on-air advertising revenue from auto dealers.

While more listings don't necessarily translate into more revenue, users will ultimately gravitate to the advertising marketplace where they can find what they want – a home, a car, a job, a date. Lose that marketplace, and you're on your way to losing the war.

Thus, newspapers have reason to be

concerned about broadcasters and classifieds. That massive revenue stream that's been newspapers' alone since the earliest days of newsprint is facing a new local challenge. And while newspapers have sales reps responsible for producing class-ad revenue, many papers, even now, employ 'order takers' in their classified departments rather than working hard at selling classifieds. And advertisers increasingly want to place ads on a selfservice, "on my own time and in my own way" basis. Most broadcast classified services play well to that desire, and many are starting to employ full-time classified sales reps.

Television group Liberty Corp. is by far the smartest broadcaster we found moving into classifieds. VP Ron Loewen says the company originally hoped to generate \$5 million in Internet revenue by 2006; now, he says, that looks like a conservative forecast. "Whatever we got from classifieds is new money – money we would not have gotten anyplace else," Loewen told Classified Intelligence. "And that's sweet."

While it's sweet to the broadcasters, it isn't sweet to the newspapers that lose revenue to the new competition.

If you're not aggressively pursuing classified revenue with strong sales efforts, excellent print and online products, a consultative approach to selling, and an 'us or them' attitude, you may soon run into Ron Loewen or one of his broadcast colleagues. Be forewarned and act now, rather than reacting later.

A free preview of the Broadcasters and Classifieds report is available at ClassifiedIntelligence.com. Zollman is founding principal of Classified Intelligence and the AIM Group, offering strategic and tactical support for newspapers pzollman@classifiedintelligence.com (407) 788-2780



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# member news McConnell publishing family loses matriarch

al McConnell, a well-known figure in Ontario's community newspaper industry for over 40 years, died in a Chatham hospital Jan. 18. She was 84. McConnell died of post-operative complications after she suffered a broken hip in a fall at her Tilbury home three days earlier.

While she was the wife of one former OCNA president and the mother of another, the profile McConnell attained in the newspaper business was for her own achievements as the publisher and editor of the North Essex News, Belle River's weekly newspaper, for 17 years.

Before her retirement in 1978, McConnell and the News were both recipients of numerous provincial and national awards for journalistic excellence, while her newspaper prospered, tripling its paid circulation.

In 2000, she and her family were named among the 50 most influential newspaper people in the province by the OCNA.

Both McConnell and her late husband Harold (Mac) McConnell, the former publisher of the Tilbury Times who passed away in 1989, were made honorary life members of the CCNA in 1983. Mac also served as OCNA president in 1970, as did their son Terry in 1986. Terry was also



McCONNELL

CCNA president in 1994. In addition to the Tilbury and Belle River newspapers, the family also published the Merlin Standard and the Comber Herald and founded Shoreline Week, a community newspaper in Tecumseh.

"We went out and took pictures, came back and did the writing, did the bookkeeping and developed our own pictures," recalled McConnell in 2000 for NewsClips. They also sold advertising and commercial printing. "In what other career could you talk to so many people? Every day was different."

The Merlin and Comber papers no

longer publish; the Tilbury, Belle River and Tecumseh papers changed ownership in 1995.

McConnell was born in Lethbridge, Alta., in 1919 and grew up the daughter of an RCMP officer in that province's Peace River Country. She served in the RCAF during the Second World War and met her husband at the airbase in Summerside, P.E.I. In 1955, they moved to Tilbury to take over the local weekly.

McConnell was also engaged in numerous community activities in Tilbury, which she called home for 48 years. She was a founding member of the fundraising committees that built Tilbury's Odette Memorial Library and Centennial swimming pool and she was a longtime member of the Lieut. Patrick Wilson chapter IODE.

She is survived by two daughters, Linda Nixon of Tilbury and Barbara McConnell and her husband Errol Weaver of Milford; two sons, Michael McConnell of Tilbury and Terry and his wife Vicki Charron of Edmonton; 13 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Interment was in Aylmer Cemetery.

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Continued on Page 12

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· Cheryl Rattie, business manager of the Napanee Beaver, celebrated 25 years of service to the paper in February.

• Kingston This Week took third place in the Lung Association's Gardening Festival's Community Contest during the kickoff for the association's annual fundraiser in February. Community service groups, local media and individuals, were asked to create a decorative floral display using the theme children and gardening. Kingston This Week's entry, created by Joyce Cook in production, captured third place while Mayor Harvey Rosen's entry took first. The public also had a chance to vote for their favourites during the fifth annual festival at Portsmouth Olympic Harbour. The arrangements were then donated to local childrens' groups following the festival. SEE PHOTO --

 The Ontario Lacrosse Association honoured Turtle Island News with the best overall lacrosse coverage award, and its sports writer Wray Maracle earned the sports writing award in a recent celerbation.

• Peterborough This Week recently picked up the rights to publish the Peterborough Pages, a large print telephone directory distributed early in the year. This Week had been in the process of producing its own directory for 2004 and with the addition is able to provide the benefits of extensive distribution, production and printing resources.

#### send gossip to c.mullin@ocna.org

#### Reach out to **OCNA** members

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awards news as well!

## **THINK SPRING**



Joyce Cook shows off the floral arrangement that earned Kingston This Week third prize in the Lung Association's Gardening Festival Community Contest. KTW photo

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# production PDF problem files easier with Enhancer

#### By Kevin Slimp

very now and then you come upon a software application that makes you ask yourself, "How did I make it without you all these years?" PDF Enhancer, from Apago, Inc. is just such an application.

Over the past few months, I've written a great deal about the need to preflight PDF files for potential problems before discovering errors on the printed page. Acrobat 6.0 Professional has gone a long way toward making preflighting a painless task with its new preflight and colour separation functions. PDF Enhancer fills in the gaps by offering users the ability to make simple corrections without the risk of changing essential elements on the page.

The stated purpose of PDF Enhancer is to 'improve the quality and functionality of PDF files by correcting errors or damage in a document, reducing them in size, and applying such features as security and linearization.' For most users, PDF Enhancer serves to decrease the size of PDF files. Most of us in the newspaper business will never use this feature. The feature we will use is PDF Enhancer's ability to remove OPI comments from PDF files.

As I have mentioned in the past, OPI comments can be pesky, causing otherwise perfectly good PDF files to produce errors when printed. When using Acrobat Professional 6.0 to preflight PDF files, OPI comments can be found within a document. Unfortunately, Acrobat can't remove these comments. That's where PDF Enhancer comes in. Custom settings can be created to remove any OPI comments from PDF files activated through this utility.

Here's how it works. I opened PDF Enhancer and created three custom 'enhancers.' I named these 'Newspaper Gray,' 'Newspaper CMYK,' and 'Newspaper Spot.' Basically, I created



each of these enhancers with almost identical settings. Not wanting to take the risk that I could change a font or graphic in a PDF file, my settings called for PDF Enhancer to make no changes to resolution or fonts. In all three enhancers, I instructed the utility to remove OPI elements. In the 'Newspaper Gray' enhancer, I selected the option to covert vector and text to gray. In the 'Newspaper Spot' enhancer, I selected the option to 'preserve spot colours.'

After testing several PDF files with PDF Enhancer, I found the utility to do an excellent job of removing OPI elements from problem files. During testing, no problems arose related to changing fonts, resolutions, or other necessary elements. In addition, hot folders can be created to automate this process.

PDF Enhancer 2.0 is available for Mac OS X (10.1 and later) and Windows 98/ME/NT/2000/XP. There are three versions available: standard (\$179), professional (\$349), and two server versions (\$999 & \$1499). Most newspapers will be interested in the professional or server versions. A free, fully-functional, demo is available at http://www.apago.com/prod-ucts.html.

#### Xante Driver Available

Several newspapers contacted me recently with problems related to printing oversize documents from Acrobat Professional 6.0 to Xante 3G and 4G printers. The problem is related to pages jamming upon exit. I've been in contact with Xante over the past few weeks while they've worked to create a new printer driver to alleviate this problem. This morning, I received a test driver from Xante that has worked well on several oversized test pages. Check Xante's web site at http://www.xante.com for the latest OS X drivers for the 3G and 4G printers.

Kevin Slimp serves as director of the Institute of Newspaper Technology, a training program for newspaper professionals sponsored by the University of Tennessee and Tennessee Press Association. His previous columns can be found at www.kevinslimp.com.



# redesign Reader input necessary in redesign process

By Edward F. Henninger OMNIA Consulting

don't know how much you paid your consultant to revamp and redesign your paper, but any amount was too much."

"I didn't have to look past the front page to know I liked it. Easy to read. God bless you!"

Well, it's true: Ask readers to tell you about your redesign – and they will. The previous two quotes are examples of how extreme their reactions can be. Some will hate it, some will love it.

But the key is this: Ya gotta ask. If you don't, how will you know you've done the right thing?

After all the time you've spent doing a redesign, you do want to know what your readers think, don't you? I do – every time. Yeah, sure, I'm hoping for a few pats on the back. Who wouldn't want his work rewarded with some praise? But I'm also looking for the kind of feedback that may indicate there's a problem.

Some readers may not like the new text type.

Some may not like the new way you handle pull quotes.

Some may hate the new infoboxes.

Some may even state they don't like the new big city look.

And some will plead: "Please change it back the way it was."

Well, we're not going to change it back. That doesn't happen. But we may find that there are changes we need to make. When we introduced a recent redesign, we kept hearing that readers didn't like the smaller type, which was actually larger. We waited it out a few days and then we reworked the text type. We switched to a face that was bolder – though not necessarily any more readable.

Some readers called to thank us for

that. Others still complained. We now believe the complaints are focused on the sans serif font we've been using in captions, lists, digests and the like. And we are fixing that.

When the changes are made, we will let readers know about the tweaks and again ask for their feedback. As usual, some will like it, some will not. The point is we need to continue to listen – and we need to continue to work for improvement.

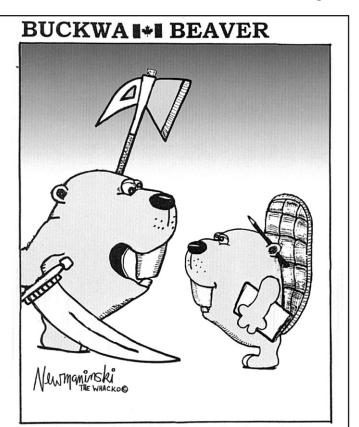
Here are some other points to consider:

• Ask your readers for their reaction. If you don't those who dislike the redesign will call you anyway. By asking for feedback, you're encouraging those who like it to contact you.

• Provide a phone number and a web

address so they can contact you.

• Make sure to train your receptionists and your newsroom personnel so they know how to react to reader calls – and how to ask readers important questions. *Continued on Page 12* 



I don't think the dude who wrote 'The pen is mightier than the sword' ever got a load of my sword.

Mike Newman is a freelance cartoonist who has worked for various Ontario publications and has published a Writing Tips book. Reach him at 905-428-7677 or by e-mail to drawingtips@yahoo.com

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# redesign Develop a form to capture reader reaction

#### Continued from Page 11

• Develop a form for those who answer calls so they can write down specifics.

• Ask readers for specific reasons why they like/don't like something in the redesign. "I just don't like it at all!" doesn't help us. "The type is too small" tells us something we can work on.

• Don't knee-jerk. There will be negatives. There may be an angry call or two. It's OK: readers, like the rest of us, don't like change. Give it a few days. • Be careful to separate design criticisms from those that focus on content. "Why did you drop Dilbert?" is not a design issue.

• Do "group therapy": If there are changes to be made, let's make sure they are discussed and worked on by your full design committee—not just one or two editors who are in a hurry to get something fixed (that may not need fixing).

Launching a redesign should be an event filled with confetti and popping

corks. It's a time to celebrate. But for every parade, there's someone just waiting to rain on it.

The important point to remember is: If you get wet, you're not gonna melt.

Edward F. Henninger is an independent newspaper consultant and the Director of OMNIA Consulting. Offering design expertise, consultation, redesigns, workshops. You can reach him at 803-327-3322. E-mail go20mnia@aol.com

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