

an educator in the local school district and taught journalism at the community college. Since 2007, he has won numerous awards from the NNA's Better Newspaper Contest, including first place honors for editorial, in-depth, business and business feature reporting. The Nevada Press Association named Ranson as one of two Outstanding Journalists in 2012. In the same year, he also won major state and national awards (to include NNA and the Military Reporters and Editors association) for his reporting from Afghanistan where he embedded with two Nevada Army National Guard units in November 2011. Ranson also spent five days in Bahrain where he followed the flight training of a carrier air wing that had trained at Naval Air Station Fallon. He returned to Afghanistan in November 2012 where he flew missions with an aviation company and rode in armed convoys through Kabul.

**Keith Rathbun** has been publisher of The Budget, a community weekly newspaper for Sugar Creek, OH, since 2000. In addition, The Budget publishes a weekly newspaper that is distributed nationally and internationally to Amish and Mennonite communities across the U.S., in Canada, Central and South America and overseas. Rathbun has worked with weekly newspapers his entire professional career. He was editor and publisher of Cleveland SCENE for 26 years. Rathbun serves currently on the Ohio Newspaper Association's Board of Trustees' Executive Committee and NNA's Postal Committee.

**Ray Seale** is a digital refugee from 15 years in the music business and four years in the direct mail/catalog industry where digital put these industries into a tail spin. He has been the production, technology and Web director for The Taos News for the past eight years. His background includes large scale e-commerce, e-mail marketing, multi-media and the study of usability design—how people interact with websites and other digital technologies.

**Larry See Jr.** is a retired reporter/photographer/columnist. He previously served as the general manager/editor for the Antrim County News in Bellaire, MI. Currently, See is a freelance writer and photographer.

**Jeri Seely** is editor in chief at The Papers Inc. in Milford, IN, and had been editor since the late 1970s. She currently oversees eight weekly and monthly newspapers and works with 13 additional publications. She has been a staff member of The Papers for more than 50 years. She has received the national American Legion Auxiliary's Best Local Editorial in the interest of youth award and has won a number of Hoosier State Press Association awards.

**Russel Skiles** graduated from Angelo State University in San Angelo, TX, in 1979 with a degree in journalism, started work as reporter/photographer for the Lamesa Press-Reporter in 1980 and became news editor the following year. He was named publisher in 1991 and took over as president of both the Lamesa Press-Reporter and its companion printing company, South Plains Printing, January 2004.

**Michael Smith** started making images for the Green River Star in 1986 while attending high school in Green River, WY. After college, Michael worked for a variety of newspapers and wire services as a photojournalist in southern Arizona. In 1996, he moved to Washington, to pursue freelance and editorial work. While in Washington, Michael covered the White House, Capitol Hill and was the in-studio still photographer for NBC's 'Meet The Press' with Tim Russert. In 1999, he began working for Getty Images and covered political and editorial stories that were featured in Time, Newsweek, People, The New York Times and many other publications. In 2001, Michael moved back to Wyoming and started working at the Laramie Daily Boomerang. In 2005, Smith joined the Wyoming Tribune Eagle as photo editor and chief photographer.

**Gary and Helen Sosniecki** of Le Claire, IA, owned three weekly newspapers and published a small daily in Missouri during a 34-year career in which they and their staffs earned nearly 300 awards for journalism excellence, including the 1998 NNA Community Development Award. Gary is a regional sales manager covering nine states for TownNews.com of Moline, IL. He is a past president of the Missouri Press Association and currently serves on the board of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors. Helen is senior sales and marketing manager for Interlink of Berrien Springs, MI.

Helen is a past president of the Ozark Press Association and a former NNA state representative for Missouri. She received NNA's Emma C. McKinney Memorial Award in 2011.

**Barbara A. (Barb) Walter** started journalism career in the eighth grade on the staff of the Oklahoma City Classen High School newspaper. The next year, at 14, she became a teen correspondent for the Oklahoma City Times and kept that job four years. She is co-publisher/managing editor, The Hennessey Clipper weekly newspaper, 1978-present; Oklahoma Publisher editor/education director, Oklahoma Press Assn., 1962-78. National and state honors for column writing, community service and investigative reporting. Past president and OPA treasurer, past president and current member Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation. Liberty Bell Award, Beachy Musselman Award, Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame (2008).

**Cesca Waterfield** is editor of Westmoreland (VA) News. A journalist for nine years, she has written for daily newspapers including the Richmond Times-Dispatch and the Virginian-Pilot, alt-weeklies including Style Weekly and Port Folio Weekly, where she maintained a column, as well as several monthlies and glossy publications. She teaches creative nonfiction techniques and memoir writing.

**Kay Watson** has been the managing editor at the Okemah (OK) News Leader since 2008. She attended Oklahoma State University-Okmulgee for photography/graphic design and graduated in 2006. She worked as an office manager for several years before starting at the Okemah News Leader.

**Amy Wilson** is the former publisher of the St. James (MO) Leader-Journal (GateHouse Media). Her journalism career has spanned more than 12 years. She is currently the senior training specialist at Phelps County (MO) Regional Medical Center.

**Angela Wilson**, a former journalist, is a seasoned communicator who calls Central Missouri home. She is a multimedia strategist, published author and book reviewer who serves as Promotions Coordinator for Brownfield Ag News, the largest agriculture radio network in the U.S.

# Thank You Judges



## NNA thanks the following individuals for their time and talent in judging the 2013 Better Newspaper Contest, Better Newspaper Advertising Contest & Newspaper And Education

**Anne W. Anderson** has written for The St. Petersburg (FL) Times, Tampa Bay Newspapers, and The Anniston (AL) Star, among others, as a general assignment correspondent, feature writer and review columnist. She earned her masters of arts as a Knight Foundation Fellow in Community Journalism at the University of Alabama, where she studied the relationship between news organizations and children in the communities they serve.

**Dennis Anderson** has been editor of the Antelope Valley Press since 1999. The Valley Press is virtually the only family-owned, independent daily newspaper remaining in Southern California. Before coming to the Valley Press in 1998 as city editor, Anderson worked for United Press International and The Associated Press. An Army veteran of the Cold War, he is author of three novels about the military, and he embedded in Iraq in 2004.

**Jerry Bellune** founded his newspaper, the Lexington County (SC) Chronicle, with his wife and son. He and his wife, MacLeod, have operated four award-winning community newspapers.

**Joni Berg** has more than 30 years of experience in newsrooms. She is currently a graphic designer. Berg has worked as a reporter, editor, graphics artist, visuals editor and art director. She creates and designs pages, ads, news information graphics, maps and special sections for newspapers (for print and online) in her freelance work. She has taught, as an adjunct professor at the University of Minnesota School of Journalism teaching a course on community journalism, for nine years.

**Wayne Braverman** is managing editor and internship coordinator at GateHouse Media's Metro unit. Braverman has been in the newspaper business for 35 years, winning numerous awards at the local, regional and national levels for his work in news, design and sports. Braverman also spent five years in the Internet world, including teaching Web building and directing an outreach program through the Boston Herald/Com-

munity Newspaper Company's Town Online. He is also a professional speaker, former radio host and children's camp director.

**Laurie Ezzell Brown** is editor and publisher of The Canadian (TX) Record, taking over after the death of her father in 1993. In the 19 years of her tenure, The Record has been a consistent winner of top regional and state press awards for Sweepstakes, General Excellence and Community Service. As publishers of the Record, the Ezzell family was the recipient of the 2007 Gish Award for courage, tenacity and integrity in rural community journalism.

**Kelli Bultena** is co-publisher and advertising manager of two weekly eastern South Dakota newspapers. Bultena has been in the newspaper industry since 1997. Bultena has received numerous awards in the SDNA's better newspaper contest through the years and recently brought home a national award in the 2011 Better Newspaper Advertising Contest.

**Rick Bussler** is the publisher of two small weekly newspapers in Southern Minnesota. He has owned The Times of Blooming Prairie since 2009 and the News-Enterprise of West Concord/Clairemont/Dodge Center since 2012. During his tenure, Bussler has been responsible for overseeing an expansion of The Times into a county-wide newspaper. The Times has doubled in circulation and tripled in sales. Bussler has also developed The Times into a state and national award-winning newspaper.

**Rick Carpenter** is the general manager of the Northern Nevada Business Weekly. He is the former editor and publisher of the Idaho Business Review, managing editor of the Loveland (CO) Daily Reporter-Herald and owner, editor and publisher of the La Veta-Cuchara (CO) Signature.

**Rusty Carter** has been a journalist for nearly three decades, spending the last 25 years at the nation's oldest newspaper, The Virginia Gazette in Williamsburg, VA. Carter went to Williamsburg in 1987 as the Gazette's sports

editor. In 1996, he moved up to deputy editor, and in January 2004, was promoted to editor, where he directs the Gazette's award-winning news coverage. Carter has won more than 60 Virginia Press Association and NNA awards.

**Jennifer Cone Chciuk** is a second generation owner of the West Essex Tribune, Livingston, NJ's award-winning community newspaper, which has been in existence for more than 80 years. She follows in the footsteps of her father, Kit Cone, longtime editor and publisher of the Tribune. Chciuk has published the Tribune for 10 years, and has worked at the paper in various capacities for more than 30 years. Additionally, she is a registered nurse, and worked in maternal/child nursing for many years, while also maintaining a position in the Tribune's production department. Chciuk is a past president and currently serves as chair of the board for the New Jersey Press Association.

**J.P. Crumrine** has been editor of the Idyllwild Town Crier since November 2009. He had been a reporter for the paper for the previous five years. Crumrine is a 1970 graduate of The Johns Hopkins University. In 1972, he earned his master's degree in public policy from the University of Michigan. As a reporter he has received several awards from the California Newspaper Publisher's Association. In 2011, The Town Crier was honored for its overall front-page coverage and Crumrine received recognition from NNA for his editorial, castigating hate crimes and racism, which were surfacing in Idyllwild. The paper won several awards in 2012 and 2013 including honorable mention for best website.

**Ashleigh David** started in the newspaper business while attending college organizing tearsheets at The Lafayette (LA) Daily Advertiser. She then moved to The Livingston Parish News in Denham Springs, LA, a family owned newspaper since 1962. Starting in advertising layout in 1995, she tried her hand in all the departments of the newspaper before leaving in 2006 to experience the commercial printing business. Ashleigh

**Jeff Farren**

Chair, Contests and Awards Committee (2009-2013)

President/Publisher, Kendall County Record-Newspapers Inc., Yorkville, IL



now manages the office and press room of one of the last remaining family owned and printed newspapers in the state of Louisiana.

**Charles N. Davis** served as a professor at the University of Missouri Journalism School. Davis taught Controls of Information; Journalism and Democracy, a capstone graduate course for news-editorial students; and the school's introductory course, Principles of American Journalism. Davis worked at newspapers, magazines and a news service in Georgia, Florida and Ireland for nearly 10 years as a journalist after his graduation from North Georgia College.

**Kevin Dilley** teaches journalism at the University of Texas at Tyler. He is also the adviser for the award-winning media outlet, The Patriot Talon. Before teaching at the university level, Kevin was a consultant for Creative Circle Media Consulting. With this group he lead print and website redesign and development projects and was a newsroom trainer. He has a master's degree in visual communication from Ohio University and a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Before his work with CCMC, Kevin held multiple newspaper positions including photojournalist, copy editor, designer and photo editor.

**Tess Elliott** became the editor of the Point Reyes Light, a Pulitzer Prize-winning weekly newspaper located on the Marin County coast, in 2007. Since then, she and her staff have received numerous national and state awards, including first and second place awards for investigative and public service journalism. In 2010, along with a dozen local authors, journalists and community leaders, she helped form a non-profit media institute that purchased the newspaper and restructured it as an L3C.

**Bill Felber** has been executive editor of The Manhattan (KS) Mercury since 1986. He is a former board member and treasurer of Associated Press Managing Editors, and for two years chaired APME's FOI Committee. He is the author of five books.

**Kent Ford** is the editor for the Missouri Press Association, a position he's held since 1989. He has experience as a daily newspaper reporter, daily newspaper city editor and had been owner/editor/publisher of a community weekly in Northwest Missouri. Ford has assisted often with judging of the NNA contest and with other state association contests.

**Tania French** has been publisher of the Port Lavaca (TX) Wave Newspaper since 2007. She oversees the day-to-day operations of the semi-weekly publication and commercial print operations. Before being named publisher, she was the general manager of The Wave, after

spending several years in the newsroom, and later the advertising department.

**David Green** is the third generation of his family to publish the Observer in Morenci, MI. He studied psychology at Michigan State University and after a period of serving as a bum, returned to earn a K-8 teaching degree, which he never used. He decided to take his turn running the paper because he knew his brothers and sisters would never do it. That was 2,112 issues ago. He and his wife, Colleen Leddy, produce each weekly issue with a minimum strain on their relationship. David serves as chair of the Michigan Press Association contest rules committee.

**Jim Hamilton**, a senior writer for Neighbor News of Missouri, is a columnist and agricultural writer with more than 40 years of journalism experience. He earned his first journalism dollar as a paid editor of his college newspaper in 1970-71, followed with a stint as a military journalist. He has been a weekly journalist with only brief digressions since 1976.

**Doug Hanneman** has been editor of the Hutchinson (MN) Leader since 2001. He started his career in newspapers more than 30 years ago when he helped launch a monthly newspaper for older adults in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. During his time as editor, the Hutchinson Leader has won more than 150 awards for its news coverage, including more than a dozen General Excellence awards at the state and national levels.

**Cynthia Haynes** is a registered pharmacist and a graduate of the University of Kansas. Haynes started in newspapers in 1980, when she and her husband, Steve, bought their first paper, The Mineral County Miner in Creede, CO. During the last 32 years she has learned to write, take pictures, sell advertising, make up pages and do the books for the newspaper. Haynes has been active in the Kansas Press Association, Colorado Press Association and National Newspaper Association. She has won many state and national awards for writing and photography. She is now publisher of The Oberlin Herald and co-owner and chief financial officer of Haynes Publishing, which publishes three weekly, two twice weekly and one daily paper in Northwest Kansas.

**John Hendler** has been news and sports editor at the Marshall Advisor & Chronicle in Marshall, MI, since 2008. Along with his job as editor, John also writes several news stories and features each week, including a weekly column. He also takes all the sports photos while covering the local high school sports scene. In 2007, John won first place for best sports feature in the Michigan Press Association's Better Newspaper Contest.

**Edward F. Henninger** has been an independent newspaper consultant since 1989 and is the director of Henninger Consulting in Rock Hill, SC. The focus of his work is on small dailies and weekly newspapers. His column on newspaper design appears regularly in Publishers' Auxiliary.

**John Hewitt** has been chief operating officer of The Champion (the most award-winning weekly newspaper in Georgia) since 2000. The Champion has been recognized as a "General Excellence" newspaper by the Georgia Press Association for the last six years. Before joining the staff of The Champion, Hewitt sold commercial publishing services and served as production manager of The Daily Olympian and Sports Nippon Newspapers (Tokyo) during the 1996 Olympic Games.

**Katherine E. Hill** is the associate publisher and editor of The (Tahoe-Truckee) Weekly in the Lake Tahoe area. She was a columnist for Publishers' Auxiliary and managing editor of The Enterprise-Journal in McComb, MS. She also served as editor in chief of The Tahoe World in Tahoe City, CA.

**Harry L. Hix Jr.** is retired from the University of Oklahoma, where he was the Engleman/Livermore professor of Community Journalism. During the first three years of retirement, he was a visiting professor of journalism at Oklahoma State University, teaching the reporting class. In addition to experience as a reporter and photographer, he has been managing editor of a daily newspaper, and publisher for 16 years of an award-winning weekly newspaper. He also is a past president of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors.

**Dodie Hook** is owner and publisher of The Akron (IA) Hometown. She and her husband, Joe, began the newspaper in December 2001, and then bought out the competing newspaper, The Akron Register-Tribune, in June 2005, combining the two papers. She has been in the newspaper business for almost 30 years, serving in various areas of the business. Her newspaper has placed or won General Excellence in its category at the Iowa Newspaper Association convention many times. Dodie serves on the Iowa Newspaper Foundation board of directors and currently serves as third vice president.

**Terri House** has been publisher of The Pagosa Springs (CO) Sun since 2003. Before that, she served in various positions in the advertising department of The Sun, beginning in 1982. Among other advertising awards over the years, House received the Colorado Press Association Best of Show award for advertising in 1996. The Sun was awarded first place in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in the NNA Better Newspaper Advertising

Contest. The Sun has also received numerous awards from CPA, including 2011 and 2012 General Excellence in its division.

**Bill Jacobs** is the former president and owner of two publishing companies, which owned a daily and weekly newspapers and other publications serving a seven-county area in Southwest Mississippi. He is currently a director of the Mississippi Center for Freedom of Information and a director of the Mississippi Economic Council. He is a past president of the Mississippi Press Association, and past president of the MPA Education Foundation. He is a past state chair for NNA. He served as NNA's Region 4 director from 2006 to 2012.

**Woody Jenkins** is editor and publisher of the Capital City News in Baton Rouge, LA, and the Central City (LA) News. He has been a journalist for nearly 50 years, with experience as a radio newsman, TV announcer, TV station general manager, owner of an advertising agency, and a newspaper editor and publisher. He served as a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives for 28 years. He was named to the LSU Journalism School Hall of Fame and last year received the coveted Freedom of Information Award from the Louisiana Press Association.

**Tad Johnson**, a graduate of St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN, has been the managing editor of Sun Thisweek Newspapers and the Dakota County Tribune since 2003. He oversees four community newspapers in the south metro of the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Before that, he was the editor of the Anoka County Union in the north Twin Cities area for five years and editor of the Waseca County News for one year. His newspaper won the Minnesota Free Newspaper Association award for General Excellence in 2010.

**Diana Kramer** is a former editor and publisher of community newspapers and magazines in Washington and Arizona. She served as executive director of Washington Newspaper Publishers Association between 1992 and 2004, and is currently the Publisher/Editorial Adviser to Student Publications at the University of Washington.

**Cecile (Wehrman) Krimm** is the publisher of The Journal at Crosby, ND, and The Tioga (ND) Tribune, having purchased the newspapers from a three generation newspaper family July 2012. Krimm has worked for Journal Publishing since 1999. Both newspapers are located in the booming Bakken oil field, which is currently "enjoying" the hottest job market and oil play in the country. She is the author of the book, "The Brothers Krimm," released in 2011, about a serial bank robber whose prolific career ended, literally in her back yard.

**Katherine Lee** is in her 20th year as editor of two award-winning weeklies on the

north coast of California: the Fort Bragg Advocate-News (founded in 1889) and The Mendocino Beacon (founded in 1877).

**Ryan Lewis** is the editor of The Allegan County News, a rural weekly in southwest Michigan where he has reported on news since 2002. He is a 1998 graduate of Albion College. The Allegan County News won first place for General Excellence in the 2010 NNA Better Newspaper Contest and won first place for best local news in the NNA's 2012 contest.

**Lisa Loomis** has been the editor of The Valley Reporter in Waitsfield, VT, since 2000. She has been with the paper since 1986, having been hired as a staff writer and promoted until she succeeded the editor who hired her. Loomis and The Valley Reporter consistently win state and national awards for excellence and Loomis had received awards for editorial writing as well as reporting.

**Dave Marner**, managing editor of the Gasconade County Republican in Owensville, MO, has been working at Missouri newspapers since 1986—the past 20 of those in Owensville. A photojournalist by training, he has received Missouri Press Association awards for news, editorial, and feature writing; sports coverage, investigative reporting, community service, and photography awards for news, feature and sports entries and photo packages. The Republican received the Best Use of Local Photographs award from the National Press Association in 2010. He has also received NNA awards for sports photography, photo packages, and investigative reporting.

**Brian Martin** has been at the Wyoming Tribune Eagle since 1998. He is currently managing editor, with primary responsibility for supervising six news reporters and directing the local news coverage at the daily newspaper in the capital city of Cheyenne. Before that he was news editor at the Finger Lakes Times in Geneva, NY. His newspaper won first place for General Excellence from NNA in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

**Cherri Medcalf** has worked at the award-winning Hood County News in Granbury, TX, since 1973, including many years as advertising director.

**Karen Mitchell** worked for 25 years in photojournalism before joining the convergence journalism faculty at the University of Missouri January 2008. A native of Des Moines, IA, Mitchell worked as a photojournalist at the Associated Press in Chicago and New York, Des Moines Register and Gannett Rochester Newspapers in Rochester, NY.

**Ellen Mortensen** joined the staff of the Custer County Chief in Broken Bow, NE, in 2005, making the switch from radio to newsprint. She began her newspaper career

in the advertising department, then moved into the features editor position and now serves as managing editor. In a small town weekly newspaper, Ellen covers everything from school board and town hall meetings, to court trials, to youth events. She is best known, however, for her feature writing, and has won several awards from the Nebraska Press Association for her feature stories.

**John Nelson** is the advertising sales manager for The Villages Media Group in central Florida. Nelson has almost four decades of media sales and marketing management experience with newspapers in California, Wisconsin, Kansas and Missouri.

**Nancy O'Halloran** is news editor of The Valley Breeze newspapers, a group of five community papers serving 10 towns and cities of northern Rhode Island. She oversees style and content, the copy desk, layout, and editing of the five editions, which have a combined circulation of 62,500. O'Halloran created The Valley Breeze stylebook for writers and editors. Before joining the newspaper industry 16 years ago, she concentrated on writing and editing children's literature.

**Bill Ostendorf**, president and founder of Creative Circle Media Solutions, has led the redesign of more than 500 newspapers and magazines along with more than 250 websites. He has consulted with hundreds of media companies on three continents and has been a speaker at industry seminars in 43 countries on a wide range of topics.

**Russell Pankonin** is co-owner and co-publisher of Johnson Publications Inc., which includes four weekly newspapers in Southwest Nebraska and Northeastern Colorado. He remains on the front line as the managing editor and co-publisher of The Imperial (NE) Republican, largest of the four Johnson Publications weeklies. His weekly journalism career spans 30 years, earning recognition along the way for both his writing and photography in state and national contests. He is also a past president of both the Nebraska Press Association and the Nebraska Press Advertising Service.

**Melissa Perner** has been editor and publisher of The Ozona (TX) Stockman since 2004. Before that, she was a reporter with the San Angelo (TX) Standard-Times for five years. Her newspaper won its first NNA awards in 2009 and is a multiple-winner of the Texas Press Association Better Newspaper Contest and received the Sweepstakes award in the 2009 West Texas Press Association Better Newspaper Contest.

**Steve Ranson** has been editor for the Lahontan Valley News in west-central Nevada, since March 2008. Before that, he was the sports editor for the newspaper. He also served as