

NNA: The Eighth Decade

Journey through the National Newspaper Association's history

“There were hundreds of publishers and editors who did accept the journalistic challenge regardless of consequences: fighting crime, exposing corruption and pursuing the less notable community needs like improved streets, new libraries, better schools and more accessible health care. Most of them carried on their work without wide recognition. A few won great honors and the admiration of their peers.”

-- Robert Karolevitz, author of “From Quill to Computer”



In 1959, an article in Newsweek claimed that “Suburbia’s green pastures are where newspapers have been making hay in recent years.”

The increased use of automobiles meant people could travel outside of their hometowns and spend money in nearby big cities. In some cases, businesses in these small towns, including rural newspapers, went under as residents abandoned the small places where they grew up.

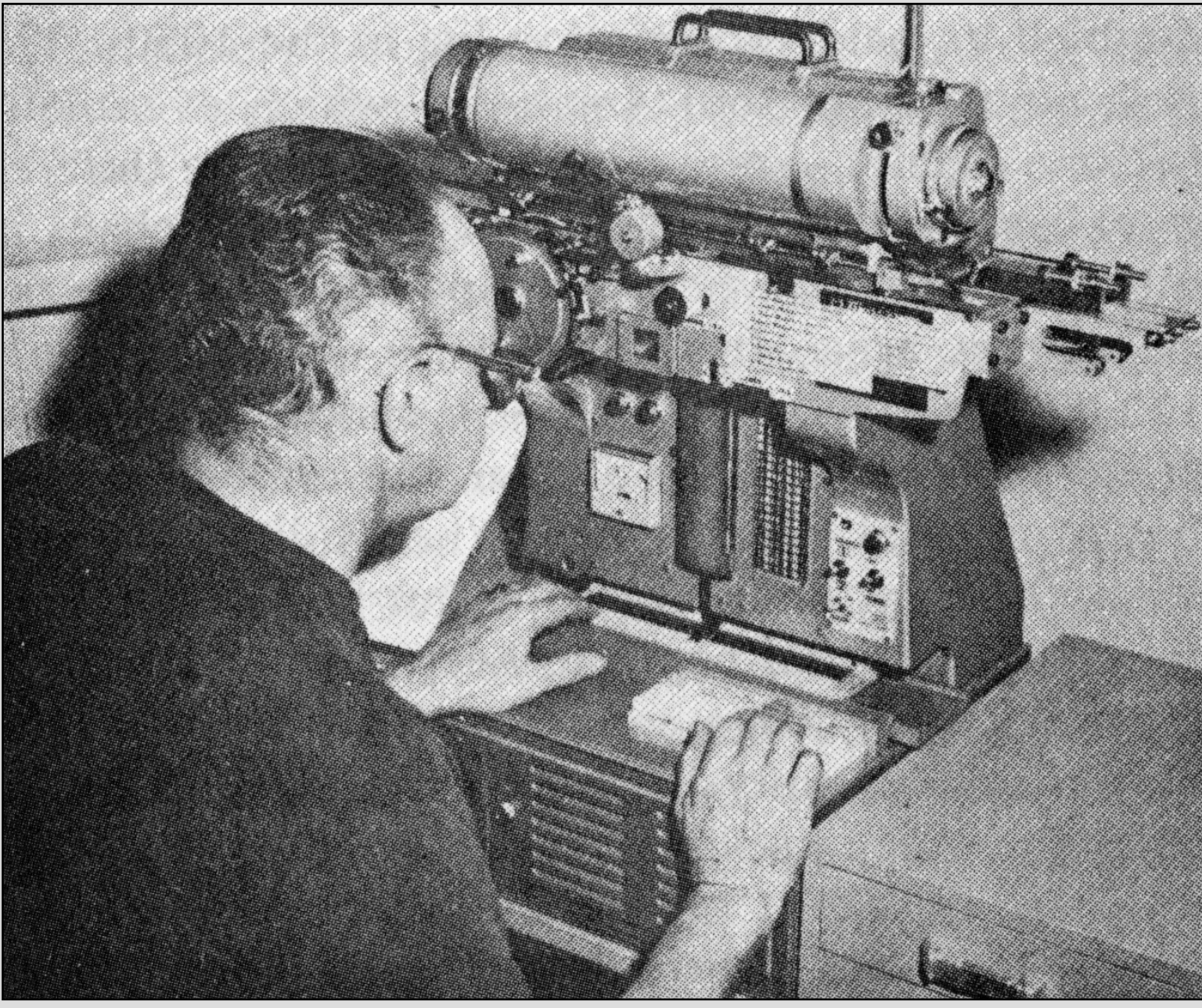


But it wasn’t all bad news for rural papers. People leaving small towns often settled in the suburbs, creating a whole new market for small daily and weekly newspapers. The growth of suburbia would create a market that rural and grassroots papers could take advantage of. As the suburbs grew, some papers doubled in circulation.

Media mergers began to affect small papers at this time as large media companies started noticing the financial success of suburban papers. They wanted a share and could offer more resources as an incentive to merge.

By the 1960s, many newspapers made the switch from using a letterpress to printing with the electronic cold type process, where images were transferred to paper by plastic or film rather than metal. The Cadillac (MI) Evening News, seen below, used a Morisawa Photo Typesetter during this time.

By the end of NNA’s eighth decade, there were about 1,400 newspapers printed with offset presses and that number would soon rise to 5,000 just a few years later, according to author Karolevitz. With higher printing quality, journalists began to think more about the photographs that could accompany their stories.



NNA purchased the Publishers’ Auxiliary to serve as a trade publication for its members and other journalists. The association bought Pub Aux from the FWP Corporation, which stands for Farwell W. Perry. Pub Aux was published along with NNA’s other, older trade publication — The National Publisher.



The association’s advocacy in Washington remained strong during this decade. In fact, some NNA members in 1963 met Attorney General Robert Kennedy (left) when the association sponsored a governmental affairs conference at the nation’s capitol.

After 80 years, the association officially changed its name from the National Editorial Association to the National Newspaper Association. The name change was to eliminate any confusion between the community newspaper association and other NEAs: the National Education Association and the Newspaper Enterprise Association.



Award-winning journalism

During this decade, small papers proved they had the same journalistic abilities as the big metro papers.

Those honors included the Pulitzer Prize to Oscar Griffin of the Pecos (TX) Independent and Enterprise for his coverage of the corrupt Billie Sol Estes in 1963, and the Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award to Samuel E. Woodring of the North Augusta (SC) Star for life-endangering coverage of local police in 1961.

1959

1960

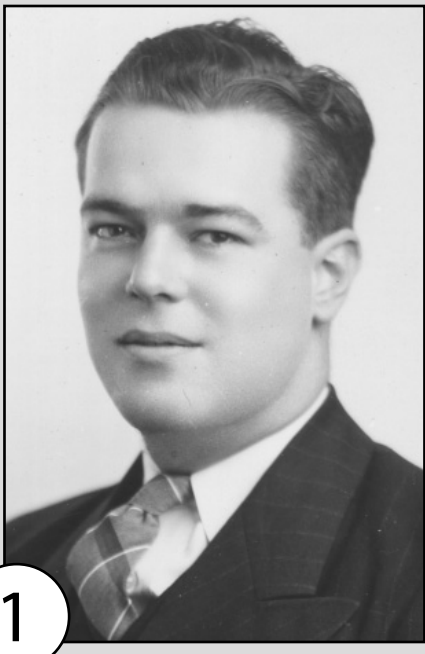
1962

1963

1964

Presidents of NNA’s eighth decade

1. Don Hardy of the Daily Record in Canon City, CO, 1955
2. Alfred J. Ball of the Leader-Observer in Woodhaven, NY, 1956
3. Lowell E. Jessen of the Turlock Journal in Turlock, CA, 1957
4. G. Arthur McDaniel of the Federalsburg Times in Federalsburg, MD, 1958
5. Edgar W. Schergens of the Tell City News in Tell City, IN, 1959
6. Paul C. Smith of the Lyon County Reporter in Rock Rapids, IA, 1960
7. Guy Easterly of the LaFollette Press in LaFollette, TN, 1961
8. Charles W. Claybaugh of the News & Journal in Brigham City, UT, 1962
9. Max Thomas of the Kerrville Times in Kerrville, TX, 1963
10. Gordon B. Seavey of the Belmont Citizen in Belmont, MA, 1964



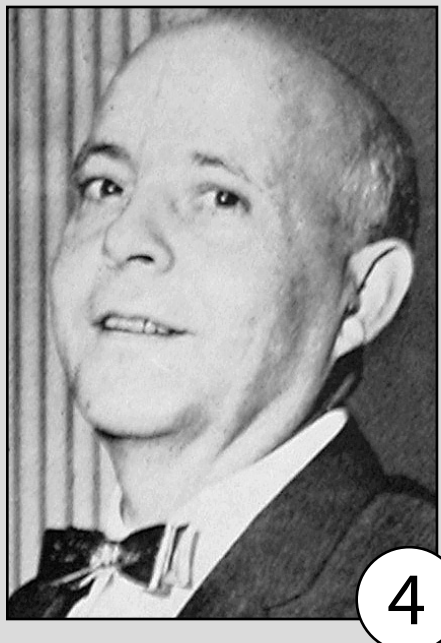
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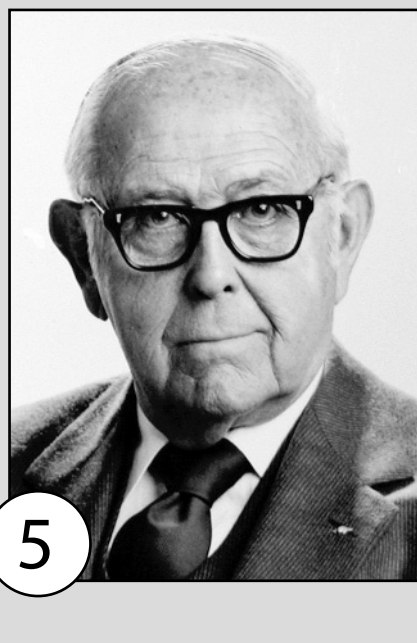
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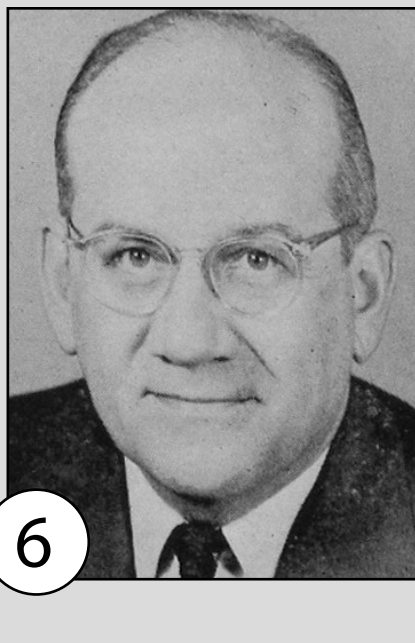
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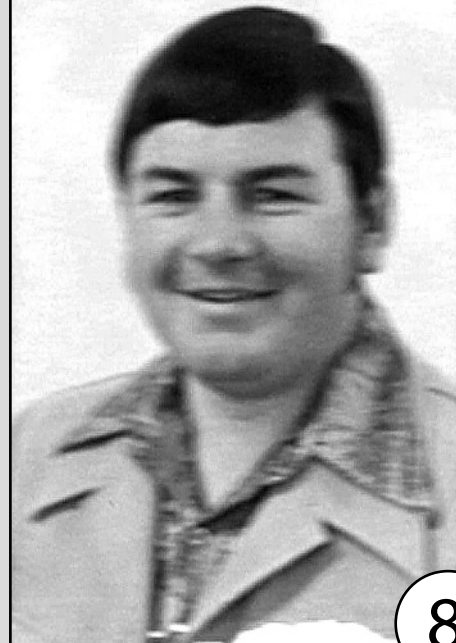
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