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President's Corner



Joyce Frericks

One Step at a Time

Thank you to everyone who attended our conference last week in Des Moines, Iowa. It was great from the beginning with Brian Imbus showing us the “Miracles of the Mind” to the last minute of the 3-Minute Idea Exchange.

The attendees were generous and shared their knowledge at the Publisher/Manager Roundtable and the 3-Minute Idea Exchange. Ideas ranged from a how-to guide, sports poster, candy bars with logos, FFA special sections, a Staycation guide, a Legen-Dairy puzzle book and many more.

Now is the time to heed the advice of other publishers and managers and use some of those great ideas.

I was at a publisher's summit many years ago and was overwhelmed with the number of ideas we could implement in our publications. I asked the now late Doug Fabian who was sitting next to me how anyone could possibly get so many of the ideas done. His advice was to not try and do them all the day you come home from conference. Put them on a list and do one a week until they have all been done.

Doug's ideas were the catalyst for the Dairy Star's Legen-Dairy puzzle book and in addition to bringing our publication revenue, it has brought our readers a much-needed break in the never-ending task of providing food to the world.

I've made my list for this conference and checked off the first one this morning, which was finding a local supplier to put our logo on cheese or a candy bar. I'm excited to see what doors this idea opens.

For those of you who attended, I hope you have a list of ideas for your publications. For those of you who couldn't attend, we hope to see you at our next in person MFCP event July 12-13 at the Publisher/Manager Summit at the Hotel Julien in beautiful Dubuque, Iowa.

You may be tempted to stay a day or two extra as Dubuque is a beautiful city with a lot to explore. Check it out at www.traveldubuque.com/explore/along-the-river.

Joyce

From the office



2 New Additions to MFCP



By Lee Borkowski

The MFCP family just keeps growing....

In fact, we had two new additions just last month.

Our oldest new member to the family is my mom.... Allana. For those who don't know, my mom suffers from dementia. Growing up she worked outside the home as a bookkeeper. She was very exacting in her work and always busy. Now, she struggles with basic skills. But she still wants to be helpful. She asks about the jobs Sue Pilla and I do for MFCP and often offers to help... "if there's anything I can do" ... "Do you need help with anything?" "I can still work you know!!"

So, a couple of weeks before conference we told her we had a job for her. We checked her out of the assisted living facility and brought her to my home. Then we put her to work! Her job was to put the Meeting of the Minds labels on the attendee gift bags. She was thrilled to help. It took a little longer than it would have without her – but one look at the smile on her face and Sue and I both knew it was so worth the extra time. Some of the labels were a little crooked but we knew that would be OK, too. Because the MFCP family and the free-paper industry was built on a basis of trust and support. Of building each other up and helping navigate hard times.

Our youngest new member was planning to attend the conference but her parents had to cancel at the very last minute. Her name is Lilah Rose and she was born, February 15th, 2023. She is a blessing to great-grandparents John and Peggy Loveless, grandmother Hillary Zidlicky and parents Garrett and Veronica Cole. It won't be long and Lilah will be old enough to have a paper route or stuff envelopes and that will make her the 5th generation to work in the family business!

Speaking of people that have worked in the business.... over the years we've had many fine leaders of MFCP. These people gave freely of their time and talents and thereby played an important role in MFCP's development and growth.

Each month in Paperclips we are featuring an "industry pioneer." This month we're featuring Bill Welsh, a man many of us knew and loved. Previously we've featured Craig Trongaard, Cathy Crosby and Gladys VanDrie. If you knew them, you'll want to read their stories. If you didn't know them, you'll still want to read their stories. It's because of them and many others that the industry is where it is today. If you know of a person or company that should be featured, please contact us at director@mfc.org

MFCP – building each other up, helping navigate hard times and growing skills since 1955. How lucky are we to be associated with such an industry and association?!

Lee

Members Helping Members

A “Sweet” Idea Exchange



A highlight of each conference is the 3-minute idea exchange. Attendees are encouraged to share ideas that improved their bottom line. The ideas could be revenue generating or expense saving in nature.

This year we had 18 entries into the 3-minute idea exchange. They were widely different from each other. Here’s a summary of the 3rd place winning idea presented by Russ Swartz – Tidbits of Linn & Johnson County, Hawkeye Publishing, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Russ shared with the group that he has been purchasing custom candy bars that feature his company logo. He purchases the bars locally for \$1.25 each. These are full sized candy bars and are of a very high quality. There are several flavors – dark chocolate, milk chocolate, and mint chocolate are the favorites.

What makes Russ’ candy bars unique is that his company logo is imprinted as part of the candy bar. He purchased the mold years ago for around \$80. A quick online search found a number of sources for purchasing a custom silicone logo mold. You can expect to spend \$100 or so for a custom mold.

Once he has the bars in hand, he makes a custom label that he affixes before giving the bars away. What’s nice about this is the option to easily change the message. You could have one to welcome new customers, one to say “thank you for your business”, maybe one to serve as a sell sheet about an upcoming special section. The possibilities are endless!

Russ shared that the same candy shop that makes his bars also has the ability to put a logo on truffles and other confections. This gives him another option for gift giving.... a customized box of chocolates or truffles.

This is the candy shop Russ uses and a link to their site:

Sweetopia

Tina Kerslake

1468 Twixt Town Rd., Suite 1468

Marion, IA 52302

319-294-4281

[Artisan Chocolate Shop in Cedar Rapids, IA | Sweetopia \(sweetopiachocolates.com\)](http://sweetopiachocolates.com)

If you’re looking for a “sweet” way to say thank you to your customers and support staff this may be the golden ticket!

Member News

Congratulations Lisa Miller! MFCP Distinguished Service 2023



The MFCP membership was pleased to honor Lisa Miller as the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. In presenting the award Greg Birkett shared the following comments:

Today we honor an individual who has given a great deal to this organization and to the free paper industry.

The Presidents' Memorial Award for Distinguished Service is given in memory of our past presidents who helped build this organization and our industry, and this year's honoree has worked to keep MFCP strong.

She has been in the community paper business for over 20 years and is the General Manager at New Century Press where she oversees 11 small independently owned weekly publications in four states including Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota. They have 3 free-circulation publications in their operations. She has worked in circulation, production and management and that makes her the perfect person to help their company grow, help our association grow and help fellow publishers.

She joined the MFCP board in 2016, is a 2 term President and currently serves on the MVP committee and she chairs the Contest and Conference committees. And if that isn't enough – she also is 2nd Vice President for the National Association – the Association of Community Papers.

I asked some folks for comments about our honoree and everyone agreed she is always willing to lend a helping hand. Not just with her ideas – but is willing to roll up her sleeves and get the work done.

Lee Borkowski said she is always smiling, always willing to help and often says “it's no big deal”.

One board member recalled how thirsty we all were one night setting up for a conference when a cooler appeared thanks to our honoree and solved our thirst problem. That's her – always a problem solver! And we didn't get thrown out of the hotel either – but it was close.

Another board member commented about how she has earned the respect of our board and membership.

You may have read this in the latest issue of PAPERCLIPS, but our award winner recently drove several hours out of her way last minute on a Friday night to help ensure that a fellow publisher could deliver a print job on time.

She and her husband Ryan live in Rock Rapids, Iowa and have a son, Devin and a daughter, KyLee.

Always willing to lend a hand, always dedicated to her publications and always dedicated to our association. Please join me in honoring Lisa Miller for her Distinguished Service to MFCP.

Industry Pioneers

The free-paper industry has a rich history. And, many people from the Midwest played an important role in its development and growth. The caring, sharing and support members offer each other make this an industry like no other. In this section we will share features from people past and present who helped create the unusual dynamic we enjoy today.

If you know of a person or company that should be featured, please contact Lee at director@mfcg.org

This month we are featuring Bill Welsh



Memories of Bill Welsh

*Elevator incidents, wedgies and
yellow leather suits*

By Shane Goodman

I knew Bill Welsh for a number of years before I ever worked for him at Maverick Media in Syracuse, Nebraska. Like many of you, I got to know him at free paper industry conferences, and he made me smile and laugh more than anyone else I would see. I can't think of a time when I didn't look forward to seeing Bill.

Bill was a salesman at heart, but he was a good business operator, too. He understood that relationships were integral to any successes, and he was a master at making people feel good.

I desired to gain experience in managing a printing plant, and I wanted to learn from Bill. To be honest, I don't know that I learned much about printing presses from Bill, but I learned a whole lot about life.

Bill didn't encourage me to get involved in free paper associations; he required it, and I am glad he did. We were able to travel together on our trips to conferences and board meetings, and he introduced me to some incredible people whom I continue to have strong relationships with today. Like some of you, I was also the recipient of a number of his jokes. Let's start off with one of his classics.

When the two of us would be alone in an elevator, he would pass gas right before he would get off on his floor, leaving me with the aftermath and the awkwardness of meeting people on the next floor who jumped on.

Bill also liked to walk up behind me, grab my tucked-in shirt, and give it a strong pull upwards. Although this wasn't a true wedgie, the results were quite the same. Years later when I no longer worked for Bill, I decided to return the favor. But when I gave his shirt a strong pull, nothing happened. He told me he stapled his shirt to his underwear — and he might have.

Another time while we were waiting for our flight at an airport, a man strutted by in a yellow leather suit. I jokingly asked Bill if he ever had one of those. "Don't laugh," he said. "I had a closet full of them." Prior to working in the publishing business, Bill ran a men's clothing store in Forest City, Iowa. That was the 1970s, and Bill apparently had quite the disco-era wardrobe.

Bill had many great one-liners and phrases that I continue to borrow today. He had a strong mile-high sense of financial numbers, but he didn't like to get caught up in the fine details. "Figures lie, and liars figure," he would tell me. And when meetings were running long, and people were struggling to get to the meat of the discussion, Bill would cut through the B.S. and say, "Let's call a spade a shovel and get moving on this."

My prior bosses had a regimented system of weekly update memos and projection reports they expected from me. Not Bill. I supplied him with similar reports the first few months I worked for him, until he told me, "Just tell me what the hell is going on, and make sure I am the first to know." And so I did. I never received an email from Bill in the five years I worked for him. He preferred to talk, and it took me a while, but I learned how to keep him properly posted... at his pace.

Most mornings, Bill would fill up a cup of coffee from the breakroom and make his way into my office for a short conversation. He seemed to only drink about half of the coffee, as he spilled the other half on my desk. He would say "oops" with that familiar grin and wink, but I think he did it on purpose, just to rattle my cage. It worked.

Bill and I would go out for dinner together often, and he would regularly ask me to toss spaghetti sauce on his shirt before we started to eat so he wouldn't have to worry about making the first stain. As tempted as I was, I knew better.

Bill loved to golf. He would say, "Where else can I drink, smoke and gamble all at the same time?" The answer to that question was one of his other favorite places to be — the casino. Bill's father was a county sheriff, and Bill said he learned to play cards as a kid with the jail tenants. They taught him well. Bill didn't talk too much about his father to me, but when he did, tears of love would often run down his cheek.

The stories go on and on, from the time when Bill was a city councilman in Forest City and took it upon himself to dynamite a flood levee, to him inviting his son, Skip, to join him on top of the garage to get a better view of an approaching tornado.

Bill truly loved his family, his kids, his grandkids and his dear wife, Ruby, who were all, at one point or another, the recipient of his jokes. Many of you reading this likely were, too, and that means he loved you as well. He also loved this industry and all those whom he was able to connect with.

Bill left this world all too early on Nov. 2, 2014, but I would guess he is still pulling a few pranks by the pearly gates, and the good folks in heaven are smiling along with him, too.

Shane Goodman is the publisher of CITYVIEW magazine and the president of Big Green Umbrella Media in Johnston, Iowa.

MVP'S At Work



Tips and Tricks Galore from Spring Conference

By Emily Adcock

Hello to friends new and old! It was a pleasure to mingle with many of you at the conference this past weekend. Did Brian Imbus blow anyone else's mind?! How he knew the exact answers to the questions I dropped in the locked box before the keynote kept me up at night. I'm sure many of you can relate!

This is my second year attending the MFCP conference, but my first since being nominated by my coworker, Lloyd Uthe. It's been a blast getting to know the MVPs online over the last 12 months, but nothing can beat meeting the MVPs in person and interacting with them for the first time. The energy going into this year was different than last. The MVP program has given me the confidence to meet new people, lend a hand when needed, and reach out to others.

The designer courses with Russell Viers always leave me excited to implement new tips and tricks. Are any other designers nerding about GREP and the power of paragraph styles?! Russell also taught us the difference between a paragraph style and a character style. Russell's explanations are always simple and effective.

I'm so excited about the designer roundtables Russel is holding for us soon! Designers – check your inbox on future dates because you won't want to miss this!

With the conference being a single-day event, it may feel overwhelming to absorb the new information coming your way. Let's be honest; the likelihood of remembering everything is slim.

However, there will always be a few golden nuggets to grasp onto throughout the day. Truthfully, the conference is more than what we learn for ourselves. It's also what we can teach others who cannot attend the conference. I encourage attendees to spread a few golden nuggets to their coworkers.

Kevin Slimp



Taking Control of Your Time

Some tools that can increase productivity

Kevin Slimp
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It has been one of those days. You've had them.

It began with a website that wasn't working like it was supposed to. When you have a website that lists items for sale on the homepage, and the homepage is blank, you have a problem. That's how my day began.

It seems like it's always on your busiest days when things go wrong. Thankfully, with the help of a friend in Dallas, we were able to find our problem and get the site up and running in about an hour. So, the day could have been a lot worse.

I redesign a lot of newspapers these days. It reminds me of the work a lot of my readers do. It's deadline-driven. A newspaper will come out with a new design in two weeks, whether it's ready or not. So, it had better be ready.

Just this morning, I wondered why I hadn't heard back from the co-publishers to tell me how they liked the designs I sent them two days ago. Then, late this morning, I got an email from a mail server letting me know the emails to my client never made it to their inbox due to an error in my email system. That took about three hours to fix, but everything is fine now.

Both of those issues were caused by servers in other places that control things like how my websites work and where my email goes. I couldn't have seen those problems coming. Problems arise all the time in the high-tech world in which we operate. Still, it's tough when the problems come in pairs.

Time is my most important commodity. I make a great effort to get the most out of my time. Maybe I can't control a website host in Eastern Europe or an email server across the country, but there are things I can control to get the most out of my time.

One of the most important things I can do is use the right tools to do my work. Some of you have been following my work long enough to remember when I used to receive shipments from software and hardware companies almost daily, hoping I would mention their products in a column. Those days were fun, but they're past. Like everyone else, I buy my own hardware and software these days. I'm not looking for the least expensive tools to complete my work. I'm looking for tools that allow me to get the most work done in the shortest amount of time.

Hardly a week goes by that I don't invest in a new piece of hardware. Here are a few of my favorites that save me a lot of time:

Keyboards:

Logitech MX Keys for Mac (\$119 US). It allows me to control up to three computers at once. Typing is smooth, requiring much less effort than most keyboards.

Chesona Wireless Keyboard for Mac (\$40). I decided to purchase a second keyboard this week and researched if there were any new keyboards with the same features as the MX Keys from Logitech. I found it in the Chesona, available in both PC and MAC versions. It controls up to three computers simultaneously and feels almost identical to the Logitech while entering text.

Mice:

Logitech MX Master 3 (\$99). Like the Logitech keyboard, this mouse fits firmly in my hand while allowing me to control up to three computers simultaneously. Other mice pale in comparison, except...

Logitech M720 Triathlon (\$36). Again, I researched to see if another mouse worked as well as the MX Master 3 without the price tag. I found it in the M720. It's almost identical to the \$99 mouse. It's built with less metal and more plastic. Thus, the lower price.

Monitors:

I use three monitors. Believe this: If you design pages for a living, the difference between two and three monitors is significant. I've tried many monitors and found three 4k monitors (QHD) I love without breaking the bank (4k monitors can run \$1,000 or more). I get great results with each of these.

Dell S3222DGM (\$349). This 32" monitor is my favorite. I never thought I'd enjoy working on a curved monitor. Go figure. The color is excellent, and the detail makes me think I'm working on a much more expensive machine. Built for gaming, it's great for what I do.

ThinkVision T32h-20 (\$389). Another 32" monitor, the ThinkVision, replaces the Lenovo (same manufacturer) C32q-20. I've owned several Lenovo monitors, so I decided to trust the ThinkVision. It hasn't let me down.

Samsung ViewFinity S60A (\$349). Again, an excellent monitor. It sits above my desk, along with the other monitors, held up by adjustable gas spring monitor arms.

When purchasing monitors, shop around online for the best price. I found some of these monitors selling for \$600 or more online. I always check Amazon, Best Buy, and the manufacturer. Just now, the Thinkvision was listed for \$200 less on Lenovo.com than on Amazon.

Okay, I'm going to be working late today. There have been a lot of interruptions, and somebody is waiting for a new newspaper design.

Kevin Slimp has been a popular consultant and speaker in the newspaper industry since developing the PDF remote printing method in 1994. His upcoming webinars on design, circulation, and software can be found at newspaperacademy.com.

Kevin Slimp is former director of The University of Tennessee Newspaper Institute and founder of NewspaperAcademy.com.

Ad-Libs



Oboes and Leadership

John Foust, Greensboro, NC

If you've been to a symphony concert, you've witnessed the cacophony of sound before the concert begins. Every instrument seems to be in its own world, independently running through the musical scale.

Actually, this is a traditional and deliberate process to tune all of the instruments. First, a single instrument plays the note of A, then the other musicians tune their instruments to that note at the same time. Once an instrument is in tune, the musician often warms up by going through the scale. The objective is for each instrument to be perfectly in tune with every other instrument when the concert begins.

Although other instruments can be used for this purpose, an oboe is generally preferred, because its steady sound stands out from the others in the orchestra. The note of A is used, because all of the string instruments have A-strings.

All of this means that the oboe sets the pace for the entire orchestra. It's easy to see a direct comparison to a leader's role in the business world. A few points come to mind:

1. Leaders lead by example. They have to be in tune, themselves, before they are ready to lead others. Even though the old way of doing things ("Do as I say, not as I do.") never really worked, a lot of so-called leaders cling to that idea. Maybe it's habit, maybe it's insecurity, maybe they've never seen any other way.

A leader has been defined as "someone who has earned the right to have followers." One of the surest ways to earn that right is be an example for others. The oboist plays A, not E or D or any other note.

If you want your team to be better listeners, be a better listener, yourself. If you want your team to be punctual, be punctual, yourself. If you want your team to understand the principles of effective ad copy and design, know them, yourself.

2. Leaders don't micromanage. You'll never see an oboist walking around to make sure the others are tuning properly. He or she stays seated, secure in the knowledge that the musicians are qualified to tune their instruments.

If a leader has done a proper job of training, there is no need to micromanage. All micromanagement does is give the manager a false sense of control over something in which he or she lacks confidence.

3. Leaders periodically review goals. Tuning is not a one-and-done activity. After the intermission in a concert, the orchestra repeats the tuning process. Adjustments are expected. Nothing is left to chance.

Over time, team objectives require adjustments. Perhaps economic winds have shifted, clients have increased or decreased budgets, or new competitors have emerged. Although those changes may seem minor at first, they can develop into huge problems later. True leaders have the flexibility to review goals and make necessary tweaks along the way.

You could say that – in music and in business – leadership is largely a matter of striking the right chord.

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

Ryan Dohrn



Make Your First Impression Count

Ryan answers a listener's question about how to make the 3-sentence rule work in making your first impression count.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53QnCRLIRIs>

Listen to Ryan's ad sales podcast, [Ad Sales Nation](#), on [iTunes](#) or on [Soundcloud](#). Keep up to date with Ryan's ad sales training advice on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/RyanDohrnLIVE>

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