

NEWS & VIEWS



PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE SASKATCHEWAN WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS ASSOCIATION

Dayplanner

2006 Atlantic Community Newspapers Conference, May 5-6, Saint John

AWNA Spring Convention, May 11-13, Banff

Junior Citizen Selection Day, May 17, Regina

QCNA Annual Convention, May 19, Pointe Claire

SANTE! CCNA 87th annual convention, May 24-27, Quebec City

Farm Progress Show, June 14-17, Regina

To have your event listed here, contact the SWNA office at (306) 982-9683

Brent Butt headlines the SWNA's 90th annual convention

BY STEVE RENNICK

The popular star of *Corner Gas* and Tisdale's own comes home to help the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association mark its 90th anniversary. Butt will accept an honorary life-time membership in the Association at Saturday, September 23rd's Better Newspaper Competition on behalf of *Corner Gas*' fictional newspaper, the Dog River Howler. Dozens of awards will be handed out in more than 40 categories recognizing excellence among Saskatchewan's community newspapers.

"Having Brent Butt in attendance at our awards is going to put the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspaper Association Better Newspaper Competition on the map," says BNC committee chair Kent Peters.

"I think it's the most exciting thing to happen to our industry in the last several years."

There were five new categories added to the Better Newspaper Competition this Year: Best Photographer, Best Salesperson, Best Website, Service to the Community, and Best Photo

Essay. Peters says, "It was obviously an effort to create more entries; we showed a slight increase this year, and expect it to increase over the next several years."

Also new to this year's Better Newspaper Competition: a free hotel room and banquet ticket for the top three finalists in each category.

"As soon as those individuals who attended their first convention this year because of this new initiative go back and talk to their peers, I think there will be nothing but increased interest in the awards," says Peters.

The entertainment the night of the BNC's is none other than the host of CBC's "Madly Off In All Directions," comedian Lorne Elliott.

Another highlight of the annual fall convention is the Junior Citizen of the Year award banquet. It is the 30th anniversary of the program that recognizes the achievements of outstanding youth aged 8 to 18. Four recipients are chosen from hundreds of nominees.

Junior Citizen of

the Year committee chairperson Chris Ashfield says the longevity of the program is significant.

"Any time you have something that lasts for 30 years, it just goes to show the commitment and spirit of Saskatchewan."

This year's keynote speaker at the Junior Citizen of the Year award banquet is 2001 recipient Nicole Watt. The world-class figure skater is now a student at the University of Saskatchewan.

Ashfield says, "It's very exciting to not only have a past Junior Citizen come back and speak at our event, it's evident winning an award meant so much to Nicole."

As the Association marks its 90th anniversary, convention committee chair Jim Tennant says it's quite significant.

"There's very few businesses, very few associations now a days that have had the staying power to last 90 years and seen the growth that the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association has had. The association is obviously doing something right."

The convention



will feature seminars by advertising guru John Foust, design expert Phil Nesbitt, and investigative reporter Gary Dimmock.

Tennant says, "These speakers will provide valuable information for both editorial and advertising people. We're in a constantly changing business and we need to be more active in what we're producing and how we're doing it."

The SWNA's 90th convention happens September 22nd-24th at the Regina Inn, in Regina.

Call 1-800-667-8162 to take advantage of the special room rate of \$96.00 a night reserved for members of the SWNA.



The Dog River Howler

Saskatchewan Employment Weekly launches to rave reviews

BY MIKE COVEY, CAREER SALES MANAGER

April 7th saw the successful launch of the SWNA's latest initiative, the Saskatchewan Employment Weekly.

Carried in 84 of our member newspapers, the weekly supplement puts employers and employees together like never before.

My hat goes off to all of our participating members

It is a fantastic thing to have such a large and diverse group come together as one to offer the recruiting public an unprecedented delivery mechanism to help them find employees.

We are on the cut-

ting edge of an enormous market and have taken the lead to break ground for other associations to follow.

With the right commitment, I can visualize an Employment Weekly right across Canada.

We have in a very short period of time generated a lot of interest within the employment community. But, as with any new business venture it takes time to build the foundation

Our foundation is such that we have the sales tools to make the calls and aid in the selling of what is already a very popular read

The SEW has stimulated the interest of many ad agencies, employment agencies, energy companies, manufacturers, employers in the automotive industry and quite a broad range of associations.

I encourage each of you to spread the word of this new service to as many of your clients as possible so that when they are in need of this service they will think of the Saskatchewan Employment Weekly.

I look forward to working with each of you in making this venture a successful one.

National BNC Finalists Announced

BY STEVE RENNICK

Saskatchewan papers are up for several awards in the CCNA's Better Newspaper Competition.

The Whitewood Herald was nominated in the Best All Around Newspaper category, as was the Shaunavon Standard.

The Moosomin World Spectator was nominated in the Best Ad Design, Best Newspaper Promotion, Outstanding Community Service, and Best Agriculture Story categories.

And rounding out the Saskatchewan BNC finalists was the Battlefords News Optimist, for Best Feature Story.

The national Better Newspaper Competition awards get handed out during the CCNA's annual convention, May 24-27 in Quebec City.



Long-time publisher suffers stroke

BY STEVE RENNICK

Kevin Hamm, better known as K.T., suffered a stroke in January.

Initially being treated at Saskatoon's Royal University Hospital, K.T. is now back in Wilkie,

where he can be closer to family and friends.

Hamm is an honorary life-time member of both the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association and the Canadian Community Newspapers Association. He published the Unity Northwest Herald, the Wilkie Press and the Western Farm Advisor.

President of the CCNA from 1983 to 1984, Hamm is also past-president of the SWNA.

The Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association wishes all the best to Hamm and his family.

Speedy recovery K.T.



Canadian Taxpayers Federation on the defensive

BY STEVE RENNICK

When the provincial government released its 2006-2007 budget, it came with hefty promotional price-tag.

The NDP spent 445-thousand dollars on a month-long campaign, featuring, for the first time, TV ads, to sell their latest fiscal blueprint.

That's close to 10 times more than the \$47,500 the government spent last year to advertise budget highlights.

The budget also included full-page ads in Saskatchewan's weekly newspapers, worth almost 35-thousand dollars.

The last time the province bought budget ads in community newspapers was in 2004, and then they only spent close to 19-thousand.

The Canadian Taxpayers federation was quick to condemn the ad campaign, calling for it to be scrapped entirely.

But CTF Saskatchewan director David MacLean says it's not an attack on weekly newspapers.

"We just have a problem with the government tacking on the more expensive mediums of TV and radio," said MacLean.

But SWNA president Terry Jenson sees it differently.

"They're biting the hand that feeds them," said Jenson.

"It's ironic the CTF relies on community newspapers to carry their message, but has a problem with expenditures that helps the weeklies pay the bills."

MacLean maintains the CTF has a great relationship with community newspapers.

"Of our 20-thousand Saskatchewan members, 90% rate their weekly newspaper as their number-one source of

\$102-million general revenue fund surplus to be applied permanently to the provincial debt.

- \$95.3 million to cut corporate taxes.

- Cut the corporate capital tax rate to 0.3 per cent from 0.6 per cent; eliminate it by 2008.

- Cut the corporate income tax rate to 14 per cent from 17 per cent; to 12 per cent by 2008.

- Increase the small business tax threshold to \$400,000 from \$300,000; to \$500,000 by 2008.

- \$6.3 million for immigration with the goal of bringing 5,000 people to the province annually.

- \$17.8 million to freeze university tuition this year and a commitment to do the same next year.

- \$407 million in spending for hospitals, schools, correctional centres and other capital projects, a 24 per cent increase.

- \$13.2 million to increase social assistance allowances.

- \$12.2-million increase in municipal revenue sharing, a 14 per cent increase.

Thank you for your support of the

Saskatchewan Employment WEEKLY

YOUR NEXT CAREER IS HERE

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The line of duty

BY TERRY JENSON

Most, if not all, newspaper people spend time volunteering in their communities. Some take part in youth sports as coaches or managers while others deliver meals on wheels. Thousands of community groups and charities benefit from its volunteers.

In the fall of 2002, I was approached by one of our RCMP constables to become a volunteer with the world's most recognized police force. I debated the idea for a few weeks, trying to determine how my work as an auxiliary constable could interfere with my newspaper work. It's one thing to cover news involving police but an entirely different thing being a part of what makes the news.

Yes, I would be going out to emergency calls in both capacities. I would be interacting with the local Mounties both as a volunteer and as a reporter. But mixing the two together can't be an option.

The possibility of conflict of interest is always there. Auxiliary constables

are privy to certain levels of information that can do a lot of damage if it falls into the wrong hands. After coming to an understanding (and it's all common sense) with those involved in the recruitment process, I was accepted and testing began in February of 2003.

Once I had passed the security clearance and the grueling Physical Aptitude Requirement Exam (a fancy term for the physically draining obstacle course), I was off to RCMP Depot Division in Regina for an intense three-and-a-half day course. Instructors packed what cadets receive in their five month training period into an extended weekend for us. Baton use, firearms qualification and apprehension and handcuffing procedures were taught, plus all 23 of us were given a shot of pepper spray between the eyes for good measure. Living the life of a cadet for a weekend was very intriguing to say the least.

I've heard the term "ride-along" used to describe what we do many times while in uniform. But,

trust me, being an auxiliary constable is just as dangerous as being a paid, full-time member. Whether it's attending to a domestic dispute involving known violent subjects or being in a high speed pursuit on a grid road in the rain or having to use physical force to subdue a suspect high on drugs, auxiliaries often run the same risk as any regular member of the RCMP.

Those risks add up quickly.

RCMP auxiliary constables have died in the line of duty. That, in itself, is a major reason why we are initially trained and continue to receive ongoing training to the highest standard possible, given the limited time to do so. Using what I've learned is something I keep in the back of my mind when I'm working a shift. Despite having a fraction of the training time that regular RCMP members receive, that training kicks in automatically when required.

On the road during a traffic stop, we're often the unseen officer — the one who hangs back and

covers the regular member as he or she makes contact with the driver. We also make observations that a lone officer may not notice in the course of dealing with the driver or the occupants. In the course of searching for someone on the run, we're another set of eyes. At a domestic dispute we're another voice of reason.

Being an auxiliary constable doesn't mean, however, we can just go out and enforce laws on our own. We're assigned to a regular member who, ultimately, is responsible for our overall safety. Having to log a minimum of 150 duty hours per calendar year, auxiliaries are sworn peace officers who's authority is in effect only under the direct supervision of a regular RCMP officer. If someone takes a swing at an auxiliary while on duty, the charge of assaulting a peace officer is no different than if it were a regular member.

I've been asked by many friends and family why I would want to volunteer in such a high-risk oc-

cupation. The answer is very simple: Knowing I have a hand in protecting those in my community is extremely gratifying.

It's all about making a difference in the lives of others.

Itching to write a column?

Have a story inside you that's just screaming to get out?

Want to share your tech or advertising expertise?

E-mail srennick@swna.com with your submissions for **News & Views**

Design

Designing Newspaper Ads Doesn't Have to Be Dull

BY KEVIN SLIMP

I'm in a familiar predicament. There are at least a dozen new software applications on my desk, all waiting to be reviewed. There's backup software, drive rescue software, photo editing software and word processing software, not to mention a pile of books. I decided to go with the most unique looking box. Comic Life, by Freeverse Software, fit the bill.

At first, you might think this is an application a newspaper would never use. Not so, my friends. I installed and opened the application. Within fifteen minutes, I had created my first comic. The comic I provided with this column was my second effort. It took about ten minutes to create. Let me tell you how it works.

After installing the software, I immediately opened Comic Life. The

workplace was very user friendly. Basically, the left half of the screen is the template for your comic. I counted 16 templates to choose from or you can create your own. The right half includes a library of photos and all the tools. Comic Life gets its photos from your iPhoto library. Yes, this application is only available on the Mac platform. I added the photos I wanted to use to my iPhoto library, then headed back to Comic Life.

Laying out a page is as simple as dragging photos from the library into frames on the template. Once in the frames, pictures can be manipulated by dragging a handle, much as you resize photos in pagination applications. Each "cell" of your comic contains an image. Comic balloons, bubbles and boxes are added to cells by choosing styles from the bottom area of the

workspace. Text is created within each balloon or box. You can even move a balloon's tail by moving it with your mouse.

My favorite aspect of Comic Life is the ability to use filters to create a "look" for your comic. I selected "Color Pencils" to give my creation the look of an old-fashioned comic book. When completed, files can be saved in tif, jpeg and other formats.

Why would a newspaper be interested in Comic Life? First, it's an easy way to be creative with advertising. Let's face it. We only have so much time to spend on each ad. Why not dazzle your client with an ad that looks hand drawn, but takes only ten minutes to create? And second (are you sitting down?), The price. Comic Life retails for \$30 US / \$35 CAN / \$50 AUS. I can't remember a product that offered so



much potential at such an affordable price.

Comic Life is available from most Apple software vendors or you can order it

from www.freeverse.com. For more information, visit www.freeverse.com.

Marketing

More marketing power is just a mouse-click away

BY JULIE SCHAU

Market Analyzer

The Market Analyzer program has gone through a series of changes and upgrades and is complete with current information on all members. All the rates have been updated and the maps have a new look to them. Member newspapers can go into the system and pull off their own personal datasheet that contains the top line numbers.

There have also been changes made to the amount of detail available on many databases. New categories have also been added. For example, the Family Expenditure database set has been expanded to include more categories, and within each one there is greater detail.

One example that comes to mind is in regards to Games of Chance. Before all the spending was lumped together under one or two options whereas now it has been expanded so we can ask specifically for bingos, casinos/slot machines, or lotteries, both government and non-government, etc. Another example is within the Health Care database. We can split out expenditures for prescriptions, dental, eye health, etc.

There has also been a significant change with the expenditures themselves. We used to get just a lump sum expenditure of the entire market area. While this served a purpose, it also made the smaller circulation newspapers numbers look smaller. Smaller market area =

smaller lump sum spending. There is now a feature built in that translates that lump sum expenditure into a household expense. That creates the ability to show what the expenses are based on a per household basis, which can greatly help the smaller circulation newspapers.

The geography section has also been modified. The two major changes to this section are that we can select by newspaper or by a zone, and we can select by province or by primary province. If we select Saskatchewan under province we will receive a list of publications that have any amount of distribution into Saskatchewan. Alberta and Manitoba newspapers will be listed. If we select Saskatchewan under pri-

mary province, we will receive a list of publications that are members of SWNA only. One detail to keep in mind when using the geography section is that you must always have something selected in the distribution filter (most likely either newspaper or zone) and then you can select either province, city or FSA.

I really encourage everyone to check out the new and improved Market Analyzer site. If you have any questions or would like a quick walk through of the system, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will be happy to walk you through it. With these modifications, this tool is even more powerful than before.

ComBase

I have finally completed the shortened versions of the Powerpoint presentations based on the top line data we received. These Powerpoints contain information just on readership and demographics of your paper. At this time there isn't any radio or TV data available. As soon as we have access to the live version of IMS I will be preparing another set of Powerpoints to include the radio and television information. If you have not received your Powerpoint, please contact me and I will send it out to you.

To contact Julie, either call 1-800-661-7962 or e-mail her at jschau@swna.com.



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