

Opinions & Letters to the Editor

The Publisher's Notebook

Charles A. Myrick
Publisher / General Manager



Newspapers hang in the balance

There are days I love what I do. To be frank, that would be most days. I fully believe in the mission of newspapers, and not just newspapers, but journalism in general — honest, respected (and respectful) journalism. I make it a point to only surround myself in this field with the very best.

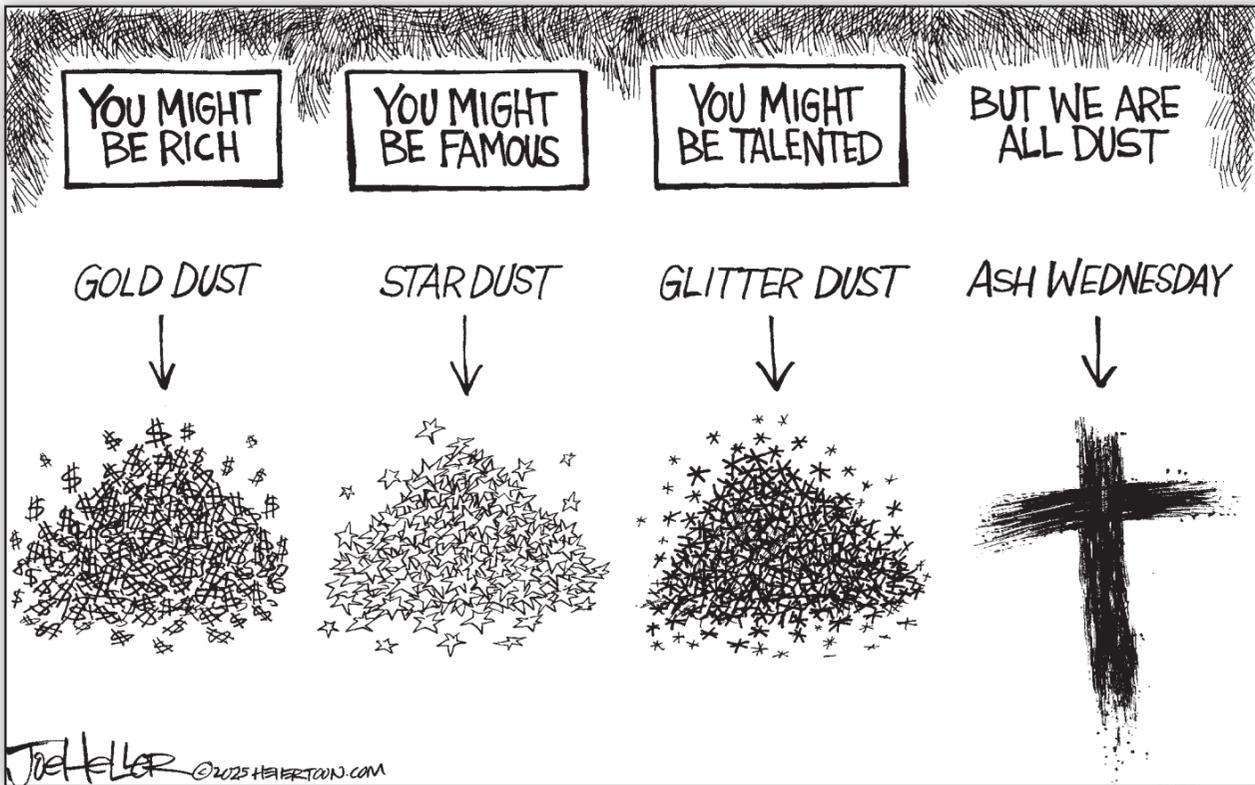
I am blessed to have served a few years with the Kentucky Press Association, and this year to serve as its Vice President. In 2027, I will take the gavel as President. That is such an honor, and I still haven't fully wrapped my head around it. There's something special about going to KPA board meetings and walking away knowing you aren't alone in the fight for our mission. We all face the same struggles to varying degrees. From financial shortfalls to constant attacks from the state legislature, we are truly brothers and sisters in this thing, and my newspaper family is very important to me.

Last week, I sat in my dad's room at the rehab facility where he is for a few weeks following a devastating respiratory illness. As I sat there, I watched live on my phone as the Kentucky House of Representatives voted for and passed House Bill 368, yet another piece of legislation aimed at gutting newspapers. Sometimes I wonder if those who sponsor these bills truly know what they're about to do, then we have people like Rep. Steven Rudy who stand before his peers and utter absolute lies about how and why newspapers operate. It really clicked for me. No... they do get it. They want it. They want for newspapers to die.

I am thankful for the handful of representatives, including our own, Tom O'Dell Smith, who voted no. In a supermajority, it takes guts to stand against many of your peers. Thank you, Tom.

The fight continues. I pray Senator Robert Stivers, our senator, who is also the Senate President for Kentucky, also stands in support of our industry. Robert is in a position to literally save or kill Kentucky newspapers. I am hoping he sides with us. Last week, he recognized our owners on the Senate floor for being in business for 100 years. That's right — the Senate recognized and celebrated 100 years of newspapers, while many on the other side of the capitol were foaming at the mouth to put us out of business.

If you don't care, please let Senator Stivers know you need this newspaper to live, and to vote NO on House Bill 368. Also, please send a note of thanks to our State Rep., Tom O'Dell Smith, for supporting us.



EDITORIAL

Thank you, Rep. Smith, for voting to keep transparency in government

At the Mountain Advocate, like a good umpire, we try to accurately call both “balls” and “strikes.” As a result, sometimes local political leaders don't always like our coverage. But when they put one squarely across the plate we call it for what it is.

That's why we urge our readers to join us in saying “Thank You!” to our State Representative, Tom “O'Dell” Smith. Representative Smith voted to keep transparency in state government by voting NO on HB 368. He voted to keep public notices printed in the local newspaper, not hidden on some government website. More impressive, he did that despite pressure from a large group of new legislative peers in the house, plus several others who don't like the coverage they have gotten from their local newspaper. Rep. Tom Smith proved he believes you have a right to know what your government is up to.

But now, unless the senate votes NO, like Rep. Smith did, public notices about everything from raising taxes to government bids will be much less “public.” So, please join us in asking Robert Stivers, our state Senator and President of the Senate, to vote to keep all the different public notices printed in your newspaper. Then, they can't be hacked. They stay easy to find. And they won't be hid deep in one of many different government websites. Ask him to vote NO on HB 368 and SB218.

Senator Stivers in the past has always stood strongly for open and transparent government. So, as we sincerely thank him for his past support, we strongly urge him as leader of the Senate to stop this bad proposed legislation, and to convince his fellow senators to do the same.

All great fishermen know you have to keep the worms warm

The story is told about an old man who was having no luck at his favorite fishing hole.

Try as he might, he could catch nothing. Meanwhile, a boy just down the way was pulling them out one after the other.

Just as we might have done, the old man swallowed his pride and asked the boy how he was catching all those fish. The boy mumbled back something that sounded like “roo raf roo reep ra rums rarm.”

“What was that?” the old fellow asked.

The boy responded again: “Roo raf roo reep ra rums rarm.”

“I can't understand a word you're saying,” the old man said.

The boy then spit a wriggling reddish blob into his hand and said, “You have to keep the

worms warm.”

I'm always glad to meet Christians who, like that boy, are willing to do whatever it takes to catch fish. You see, Jesus calls us to “fish” for people who don't yet know Him. He said his disciples, “follow me and I'll make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19).

I've been impressed with the great lengths many of today's church folks go to to be fishers of men.

I talked to a man the other day who had introduced 11 people to Christ in the waiting room of a dental office. People were sitting around trying to pass the time with nothing to read but months-old magazines. So provided a life-changing way to pass the time by telling them about Jesus.

Why not make Jesus



AIN'T IT THE TRUTH

Roger Alford
COLUMNIST

the topic of conversation?

One preacher I met owns a motorcycle and is part of a club that travels backroads. Those riders love to talk to one another during their stops. While everyone else is talking motorcycles, this preacher is sharing the gospel to great effect.

In one school district, kids whose families were behind on their cafeteria bills had been given only peanut butter sandwiches and water for lunch ... until church folks got involved. The children's parents heard about that good deed and started attending the church, and, as a result, were introduced to Christ.

I've heard of several churches that are getting barbers to come and volunteer their time to give free haircuts to impoverished families. The kids go to church looking just as spiffy as anyone else. The parents go to work trimmed neatly. Why? Because those free haircuts provided a way for Christians to share the gospel with entire families.

Some people are con-

vinced that the culture in some parts of the U.S. is no longer conducive to front porch evangelism. They say folks consider it a bother to have someone show up at their doors to talk about spiritual matters. They say it could cause more harm than good. If that's true in the area where

you live, you may have to find another fishing strategy that does work.

You need to do whatever works, but I'd advise against shoving worms in your mouth to keep them warm..

Reach Roger Alford at 502-514-6857 or rogeralford1@gmail.com

Who cares about public notices?

YOU SHOULD

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Protect public notices in newspapers and protect your right to know.

America's Newspapers

America's Newspapers is a national association supporting journalism and healthy newspapers in our local communities. Find out more at www.newspapers.org or follow us on Twitter @newspapersorg or on Facebook @americasnewspapers

newspapers.org/public-notices

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1 YEAR, ONLINE-ONLY \$57.00

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