

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES REPORT

TDNA Board of Directors Meeting July 28, 2005 - Headliners Club, Austin

TDNA's member service fits the description of something that is ever changing but always stays the same. What has never changed is TDNA's purpose – "to promote and protect the welfare of the newspaper industry," as stated in TDNA's 1961 Articles of Incorporation. The ways of fulfilling that promise to Texas newspapers, however, varies from day to day and has evolved from an era of manual typewriters and cold type to today's targeted, click-through, bilingual e-business.

TDNA's work with TPA on the joint Legislative Advisory Committee, and TDNA's hands-on work at the state capitol is the primary way in which we promote and protect the welfare of Texas newspapers. And the annual convention is where we provide education on the latest technology, methodology, and newspaper industry news and innovations. Both of these two important services are covered in separate reports.

This report will give a glimpse of the behind-the-scenes work going on in the TDNA office and will detail the actual "service" portion of our work.

An overview of standing TDNA programs begins next, followed by the project schedule for the rest of 2005 and a sampling of questions and requests for assistance received this year.

STANDING TDNA PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

PUBLICATIONS

TDNA's annual Directory of Texas Daily Newspapers is a standard reference for newspaper staffs, their vendor firms, publicity and advertising firms, state agencies, libraries, legislators, university journalism departments, small businesses and a wide variety of other customers. Over 1,200 are printed each year. Between 200-300 of these are distributed free to member publishers and associate members, and most of the remaining copies are sold

Sales income usually covers production costs. Directory income falls short of also paying for publicity costs, however, which keeps the yearly income tax bookkeeping in line with TDNA's 501-C-6 not-for-profit status. Most of the postage cost to mail orders is billed to buyers.

The yearly Directory of Associate Members is a smaller directory that provides contact information for all of the firms and companies who support Texas newspapers by belonging to TDNA as associate members. Each company, university department or news service has a full page in the directory giving them a chance to publicize their business. These directories are distributed free to associate members, publishers and member newspaper business managers.

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TDNA publishes two handbooks which are sold to reporters, editors and journalism students. One, produced in cooperation TPA and TAB, is the Law & Media in Texas, written by journalism professor David McHam who in 2001 was presented the President's Award for outstanding teaching by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. The other, also updated and printed in conjunction with TPA, is the Handbook on Media Law in Texas, which contains copies of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Open Records Act, Constitutional Provisions and Objection to Closure.

Action Memos – urgent messages mailed on red-lettered stationery – are now used mostly for more routine notices to participants concerning TDNA's awards and intern programs. Their former use as legislative alerts and to spell out various advertising, telemarketing, etc. legalities has been replaced by electronic messaging and webpage links.

The handling of Legislative Reports has also changed somewhat. What was once a TDNA report is now sent from the TPA office on joint TPA/TDNA letterhead and is a collaboration of the two association staffs. These reports are published frequently during Regular Sessions of the Texas Legislature and on an "as-needed" basis during interim periods, and they are one method of communicating with all daily and weekly papers by the Legislative Advisory Committee. The LAC also makes quick contact with publishers and editorial writers via listserve e-mail.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

TDNA's job bank probably receives a majority of the association's website hits. This service is valued by both newspaper members and potential newspaper employees. This is a longtime member service that continues to put editors with job openings in touch with applicants and vice versa.

Website postings give job candidates the newspaper contact names and phone numbers they're looking for, and allow editors to download resumes without using TDNA as a middleman.

LINAGE REPORT

This monthly statistical report has been a useful tool to TDNA's member newspapers for over 20 years. Right now there are 26 participants representing all circulation sizes.

The Linage Report provides basically the same advertising lineage sales comparisons that it has reported for many years, but it has undergone numerous refinements. The latest upgrade, a year ago, turned it into an entirely electronic data form. Numbers are submitted by e-mail, or via a website form, and the report is disseminated by e-mail. The new e-mail version is sent in both alphabetical and circulation size order.

The Linage Report deals with three categories of advertising – national, retail and classified – giving a year-to-date total as well as the monthly total, and shows the percentage increase or decrease of each category over the same month in the previous year. Only those newspapers participating are allowed access to the report data.

CIRCULATION REPORT

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This newest TDNA service is also a regular monthly report. It was created in response to member requests and provides a monthly comparison of daily averages, for both daily and Sunday paid circulation, in three categories – home delivery, single copy, and other which includes mail subscriptions, bulk sales, etc. The numbers are compiled to show the month total, year-to-date average, and percentage changes from the same month in the previous year.

This is also an entirely electronic production, saving staff time and materials and delivering the data more quickly to the participants. There are 20 member papers participating in the Circulation Report. As with the Linage Report, the Circulation Report is confidential and is released only to the personnel of participating newspapers and their corporate offices.

ANNUAL AD REVENUE SURVEY

Last year TDNA's ad rate survey was reinstated in a new format. This survey was formerly called the "Major Ad Rate Survey" and it collected best rates given to large advertisers. Now it shows a per-day average of ad revenue, instead of rates, for the previous year.

The data provided is now in line with the revised Linage Report, reporting dollar averages to correlate with ROP linage averages in three categories (national, retail, classified). Like the monthly Linage Report, this annual survey is confidential.

Response to the revised survey has been sparse. There were six participants this year.

INTERN PROGRAM

This program is another service that benefits our member newspapers through an influx of fresh talent while also benefiting a cadre of journalism and marketing students by expanding their learning with on-the-job experience.

Some facet of TDNA's Intern Program is in progress most of the year. We begin each fall by polling our members to find out which papers will be hiring interns for the next summer. Posters are printed promoting those internships and listing the papers with openings, and the posters are mailed to all Texas universities and colleges that have journalism programs.

By the end of the next May we are contacting member papers to gather the names of their interns, whether their interns were hired because of TDNA's publicity or through their own liaisons with local colleges, and every intern receives a certificate signed by TDNA's president acknowledging his or her job experience. Next the Fentress Award contest is announced and promotional information and entry guidelines are mailed to all intern supervisors. Entries are judged, award plaques are prepared, cash prize money for the winner and runner-up is contributed by Cox Enterprises, and a news release is sent to newspapers and wire services announcing the winners. By the time one year's Fentress Award contest is ending in the fall, the cycle has begun again in preparation for the next summer's interns.

Each year, by promoting our papers' summer jobs to Texas college journalism and advertising departments, we facilitate the placement of more than 100 interns on Texas daily newspapers.

CAMPUS VISITS

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The Campus Visits program is another long-standing TDNA project that has generated a positive image for TDNA and its members by encouraging students to consider careers in the newspaper industry. Every year during the fall TDNA arranges for Texas daily newspaper executives to speak at those Texas colleges and universities who request a lecturer.

This is a flexible program, attempting to arrange a visit by the exact person requested – either specifically by name, or by the type of job.

AWARDS/HONORS

Annually TDNA offers six separate awards. In many years there are one or more one-time special recognition awards as well. The six standing awards are: the Pat Taggart Award for Newspaper Leader of the Year, the Frank Mayborn Award for Community Leadership, the Fred Hartman Excellence in Sportswriting Award, the John Murphy Award for Excellence in Copy Editing, the H.M. Fentress Award for outstanding news/editorial summer student interns, and the Bright Idea Awards presented to Texas daily newspapers in four separate circulation categories for promotions.

ANNUAL MEETING

TDNA's annual meeting held each year in March provides members and associate members a unique opportunity to conduct business meetings, hear from nationally-recognized newspaper speakers, socialize and play golf.

This year's convention at the Driskill Hotel in Austin featured industry-related program speakers who were publishers and editors as well as specialists in marketing and publishing finance. A full convention report is included in the board books.

The 2006 Annual Meeting will be held March 19-21 at the Renaissance Worthington Hotel in Fort Worth.

TDNA'S WEB SITE

An increasingly valuable membership service is TDNA's website www.tdna.org. The association developed its first home page and went on line in late 1996. That initial entry into cyberspace was the result of a cooperative effort with Texas A&M University whose staff worked with us to develop our website (<http://agnews.tamu.edu/tdna/>), and for the first several months Texas A&M acted as our server. In July of 1998 we upgraded our website and went with a commercial server.

Over the past several months TDNA's website has been redesigned and updated in order to provide more assistance in a more efficient manner to members. TDNA was assisted on this important project by the technical staff of Belo and *The Dallas Morning News*.

Improvements and updates to www.tdna.org are ongoing. A section of journalism conference notices and links will soon be created. The following items are to be added now, and other items will be added as appropriate in the future.

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- (Mayborn Institute, July 22-24 – **The Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference of the Southwest.**) Too late for this year’s conference, but TDNA helped promote this event by mailings to our members earlier in the year. A link to the Mayborn Institute will be included in the University of North Texas listing.
- Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, August 2 – **AEJMC Pre-Convention Conference for Journalists, Academics and Citizen Activists.** This event has also been promoted by mail.
- Society of Professional Journalists, October 16-18 – **National Journalism Conference.**
- Hogg Foundation for Mental Health and The University of Texas School of Journalism, October 24-25 – **Mental Illness and the Texas Criminal Justice System.**
- Updated journalism career guide *The Journalist’s Road to Success* is available from The Dow Jones Newspaper Fund.

WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

Up until a few years ago TDNA was planning and sponsoring 12 to 15 seminars and/or workshops a year entirely hosted and conducted by TDNA on topics such as advertising, management skills, online reporting, and all aspects of newspaper operation . The board determined, however, that it was not necessary for TDNA to maintain such an aggressive schedule because of the proliferation of workshops being sponsored by numerous newspaper-related organizations (SNPA, NAA, NNA, SPJ, Inland, UT, ASNE, TCMA, etc.). Another factor in cutting back on the educational meetings was the fact that most of the groups who own Texas papers were providing their own workshops.

Originally, when TDNA began a heavy presence in the workshop/seminar business in 1985, very few other organizations were doing so. During the mid and late 80’s TDNA would average 50 to 100 attendees and the workshops would pay for themselves with modest registration fees. Beginning in the early 90’s, however, because of the competition, attendance dropped to 25 or below causing deficits and a drain on the association budget. TDNA still sponsors workshops on an “as-needed” basis. Over the past five years or so, we have produced about half a dozen such programs. We are, of course, prepared to develop and stage workshops anytime the need arises. TDNA also cooperates with several other organizations to co-sponsor and/or help promote various seminars and workshops.

MISCELLANEOUS

TDNA stands ready to become involved in membership service projects as needed. One area in which TDNA lends support to the newspaper industry is by signing on as a participant in appropriate amicus briefs. Two examples in recent years were Hearst Corporation v. Skeen handled by Jackson Walker L.L.P., and Forbes Inc. v. Granada Biosciences, Inc. by Vinson & Elkins L.L.P. Both were cases before the Texas Supreme Court.

One of TDNA’s strengths is that it can immediately adapt to any membership or newspaper industry need. We can almost instantly gear up to deal with any topic or issue.

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Whether it's developing a statewide recycling program, initiating a lawsuit, sponsoring literacy programs, developing educational programs, or promoting and representing any aspect of Texas daily newspapers ... TDNA has proven time and again that it is equipped to effectively respond.

FROM NOW TO END OF YEAR

The TDNA staff will be busy during the remaining months of this year working on the following projects.

- Summer Intern Program
 - Papers have been asked for the names of their summer interns, to whom TDNA sends a certificate of recognition signed by the association president (Larry Walker' signature stamp).
 - Next, interns and their supervisors will be sent contest guidelines and entry forms for the F.H. Fentress Award
 - As this year's award entries are being judged, papers will be polled to find out what intern positions they will offer for the summer of 2006. A poster listing those papers and departments hiring interns will be sent to all Texas college journalism and advertising departments.
- Contest guidelines and entry forms will be sent to member papers for Taggart, Mayborn, Murphy, Hartman and Bright Idea awards.
- Board elections for 2005 officers will begin in September.
- Campus Visits Program – newspaper speakers will be offered to Texas colleges and universities in the fall.
- Process to update, print and promote the annual Directory of Texas Daily Newspapers and Directory of Associate Members will begin in October and last through the rest of the year.
- November board of directors meeting.
- 2006 auto "PRESS" decals will be sold to member editors in December.

MEMBERSHIP REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE THIS YEAR

- Provided circulation list of Texas dailies to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

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- Gave Alaskan attorney background and update on Texas public records in light of HIPAA regulations and in relation to Texas AG opinion.
- Assisted publisher Amy Miller of *Jacksonville Daily Progress* regarding retaliatory ad that local nursing homes wanted to place seeking to turn public opinion against JEDCO economic development corporation. Also reminded her that the *Daily Progress* is not currently a TDNA member.
- Consulted Jackson & Walker on legality of employment ad for adult business specifying that applicants be 21 or older.
- Consulted Jackson & Walker on ad to be placed in *El Paso Times* by Philip Morris opposing an increase in the sales tax on cigarettes in Texas.
- Passed on information to *Abilene Reporter-News* circulation director Malcolm Brownell regarding street vendor problems experienced by the *Houston Chronicle*, *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* and *Bryan-College Station Eagle* and how those issues were resolved. Referred him to Houston attorney who was currently handling this case for several other papers.
- Found Newspapers In Education contact information for caller.
- Responded to requests for information on Texas from elementary students in Oregon and Washington.
- Did a Sunshine Project mailing for the *Houston Chronicle*. Letter on behalf of the American Society of Newspapers Editors, signed by editor Jeff Cohen and assistant managing editor Steve Jetton, asked other news executives to participate in Sunshine Sunday and Sunshine Week by featuring stories, cartoons and editorials on the importance of open government.
- Contacted the Attorney General's office and prepared to meet with them about the police scanner access issue in Wichita Falls. The issue was resolved locally.
- Worked with NAA on federal shield law legislation.
- **Miscellaneous:** Refer requests for network advertising or press release service to TPA on a regular basis; provide mailing lists and field frequent requests for various address/telephone/e-mail contact data for Texas newspapers; occasionally help job seekers find contacts other than TDNA website job bank; occasionally provide research and source references to those doing genealogical research.