





REGISTRATION



From left, TPA Controller Laurie Alford, Network Advertising Coordinator Beth Elliott and TPA Member Services Manager Robyn Gentile set up the registration table for the 2014 Tennessee Press Association Winter Convention & Press Institute at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in downtown Nashville.



TPA Member Services Manager Robyn Gentile greets Mike Fishman, publisher of the Citizen Tribune in Morristown at the registration table

2014 Winter Convention Factoids

- 244 registrants
- 46 newspapers/newspaper groups represented, with 122 registrants
- 18 dailies, with 63 registrants
- 28 non-dailies, with 59 registrants
- Paper with the most registrants: The Tennessean, Nashville, with 15
- 14 associate members, with 67 registrants
- 7 schools represented, with 25 student registrants
- Event with most registrants: Friday Luncheon, with 112

Cover photos taken by Mark Zaleski, Associated Press Photos; Joel Washburn, managing editor of The McKenzie Banner, and Amelia Morrison Hipps, managing editor of The Tennessee Press. Artwork of “TPA Nashville Winter 2014” by the Chattanooga Times Free Press.



TPAF Trustee Nate Crawford, Nashville, and Joel Washburn, managing editor of The McKenzie Banner and vice president of non-dailies at TPA, catch up at the registration table Wednesday afternoon.



From left, Honorary Member Jim Charlet of Brentwood talked to David Critchow Jr., editor of the Union City Messenger, while TPAF Trustee Nate Crawford looks over the material at the MTSU booth. MTSU was one of the convention’s sponsors.

Photos throughout the Special Section taken by Amelia Morrison Hipps, managing editor of The Tennessee Press, unless otherwise noted.

## REPORTS

# TPS President's Report to the TPA Business Session, Wed. Feb. 5, 2014

This is an exciting year for Tennessee Press Service.

April will mark the second anniversary of Advertising Director David Wells' tenure with TPS. In his first year and a half, David has built a powerful sales and media team that can quickly handle any placement or agency-type service for any customer, large or small.

The team generated more than \$500,000 in new business for TPS stockholder newspapers during fiscal 2013!

We have guided this team to focus on the potential of digital products that could add placement dollars for Tennessee newspapers.

We've focused on connecting the ROP, Network, and Clipping departments to help cross sell and provide seamless advertising and media monitoring. We're promoting digital placements side by side with print in order to maximize an advertiser's reach.

Led by Kevin Slimp, The Institute of Newspaper Technology held its



**TPS  
PRESIDENT**

VICTOR PARKINS



17th session last fall. The world-class program attracts students from throughout North America and boasts some of the best and brightest technology instructors in the industry.

The TPA Foundation graciously provides numerous scholarships so that many TPA newspapers can attend at a greatly reduced cost.

Following TPA's passage of new public notice legislation that requires all newspapers to post their notices on their own websites as well as our aggregate public notice site, [www.tnpublicnotice.com](http://www.tnpublicnotice.com), we will be reaching out to any and all newspapers that carry public notice to make sure they are posting to the site.

These online postings coupled with their print counterparts will ensure that all Tennesseans have more access to notices than ever before.

TPS placed more than \$4 million in ROP and Network advertising during the past 12 months. We also provided more than \$125,000 in media monitoring through our Clipping Bureau.

Our Board is focused on pushing these totals even higher as we move into 2014. We are excited about the future of newspapers!

*Victor Parkins is editor of The Milan Mirror-Exchange.*

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# TPAF President's Report to the TPA Business Session, Wed. Feb. 5, 2014

This is shaping up to be another exceptional year for the Tennessee Press Association Foundation.

We are more than halfway through our five-year capital campaign named "I Believe," which signifies our confidence in the strength of the industry. We have pledges of more than \$300,000 thus far.

On Friday during our Board of Trustees meeting, we will hear from the Development Committee about their plans for pushing this total even higher.

Many of you are familiar with the Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame that is located on the UT-Knoxville campus. At this point, it recognizes more than 50 past leaders of our industry, each of whom have contributed uniquely to the successful development of newspapers and journalism in our state.

The Hall of Fame has for some time been in need of an update, and we have embarked upon a project to transform it into the most impressive newspaper hall of fame in the country.

We have already been working



**TPAF  
PRESIDENT**

GREGG JONES



with the University and a highly-regarded architecture/interior design firm on the concept. This project has made a lot of progress over the past several months, but it still has a long way to go.

It is going to take your support, financial and otherwise, for our Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame to fully realize its significant promise. In order to facilitate fundraising efforts, we are moving ownership of the Hall of Fame to the Foundation.

I encourage each of you to attend a special general session tomorrow at 3 p.m. where we will present a vision for a greatly enhanced Newspaper Hall of Fame display that will be second to none.

And let's not forget about the support that TPAF has provided to newspaper-related causes this past year.

We've provided grants to allow TPA member newspapers to send folks to the critically-acclaimed Institute of Newspaper Technology at a greatly reduced cost. We have provided funding for the Legal Hotline as an important protection for newspapers across the state. And we are providing funding to make possible Friday's extensive line up of training programs for staffers of all disciplines.

Your Foundation is strong and stands ready to serve the newspapers of Tennessee through strong educational efforts in 2014 and beyond.

*Gregg Jones is co-publisher of The Greeneville Sun and president and CEO of Jones Media Inc.*



## GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE



The Government Affairs Committee is led by Elizabeth K. Blackstone, Kennedy Newspapers, and Joel Washburn, managing editor, The McKenzie Banner. The committee met Wednesday afternoon, where Frank Gibson, TPA Public Policy director, gave a legislative update concerning bills of importance to newspapers throughout Tennessee.

At top, from left, are Jack McElroy, editor, Knoxville News Sentinel; Lynn Richardson, TPA president and publisher of the Elizabethton Star; Joel Washburn, TPA vice president of non-dailies; Frank Gibson, TPA Public Policy Director; Bo Johnson, principal, JohnsonPoss Government Relations, Nashville; Will Johnson, an associate at JohnsonPoss; David Critchlow, editor, Union City Messenger; Sam Kennedy, Kennedy Newspapers, Columbia, and Frank "Buzz" Trexler, The Daily Times, Maryville.

On the middle row at left is Gibson. At right, moving clockwise, are McElroy, Gibson, Bo Johnson, Will Johnson; Critchlow and Kennedy.

On the bottom row at left, moving clockwise, are Eric Barnes, publisher, The Daily News, Memphis; TPAF Trustee Nate Crawford, Nashville; Jay Edwards and Don Bona, both with the Hamilton County Herald, Chattanooga; and Gregg Jones, president of Jones Media Inc., Greeneville.



Above, from left, are Lynn Richardson, TPA President and publisher of The Elizabethton Star, and Joel Washburn, managing editor of the McKenzie Banner and vice president of non-dailies.



# TPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING & BUSINESS SESSION



Several TPA members observed the TPA Board of Directors' meeting, as well as the TPA Business session that followed on Wednesday afternoon, the first day of the Winter Convention.



Before the TPA Board meeting and business session got started, TPA members took the opportunity to catch up with each other and their emails. From left are Richard Stevens, editor and general manager, The Leaf Chronicle, Clarksville; Jeff Fishman, former TPA president and publisher of The Tullahoma News; Charles Primm, communications coordinator, University of Tennessee; Gregg Jones, president of Jones Media Inc.; Kevin Slimp, TPS technology director; Mark Palmer, publisher, The Daily Herald, Columbia; John Finney, Buffalo River Review, Linden (leaning back); Brad Franklin, vice president publishing, The Lexington Progress; Daniel Richardson, distribution manager, Magic Valley Publishing Co. Inc.; and Joel Washburn, managing editor of The McKenzie Banner and TPA vice president of non-dailies.

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## TPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING & BUSINESS SESSION



Before the TPA Board of Directors meeting got underway, members visited with each other. From left are Joel Washburn, managing editor of The McKenzie Banner; Greg Sherrill, executive director of TPA; Lynn Richardson, TPA president (waving her hand); Gregg Jones, president of Jones Media Inc.; Jesse Lindsey, publisher, The Lebanon Democrat; and Keith Williams, publisher, Kingsport Times-News.



The TPA Board of Directors met for their regular meeting and business session Wednesday afternoon. From left are District 7 Director Mark Palmer, publisher, The Daily Herald, Columbia; Treasurer John Flinney, vice president, Buffalo River Review, Linden; District 8 Director Brad Franklin, publisher, The Lexington Progress; District 9 Director Daniel Richardson, distribution manager, Magic Valley Publishing Co. Inc., Camden; Vice President of Non-dailies Joel Washburn, managing editor, The McKenzie Banner; Executive Director Greg Sherrill; President and Publisher of the Elizabethton Star Lynn Richardson; Vice President of Dailies Jason Taylor, publisher, Chattanooga Times Free Press; Immediate Past President Michael Williams, publisher, The Paris Post-Intelligencer; District 6 Director Jesse Lindsey; publisher, The Lebanon Democrat; District 1 Director Keith Wilson, publisher, Kingsport Times-News; District 2 Director Jack McElroy, editor, Knoxville News Sentinel, and District 5 Director Hugh Jones, publisher, Shelbyville Times-Gazette.



District 7 Director Mark Palmer, publisher, The Daily Herald, Columbia, and TPA Treasurer John Flinney, vice president of the Buffalo River Review in Linden, wait for TPA Board of Directors meetings to begin.



Above, District 10 Director Eric Barnes, publisher, The Daily News, Memphis, takes in what is being said during the board meeting, while Honorary Member Jim Charlet, TPAF Trustee Nate Crawford and Rowlett Advertising Services President and Associate Member Richard Rowlett listen as well.  
At left, from left, Honorary Member Jim Charlet looks through some papers while TPAF Trustee Nate Crawford visits with Rowlett Advertising Services President and Associate Member Richard Rowlett, and Bob Atkins, American Hometown Publishing.



## AP-TPA LEGISLATIVE SESSION PREVIEW & NEWSMAKERS SESSION



Adam Yeomans, Bureau Chief of The Associated Press for Tennessee, welcomes those attending the session.



Photo by Mark Zaleski • AP Photo

Jason Reineke, associate director, Middle Tennessee State University Poll, speaks during the Legislation Session Preview and Newsmakers Session sponsored BY The Associated Press and the Tennessee Press Association on Thursday, Feb. 6.

# MTSU Poll assesses Tennessee education, Common Core, vouchers

By DR. KEN BLAKE  
MTSU, Feb. 6, 2014

The spring 2014 MTSU Poll found that Tennesseans' give their schools "Cs," haven't heard of Common Core, are uncertain about school vouchers, trust their teachers, and have mixed feelings about the use of standardized testing.

Data for the statewide poll was collected Jan. 23–26, with results having an error margin of plus-or-minus 4 percentage points.

Tennesseans give their schools middling grades

When asked to assign grades to schools on the typical "A" to "F" scale, 45 percent of Tennesseans give the quality of their local schools either an "A" (16 percent) or a "B" (29 percent). Significantly fewer, 31 percent, give the quality of all Tennessee schools either an "A" (9 percent) or a "B" (22 percent).

On average, Tennesseans give their local schools about a "C+" for quality and schools statewide about a "C."

Tennesseans living in Davidson and Shelby counties give markedly lower quality ratings to state and local schools than do Tennesseans living in less urban counties.

Respondents in Davidson and Shelby counties – collectively about 15 percent of the sample – give

the quality of both state and local schools about a C-minus on average.

"Despite the various changes that have been made to education policy over the last few years, the grades that Tennesseans give their schools – both statewide and locally – have remained fairly stable since fall of 2011," said Ken Blake, director of the poll at Middle Tennessee State University.

## Most haven't heard of the Common Core State Standards

Most Tennesseans, 58 percent, say that they have not heard of the Common Core State Standards for education, a national education initiative to define what students in public K-12 schools should know in English and math by the end of each grade.

Only 38 percent of Tennesseans say that they have heard of the standards. The rest say they are unsure if they have heard of the standards or refuse to answer the question.

Nationally 62 percent of Americans say they have not heard of the Common Core State Standards, according to a 2013 poll by Gallup and Phi Delta Kappa International.

"Despite public hearings and a reasonable amount of media

coverage, like most Americans, most Tennesseans simply haven't heard of the Common Core State Standards for education," said Jason Reineke, associate director of the MTSU Poll.

The most important predictor of awareness of the standards among Tennesseans is one's own level of education. A 65 percent majority of those with a bachelor's degree or more schooling say that they have heard of the standards, while 32 percent say they have not.

In contrast, 68 percent of those with less than a bachelor's degree say that they have not heard of the standards while only 27 percent say that they have heard of them.

A follow-up question asked Tennesseans who have heard of Common Core whether they approve or disapprove of the initiative. Responses are mixed.

A plurality of 43 percent say they disapprove of the standards compared to only 22 percent who say they approve. A sizeable portion, 35 percent, of those who say they have heard of the standards say they have no opinion about them yet.

Among Tennesseans who have heard of Common Core, the most important predictor of approval is whether one self-identifies as an

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See **MTSU POLL**, Page 8



## AP-TPA LEGISLATIVE SESSION PREVIEW & NEWSMAKERS SESSION



Photo by Mark Zaleski • AP Photo

Jason Reineke, associate director MTSU Poll, explained the findings of the Tennessee Poll during the AP/TPA Newsmakers Session on Thursday.



Deborah Fisher, executive director of the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government, spoke at the AP-TPA legislative planning session Thursday morning about Open Records and Open Meetings issues.



Photo by Joel Washburn



Photo by Mark Zaleski • AP Photo



### MTSU POLL, from Page 7

Evangelical Christian. Only 15 percent of Evangelicals who have heard of the standards approve of them, while 49 percent disapprove and 36 percent don't yet have an opinion. In contrast, non-Evangelicals who have heard of the standards are nearly evenly divided, with 33 percent who say they approve, 32 percent who say they disapprove, and 34 percent saying they don't yet have an opinion.

### Uncertainty on school vouchers

Just under half (48 percent) of Tennesseans support "providing most families in Tennessee with tax-funded school vouchers that they could use to help pay for sending their children to private or religious schools if they wanted to."

That's followed by a significantly smaller, but still sizable, 41 percent who oppose the idea. Another 11 percent are unsure.

The percentages remain essential-

ly unchanged when Tennesseans are asked the follow-up question, "What about if school vouchers were provided only to poor families whose children are attending low-achieving Tennessee schools?" (49 percent in favor, 40 percent opposed, and 12 percent unsure).

Support for the general idea of vouchers is greatest among Tennesseans age 55 and younger, especially those who are also African American or who are both white and lower-income.

Support for providing school vouchers only to poor families with children in low-achieving schools also shows an age trend, with younger Tennesseans more supportive than older ones.

### Tennesseans trust teachers

More than two-thirds of Tennesseans (68 percent) say they "have trust and confidence in the men and women who are teaching children in the public schools," while a fifth (20 percent) say they do not. Another

10 percent say they aren't sure, and the rest decline to answer.

Political orientation plays a stronger role in this attitude than other demographics do, with significantly larger percentages of liberals (76 percent) and moderates (73 percent) than of conservatives (66 percent) expressing confidence in teachers. Gender plays a role, too, with more men (77 percent) than women (61 percent) saying they have trust and confidence in teachers.

### Standardized testing seen as ineffective

Tennesseans express skepticism about the helpfulness of increased testing in public schools to measure academic achievement.

Asked whether such testing in schools has "helped, hurt, or made no difference," only 22 percent of Tennesseans say it has helped. Another 22 percent say it has hurt, and 38 percent say it has made no difference. Another 20 percent say they don't know, and the rest decline to answer.

Perceptions of testing as helpful grow significantly less common among Tennesseans as their education level rises, with college-educated female Tennesseans expressing the most skepticism of all.

Nationally, 22 percent of Americans – the same percentage seen among Tennesseans – perceive increased testing as helpful, according to a 2013 poll by Gallup and Phi Delta Kappa International.

### Opinion split on using standardized test scores to evaluate teachers

When asked about requiring that teacher evaluations include how well a teacher's students perform on standardized tests, 47 percent of Tennesseans say they are in favor of such a requirement while 40 percent are opposed. The rest don't know or refuse to answer the question.

One's own level of education is the most important predictor of attitudes about using standardized

test scores to evaluate teachers.

Among those who have high school diploma or less education, 58 percent are in favor of evaluating teachers based on standardized test scores while only 25 percent are opposed.

Among those with education beyond high school, only 37 percent are in favor of using standardized test scores to evaluate teachers while 54 percent are opposed.

### Methods

Poll data were collected Jan. 23–26, via telephone interviews of 600 Tennessee adults conducted by Issues and Answers Network Inc. using balanced, random samples of Tennessee landline and cell phones. Results have an error margin of plus-or-minus 4 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence.

The data were weighted to match the latest available Census estimates of gender and race proportions in Tennessee.



AP-TPA LEGISLATIVE SESSION PREVIEW & NEWSMAKERS SESSION

Vanderbilt Poll: TN voters want Medicaid expansion, but many still don't like the Affordable Care Act

By JAMES PATTERSON  
Senior Staff Writer, Vanderbilt University, Dec. 11, 2013

A substantial majority of Tennessee voters want state lawmakers to accept federal money that has been offered to expand Medicaid, according to the new Vanderbilt Poll.

In a survey taken Nov. 20 to Dec. 5, 2013, of 860 registered voters by landlines and cell phones, 63 percent said they supported the expansion of Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act. Thirty-four percent were against the expansion and 3 percent said they didn't know.

"The decision as to whether the state should expand Medicaid as provided by the Affordable Care Act is obviously an important issue in the state, and the Vanderbilt Poll provides important information

See VANDY POLL, Page 10



Photos above and at right by Mark Zaleski • AP Photo

John Geer, co-director, Vanderbilt Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, at left, speaks about the center's poll results, while Josh Clinton, co-director of the center, looks on at the slide presentation.



Josh Clinton, co-director, Vanderbilt Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, at left, talks about Tennessee voters' thoughts on the economy, while John Geer, co-director of the center, watches.



Geer

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## AP-TPA LEGISLATIVE SESSION PREVIEW & NEWSMAKERS SESSION



Photo by Joel Washburn

Jim Henry, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services, gave TPA and AP members an update on the changes that have taken place at DCS since taking the reigns as first interim commissioner in February of last year and then as the agency's permanent director in May. He took over after former Commissioner Kate O'Day resigned amid controversy over the agency's handling of child abuse, neglect and deaths.

# Harwell, Ramsey say guns-in-parks bill will advance this year

By Chas Sisk  
The Tennessean, Feb. 7, 2014

Speaker Beth Harwell on Thursday predicted that legislation to block local bans on guns in parks will reach the floor of the state House of Representatives, but, she said, she expects it to be amended to allow restrictions near children.

The Nashville Republican said at the Associated Press-Tennessee Press Association Legislative Preview Session that guns-in-parks legislation "is the will of the House," but there nonetheless may be room for a compromise that keeps guns away from children's facilities.

She said she favored leaving the power to decide where guns can be carried in the hands of state lawmakers.

Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey, who also spoke at the TPA Winter Conference, said he supports overturning local exemptions to the 2009 state law that declared handgun carry permit holders should be able to take their guns into parks.

He said he frequently keeps a gun in his truck, which could run him into legal trouble if he were to visit parks near his home.

"It's about common sense, and it is about the 400,000 people" in Tennessee who have handgun carry permits, he said.

Five years ago, the state legislature passed a law that stated all parks in Tennessee should be open to handguns, but it included a provision that let city and county governments opt out of the law and implement local bans.

Some say the patchwork of rules is confusing. A measure that would create a single rule for parks in the state, Senate Bill 1496, has made its way through Senate committees but was removed from a House subcommittee calendar Wednesday before it was discussed.

Nashville Mayor Karl Dean has urged lawmakers to reject the bill, saying local governments should be free to police their public property. Gov. Bill Haslam agreed.

Ramsey and Harwell on Thursday said that the bill remains under discussion. Harwell added that several House members have voiced uneasiness about allowing guns in areas frequented by children. She suggested lawmakers may agree to different rules for parks that have no dedicated facilities for children.



Speaker of the House Beth Harwell, at left, and Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey participated in the AP/TPA Legislative Session Preview and Newsmakers Session. They told TPA members and members of the media that they both expected the guns-in-parks bill to advance during this session of the General Assembly.

## VANDY POLL, from Page 9

about what the public thinks," said Josh Clinton, associate professor of political science and co-director of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Vanderbilt.

"Hopefully, this will help ensure that the discussion is not just driven by engaged activists on both sides of the issue, as this is not the first time Tennesseans have expressed their approval of Medicaid expansion."

While a strong majority of Tennessee voters favor expansion, nearly half – 47 percent – of voting Tennesseans have a negative perception of the Affordable Care Act itself, with only 15 percent supporting the law.

The poll, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International, has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.

Looking ahead to the 2016 presidential primary election in Tennessee, it appears that New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie has an edge



Photo by Mark Zaleski • AP Photo Clinton

over Texas Sen. Ted Cruz in the Republican race.

Christie's name was recognized by 67 percent of Tennessee voters, compared to 51 percent for Cruz. In addition, Christie had higher combined awareness and approval among Republicans than Cruz, 50 percent to 39 percent.

Cruz, meanwhile, is more popular among those registered voters who self-identify with the Tea Party than Christie by 18 percent.

"While we are obviously two years away from the formal start of the 2016 presidential election, these data give a boost to the potential candidacy of Chris Christie," observed John Geer, Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor of Political Science and co-director of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Vanderbilt. "Our results certainly suggest the governor of New Jersey plays well in the Volunteer State."

President Obama's approval rating has fallen to 28 percent in Tennessee, a dramatic

plunge from the May 2013 Vanderbilt poll when he enjoyed a 40 percent approval rating and in December 2012 when he was at 45 percent.

Even among Democrats, Obama's approval has dropped significantly – from 88 percent in December 2012 after winning his second term to 68 percent now. Gov. Bill Haslam's approval numbers are still high with 61 percent giving him a favorable rating.

Tennessee voters continue to be skeptical about the U.S. Congress, with 78 percent disapproving of the work of Washington lawmakers versus 18 percent who approve. At home, 53 percent approve of the General Assembly, with 30 percent disapproving.

A majority of voting Tennesseans, 57 percent, believe the state is on the right track. There is a growing belief that the state economy is doing better. Among Tennesseans, 66 percent view the state's economy as "good" compared to 52 percent in May.



## AP-TPA LEGISLATIVE SESSION PREVIEW & NEWSMAKERS SESSION



Photo at left by Joel Washburn

After giving their views of the 2014 session of the General Assembly, Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey, R-Blountville, and Speaker of the House Beth Harwell, R-Nashville, took some time to visit with TPA Past President Michael Williams, publisher of The Paris Post-Intelligencer, before the last session of the AP/TPA Legislative Preview and Newsmakers Session for 2014.

# Tennessee lawmakers propose bills for Common Core

By **LUCAS L. JOHNSON II**  
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Lawmakers have proposed a number of measures this legislative session targeting Tennessee's Common Core standards — including a proposal to do away with them.

A panel discussion on the new benchmarks for reading and math was held at The Associated Press-Tennessee Press Association's legislative preview session on Thursday.

The standards — developed by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers — are intended to

provide students with the critical thinking, problem solving and writing skills needed for college and the workforce.

They have been voluntarily adopted by 45 states. Tennessee adopted them in 2010 and began a three-year phase-in the following year.

Critics say the standards were written in private and never tested in real classrooms, and that educators aren't familiar enough with the standards to use them. The standards also come with a multi-billion dollar price tag.

"They haven't been tried or proven any-

where before," said Bobbie Patray, a panelist and president of the Tennessee Eagle Forum, a conservative group that shares many tea party beliefs. "What happens when the money runs out?"

Another concern is that the standards could lead to the sharing of personally identifiable student data with the federal government.

Last month, education officers from 35 states sent a letter to U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan addressing concerns that there will be new reporting requirements because of the standards. They said that won't happen and that the federal government is prohibited

from creating a student-level database with individual students' test results. They said the states will continue to provide the Education Department with school-level data.

However, in Tennessee, lawmakers are still considering legislation related to the privacy issue.

"There are ... legitimate concerns about Common Core," House Speaker Beth Harwell, R-Nashville, said before the panel discussion. "I think you're going to see some legislation passed on data collection; who has the ability

See **PANEL**, Page 12



"The Future of Common Core in Tennessee" was a panel discussion with education advocates, educators and state lawmakers participating. At far left, Ed Cromer, editor of the Tennessee Journal, served as moderator. Panel members, from left, were Bobbie Patray, president, Tennessee Eagle Forum; Rep. Harry Brooks, R-Knoxville, chair of the House Education Committee; Dr. Candice McQueen, dean of education, Lipscomb University, and Sen. Mike Bell, R-Riceville, chair of the Senate Government Operations Committee.



OPENING LUNCHEON



Tennessee Gov. Haslam repeats VW union criticism at TPA lunch

By Andy Sher  
Chattanooga Times Free Press, Feb. 7, 2014

NASHVILLE — Republican Gov. Bill Haslam continued to speak out Thursday against unionization of the Volkswagen assembly plant in Chattanooga, even as fellow GOP critic U.S. Sen. Bob Corker says further criticisms by him before next week's vote aren't appropriate.

Haslam's latest comments on the United Auto Workers union efforts came during a luncheon speech to the Tennessee Press Association. He touted Tennessee's attractiveness as a "right-to-work state" and criticized the union during a question-and-answer session.

"I've been fairly vocal in a way that some people have said, 'Why is it your business?'" Haslam told editors and publishers attending the TPA's winter meeting in Nashville.

"I think it is our business in the state of Tennessee. We have a considerable investment in that plant. The state of Tennessee put a whole lot of money in that plant."

It has been reported that Tennessee put up

nearly \$600 million in incentives, or roughly \$58,000 per job, to land the VW assembly plant.

Haslam also said "it's also an interest of ours because VW has been coming to us for a while" as the German auto manufacturer decides whether to put new car production in Chattanooga or in Mexico.

Earlier this week, Corker, a former Chattanooga mayor, said in a statement that he's holding his tongue on criticizing Volkswagen or UAW's organizing efforts until the election is held next week.

"During the next week and a half, while the decision is in the hands of the employees, I do not think it is appropriate for me to make additional public comment," Corker said earlier this week.

He has previously said Volkswagen would be a "laughingstock" if it becomes the first foreign-owned auto manufacturer to allow the UAW to find a foothold.

Corker helped recruit Volkswagen to Chat-

See **HASLAM**, Page 16



Photo by Mark Zaleski • AP Photo

TPA Vice President of Non-dailies Joel Washburn welcomes Gov. Bill Haslam while TPA President Lynn Richardson, seated between the two, and TPA Vice President of Dailies Jason Taylor watch. Zaleski also took the last photo of Haslam at the top of the page.

PANEL, from Page 11

to see that data."

Other proposals include repealing parts of the standards and doing away with them altogether.

Republican Gov. Bill Haslam told reporters following a luncheon that the standards have played a part in Tennessee students' academic improvement and that repealing them would not be a good idea.

"I would have a major concern about that," he said.

Photos of Bobbie Patray and Rep. Harry Brooks by Mark Zaleski, AP.



Patray



Brooks



McQueen



Bell



OPENING RECEPTION

‘Nashville’ folks toast survey that says show economic boost for city

By Dave Paulson  
The Tennessean, Feb. 6, 2014

A new survey signals that ABC’s “Nashville” is making a mark on the real Nashville’s economy – and that’s not only music to the ears of local tourism officials, but also to those affiliated with the show.

Cast member Charles Esten, who plays Deacon on the show, and executive producer Steve Buchanan, also the president of Opry Entertainment Group, were on hand at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Nashville Downtown on Wednesday night for the opening reception of the Tennessee Press Association’s winter convention.

They and “Nashville” production company Lionsgate were celebrating the results of a new Nashville Convention & Visitors Corp. survey reported on Wednesday in The Tennessean.

According to the study, 55 percent of leisure travelers to Nashville had seen “Nashville,” and one in five of those travelers cited the show as the “motivating factor” in their decision to visit. “Nashville” viewers also spent more, stayed longer and brought more people with them on average.

“We couldn’t be happier,” Esten said of the news. “You need to know that our show is a love letter to this city and this state, and so (it’s good) for us to find out that people are falling in love with this town.”

The city’s charm has also worn off on cast members – nearly all of whom were not local residents before joining the show. Esten and his family moved from Los Angeles to Brentwood last year.

Co-star Hayden Panettiere made headlines last month when she revealed she had bought a house in Nashville, saying she’d live in town “regardless of the show being there or not.”

On Wednesday night, Esten also treated attendees to an acoustic rendition of “Back Home,” a song he sang in the first episode of “Nashville.”

“When I was thinking about (the song), I was thinking about Los Angeles at the time because I was away from my family. But over the course of that first season, I fell in love with Tennessee, and I knew that I was going to bring them back here if I could.

“... Now, I’m in Brentwood, and we call Tennessee our home, so we are right ‘Back Home.’”



Charles Esten, who plays Deacon on the ABC hit show “Nashville,” performed an acoustic rendition of “Back Home,” a song he sang in the first episode of the show.



From left, TPA President Lynn Richardson, publisher of the Elizabethton Star, and at right, TPA Vice President of Dailies Jason Taylor, publisher of the Chattanooga Times Free Press, take a moment during the Opening Reception to have their picture made with Charles Esten, who plays Deacon on the ABC show “Nashville.”



Charles Esten, who plays Deacon on the ABC show “Nashville,” signs autographs for Andrew Oppmann’s daughters. Oppmann is vice president and spokesman for Middle Tennessee State University, a sponsor of the Winter Convention & Press Institute.



Above, Gif Thornton, lobbyist with Adams and Reese, Nashville, talks with Sen. Jim Kyle, D-Memphis, and District 9 TPA Director Eric Barnes, publisher of The Daily News, Memphis, during the Opening Reception.



Above, Jack McElroy, editor of the Knoxville News Sentinel and TPA’s District 2 director, spends some time with Sen. Becky Duncan Massey, R-Knoxville.



Above, from left, TPA Public Policy Director Frank Gibson talks with Chris Vass, metro editor of the Chattanooga Times Free Press (behind him); Andy Sher, Nashville Bureau reporter for the Times Free Press; and Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey.



OPENING RECEPTION



Speaker of the House Beth Harwell visits with Rep. Charles Sargeant, R-Franklin, and his legislative aide Lauren Campbell.



Rep. Todd Gardenhire, R-Chattanooga, talks with Chris Vass, metro editor of the Chattanooga Times Free Press.



John Hood, MTSU, visits with Rep. Mike Sparks, R-Smyrna.



From left, TPA President Lynn Richardson, publisher of the Elizabethton Star, and TPA Vice President of Dailies Jason Taylor, publisher of the Chattanooga Times Free Press, talk with Speaker of the House Beth Harwell. Taylor is the incoming president of TPA and will be installed at TPA's Summer Convention in June in Gatlinburg.





# OPENING RECEPTION



Rep. Craig Fitzhugh, D-Ripley, visits with Amanda Daniels, Johnson Poss Government Relations, Nashville



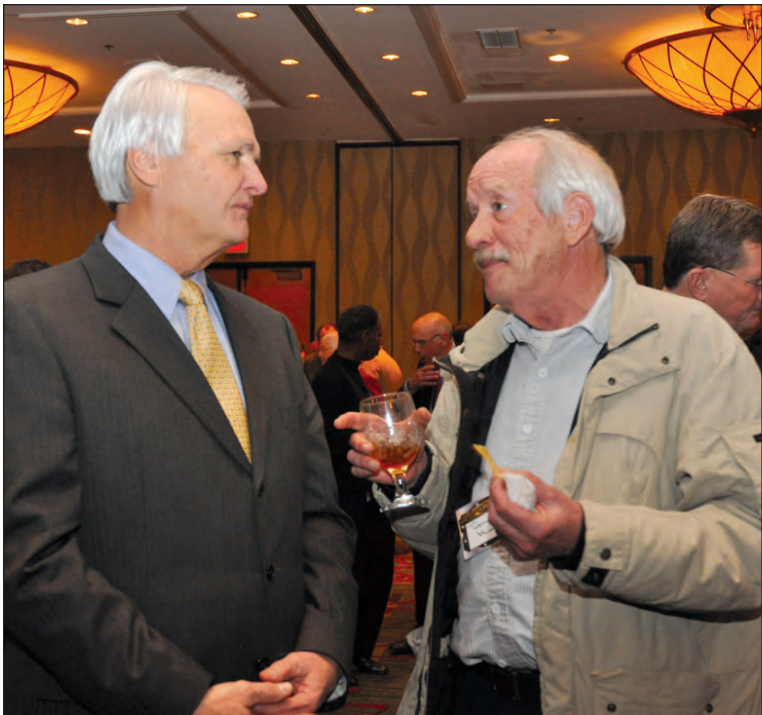
From left, Jesse Lindsey, publisher, The Lebanon Democrat, and Keith Wilson, publisher, Kingsport Times-News, visit with Rep. Susan Lynn, R-Mt. Juliet.



From left, Rep. Jeremy Faison, R-Cosby, looks on while Charles Primm, communications coordinator for the University of Tennessee, and Janet Rail, publisher of the Independent Appeal in Selmer visit.



Rep. Tilman Goins, R-Morristown, visits with TPA President Lynn Richardson, publisher of the Elizabethton Star, and Mike Fishman, publisher of the Citizen Tribune, Morristown. Sen. Becky Massey is at the far right.



Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey, at right, visits with Tom Humphrey, Nashville Bureau Chief for the Knoxville News Sentinel.



From left, David Critchlow, Union City Daily Messenger, visits with Jesse Lindsey, The Lebanon Democrat, while Keith Wilson, Kingsport Times-News, talks with Rep. John Lundberg, R-Bristol.



OPENING LUNCHEON

Edwards honored at luncheon for her 22 years of service with TPA

Elenora E. Edwards served as the managing editor of The Tennessee Press for 22 years, before retiring in December 2013. She was honored with a plaque and a standing ovation at the opening luncheon.

She was also the guest of honor at a dessert reception following the luncheon, which gave longtime friends and colleagues a chance to wish her the best in her retirement.



Photos by Joel Washburn

Above left, Elenora Edwards, former managing editor of The Tennessee Press for 22 years, receives a warm welcome from TPA President Lynn Richardson before being presented a plaque from the membership for her service. Edwards told the audience of friends and colleagues that she approached the end of her job “with mixed emotions.” She thanked all of those in the TPA and Tennessee Press Service “for their assistance, cooperation and encouragement.” She also expressed her gratitude to all of the newspaper staff members she called through the years for a story, a photo or a clarification.



The crowd of TPA members and guest listen attentively as Gov. Bill Haslam address them at the opening luncheon of the 2014 TPA Winter Convention & Press Institute.



Gregg Jones, president of Jones Media Inc., asks Gov. Haslam a question during the Q&A portion of the luncheon.

HASLAM, from Page 12

tanooga. As a senator, he earned the enmity of UAW leaders when he heavily criticized the Obama administration’s bailout of General Motors and Chrysler.

Asked about Corker’s statements about withholding comment, Haslam repeated concerns that unionization would harm state efforts to lure more auto suppliers and other manufacturers to Tennessee.

“We’re just saying what we’ve al-

ways said, that the state has a vested interest in this and I think – from our viewpoint, from what we’re hearing from other companies – it matters what happens in that vote,” he said. “I don’t know that I’m trying to influence” the vote.

The three-day voting period by Volkswagen’s more than 1,500 hourly workers begins Wednesday. The pending vote has taken on all the aspects of a tiny town election fracas as UAW officials and out-of-state conservative groups opposed to unions seek to sway plant workers.



## OPEN GOVERNMENT AWARDS

## Legislative leaders receive 'Open Government Award'

By FRANK GIBSON  
TPA Public Policy Director

NASHVILLE — Two legislative leaders from East Tennessee are the 2014 recipients of the Tennessee Press Association's coveted "Open Government Award."

The awards were presented to Sen. Ken Yager, a Harriman Republican and chairman of the Senate State and Local Government Committee, and Rep. Ryan Haynes, R-Knoxville, on Feb. 6 at TPA's Winter Convention and Press Institute in Nashville.

Haynes chairs the House State Government Committee.

TPA President Lynn Richardson, publisher of the Elizabethton Star cited the two legislative leaders' "broad commitment to the values of government transparency and press freedom."

Richardson said government transparency is a three-legged stool of public accountability, starting with the state's open meetings and public records laws and coupled with the affirmative disclosure of information through public notices.

Yager and Haynes have championed open government from a variety of perspectives through word and deed, Richardson said.

Yager, an attorney and college professor, has opposed proposals to weaken Tennessee's 40-year-old "sunshine law." He is chair of the



TPA President Lynn Richardson, far right, congratulates Rep. Ryan Haynes, R-Knoxville, at far left, and Sen. Ken Yager, R-Harriman, on receiving TPA's "Open Government Award" for their 'broad commitment to the values of government transparency and press freedom.'

Senate State and Local Government Committee.

He speaks from the unique perspective and experience of a former county attorney and county

executive for Roane County for over two decades.

Yager stood up for the interests of constituents of his mostly-rural district by speaking out against

proposals to move public notices from newspapers to the government websites exclusively.

He pointed out that in some of the seven counties he represents, as

many as 40 percent of households do not have computers or Internet access. Thus, they would be denied access to public notices.

The two lawmakers successfully sponsored legislation in the 108th General Assembly that requires that public notices be published in the local newspaper, posted on the newspaper's website and on an aggregate statewide website operated by TPA.

Yager noted on the Senate floor that it was appropriate that it passed during National Sunshine Week.

Haynes has been vigilant in watching out for the interest of open government and protecting press freedom.

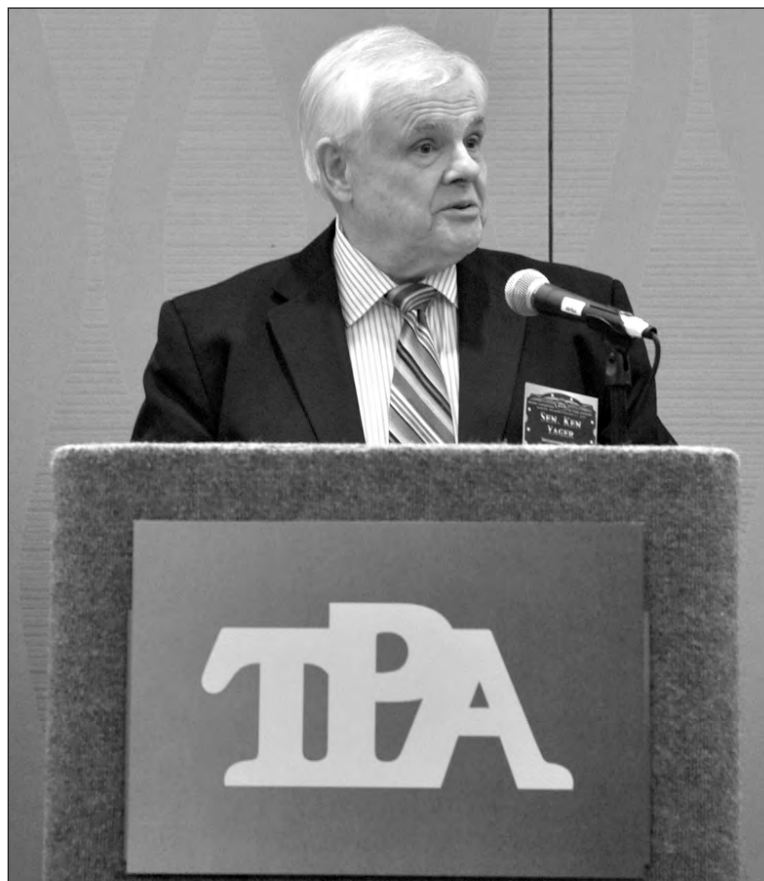
Since coming to the House in 2008, Haynes has often flagged legislation that threatened government transparency. As the House State Government Committee Chair, he has ensured open government advocates got a fair hearing.

Haynes and Yager both serve on the state Advisory Committee on Open Government.

Haynes, who is in the insurance business, is studying law at the Nashville School of Law.

Yager teaches history and law at Roane County Community College.

He attended the University of Tennessee Martin and received his J.D. degree from the University of Memphis.



Photos left and above by Joel Washburn

Sen. Ken Yager, at left, thanked the TPA for the honor after Rep. Ryan Haynes, above, gave his remarks thanking the association as well, while Yager looked over his plaque.



## ELENORA'S DESSERT RECEPTION



From left, Lu Shep Baldwin and Ralph Baldwin Jr., both of Jones Media Inc., Greeneville, Janet Rail of the Independent Appeal in Selmer share smiles with Elenora.



Looks like Keith Wilson, publisher of the Kingsport Times-News, is trying to jog Elenora's memory about a past story she did while managing editor of The Tennessee Press.



Anne Williams, corporate director at The Paris Post-Intelligencer, at left, and Kevin Slimp, TPS Technology Director, share a laugh together during the reception.



Elenora Edwards receives a hug from Mike Fishman, publisher of the Citizen Tribune in Morristown.



Jimmy Hart, director of News & Media Relations for MTSU, wishes Elenora well in her retirement from TPA.



Janet Rail, chair of the TPA Journalism, Education and Literary Committee, shares a moment with Elenora.

## HEADLINER OF THE YEAR AWARD

# Butch Jones named TPA's inaugural Headliner of the Year

NASHVILLE – UT Head Football Coach “Butch” Jones has been named the 2013 Tennessee Headliner of the Year in an inaugural award by the Tennessee Press Association (TPA) presented February 6 in Nashville.

The Tennessee Headliner of the Year Award recognizes a person (or group) who has brought the most positive headlines to the State of Tennessee over the course of the year.

Publishers and editors from across the state nominated those who they believed had contributed the most toward positive headlines. The finalist was chosen by the Board of Directors of the TPA,



Photo by Joel Washburn  
UT Head Football Coach Butch Jones.

the newspaper trade association representing 122 newspapers in Tennessee.

Lyle Allen “Butch” Jones received the award at a ceremony at the Doubletree Hotel in downtown Nashville in conjunction with the TPA Winter Convention. Jones begins his second year in charge of the Tennessee Vols football team in 2014, looking to continue the rebuilding project that, in his own words, must be done “Brick by Brick.”

Jones came to Knoxville after a highly successful run at Cincinnati, where he claimed back-to-back conference championships in his final two seasons with the Bearcats.

In separate three-year stints at Cincinnati and before that at Central Michigan, Jones won multiple conference titles, and in 2011, his Bearcats were the only team in college football to win its conference title game and the conference's academic award.

Jones has been embraced by the UT Nation, delivering a direct and inspiring message even from his introductory news conference, and his enthusiastic and impassioned message has helped deliver hope to an army of orange-clad followers who have endured the recent struggles of their beloved Vols and some high times for some of their most loathed rivals.

Since being hired in December 2012, Jones has managed to put his prints all over the program.

There was a near-record crowd at the annual Orange-and-White spring game, a showing that spoke to the belief Jones was selling and the hope the fans had conjured, considering more than 60,000 were in attendance at Neyland Stadium mere months after the end of another disappointing season.

While Jones' 5-7 season in his first campaign did not end UT's postseason drought, it certainly was not without its highlights.

Jones delivered Tennessee's first win over a ranked opponent since

See **JONES**, Page 19



## COMPLYING WITH THE PUBLIC NOTICE LAW



TPA Public Policy Director Frank Gibson, standing at the podium, moderated a Wednesday afternoon session on the new Public Notice Law that went into effect on April 1. The law requires that every Tennessee newspaper that publishes public notices must be in compliance with a new law requiring the publication of public or legal notices both in their print product and website. Participating in the panel to answer any questions TPA members may have were, seated from left, TPS Technology Director Kevin Slimp, TPA Executive Director Greg Sherrill and Bo Johnson, principal with JohnsonPoss Government Relations, Nashville. The panel covered the requirements set by the legislation that Gov. Bill Haslam signed into law in April 2013.



UT Head Football Coach Butch Jones stops to sign an orange brick for Daniel Williams, son of Immediate Past President Michael Williams, publisher of The Paris Post-Intelligencer, while TPA Vice President of Dailies Jason Taylor watches.

## TN NEWSPAPER HALL OF FAME VISION



At its Feb. 5 Board of Directors meeting, the TPA voted to transfer ownership of the Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame to the Tennessee Press Association Foundation. The TPAF Board of Trustees voted to receive ownership at its Feb. 7 meeting. But before that vote was held, TPAF Board President and Vice Chairman of the Hall of Fame Administrative Committee Gregg Jones, at the podium and below left, held a session on the proposal. Included were, from left, Stuart Butcher (at below right) and Barbara Tallent of McCarty Holsaple McCarty, architects and interior designers of Knoxville, and Dr. Mike Wirth, dean of the University of Tennessee College of Communication and Information.



Photo by Mark Zaleski • AP Photo



Photo by Joel Washburn

UT Head Football Coach Butch Jones thanks the TPA for honoring him with the inaugural Headliner of the Year Award and shares some of his thoughts about coaching at the University of Tennessee.

### JONES, from Page 18

2009 when the Vols beat South Carolina 23-21 on a last-second field goal in front of a delirious and packed Neyland Stadium crowd.

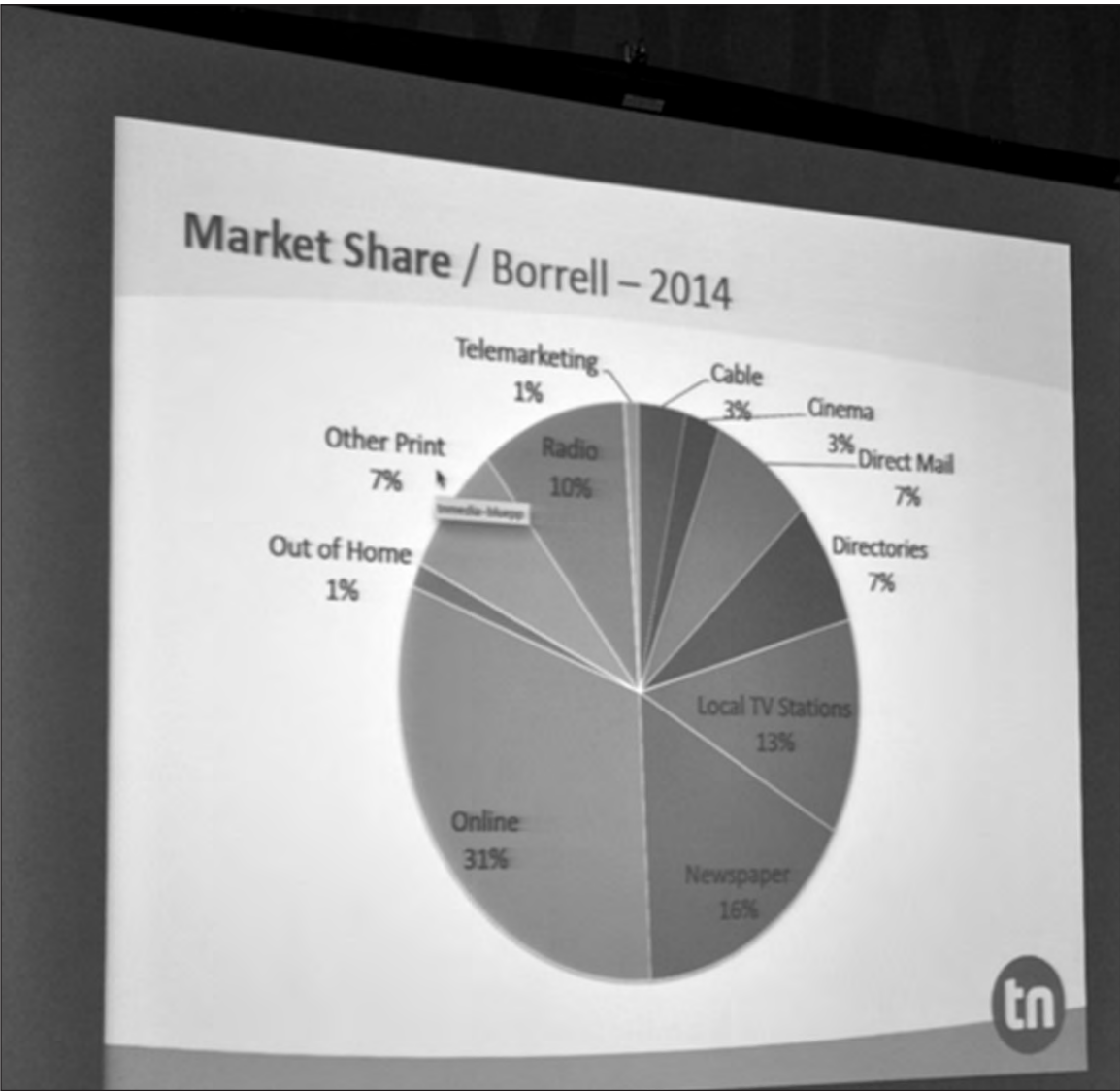
Jones and his program were singular plays away from victory against SEC-East rivals Georgia and Vandy in games that could have greatly changed the perspective of his debut season.

While that perspective may need orange-tinted glasses for some of his critics, regardless of the final record, Jones and Co. made believers out of some of the best high school players in state, region and the nation in his vision and belief.

Jones and his tireless staff of assistants are poised to land a nationally lauded recruiting class that recalls the glory days of Tennessee football.



COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE



Faricy



Morris



Gwiazdon



Peterson

The last session of Thursday dealt with the competitive landscape of today’s media. A panel discussion of the challenges and strategies with billboard, television, radio and digital, media professionals discussed how they are navigating the changes. Jason Taylor, publisher, Chattanooga Times Free Press, moderated the panel, which consisted of Bob Faricy, TN Media, Nashville; Chuck Morris, digital content manager, WSMV-TV, Nashville; Dennis Gwiazdon, vice president & general manager, South Central Media; and Mark Peterson, CBS Outdoor, Nashville.

TN NEWSPAPER HALL OF FAME VISION



Stuart Butcher and Barbara Tallent of McCarty Holsaple McCarty, architects and interior designers of Knoxville, presented renderings of what the new third floor area of the UT-Knoxville Communications Building that houses the physical Hall of Fame portraits will look like. The renderings, shown at right, were on display in the registration area of the Winter Convention & Press Institute.

The Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame was established in 1966 as a joint project between TPA and the University of Tennessee. It posthumously honors those who have made an outstanding contribution to Tennessee Newspaper journalism, or through Tennessee journalism, to newspaper journalism generally, or who have made an extraordinary contribution to their communities and region, or the state, through newspaper journalism.

The program recognizes and memorializes “extraordinary and clearly outstanding” contributions to newspaper journalism and the newspaper industry.

The TPAF was established a decade later in 1976 to serve the Hall of Fame and other journalism projects.

The physical TNHOF portraits are located on the third floor of the UT-Knoxville Communications Building. Efforts to update the physical and web presence of the Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame are underway and represent the collaboration of TPA, TPAF and UT representatives.

Fifty-five individuals have been posthumously inducted into the Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame.



# JOURNALISM, EDUCATION & LITERACY COMMITTEE



At the far right, Mark Cate, chief of staff for Gov. Bill Haslam, spoke to the TPA's Journalism, Education and Literacy Committee about Common Core and the governor's initiatives to improve education in Tennessee. Listening from left are Hugh Jones, publisher, Shelbyville Times-Gazette; Dale Gentry, publisher, The Standard Banner, Jefferson City, and Lynn Richardson, TPA president and publisher of the Elizabethton Star.



Cate answered the committee's questions about how newspapers can work to improve education in the state. Chair Janet Rail, publisher of the Independent Appeal in Selmer, presided over the meeting.



Committee members Joel Washburn, managing editor of The McKenzie Banner; Hugh Jones, publisher, Shelbyville Times-Gazette; and Dale Gentry, publisher, The Standard Banner, Jefferson City, listen intently to Cato.



On the other side of the table, other committee members were equally interested. From left, starting at the far end of the table, are Tom Hrach, assistant professor of journalism, University of Memphis; Keith Wilson, publisher, Kingsport Times-News; Michael Williams, immediate TPA past president; and Mike Fishman, publisher, Citizen Tribune in Morristown.

# TENNESSEE PRESS ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Photo by Joel Washburn

TPAF's Board of Trustees met Friday morning during the Winter Convention. Pictured from left are TPA Controller Laurie Alford and trustees Sam Kennedy, Kennedy Newspaper Company Inc.; Michael Williams, publisher, The Paris Post-Intelligencer; David Critchlow, editor, Union City Daily Messenger; Doug Horne, president, Horne Properties Inc., Knoxville.





## DRIVE-IN TRAINING SESSIONS

### Slimp conducts four sessions

Kevin Slimp, TPS technology director, held four Drive-In Training Sessions on Friday, Feb. 7, the last day of the 2014 TPA Winter Convention & Press Institute in Nashville.

The first session, “What I’ve Learned about Color Photos This Year,” covered the new insights Kevin learned visiting newspapers, from the biggest to the smallest, to test their color settings.

In the second session, “What I’ve Learned about PDF Files This Year,” Kevin shared what he’s learned through his visits with newspapers about how to handle the trickiest PDF problems any newspaper could conceivably encounter.

In his “What I Wish Everyone Knew about the Newspaper Business” session, Kevin shared what he learned while leading publishers’ summits all over the place the past couple of years.

His last session, “Teach Me Even More InDesign,” saw him sharing his tricks of the trade for this page-designing software.

Top photos by Joel Washburn



Board of Trustees for the Tennessee Press Association Foundation attend to business on the last day of the Winter Convention & Press Institute. From left are Joel Washburn, managing editor of The McKenzie Banner; John Finney, vice president, Buffalo River Review, Linden; Dale Gentry, publisher, The Standard Banner, Jefferson City, Elenora E. Edwards, trustee; Nate Crawford, trustee, and Jim Charlet, trustee.



Above and at right photos by Joel Washburn

Above, from left, are Nate Crawford, TPAF trustee; Jim Charlet, TPAF trustee; Victor Parkins, editor of The Milan Mirror-Exchange and vice president of the foundation, who presided over the meeting, and Greg Sherrill, TPAF secretary-treasurer. At right, from left, are Lynn Richardson, TPA president and publisher, the Elizabethton Star; Janet Rail, publisher of the Independent Appeal in Selmer; and Mike Fishman, publisher, Citizen Tribune in Morristown.





# DRIVE-IN TRAINING SESSIONS



## Open Meetings/Open Records

Executive Director of the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government Deborah Fisher, seated in front at left, and TPA Public Policy Director Frank Gibson, standing at the podium, gave two sessions on open meetings and open records laws. They provided a need-to-know briefing on recent challenges and tools newspaper reporters need to continue their watchdog tradition.



Above, Joe Hurd, publisher of The Courier in Savannah, participated in the morning session of the Open Meetings/Open Records Drive-In Training seminars.

## Design with Michael Babin, Gannett's Design Studio



Above, Michael Babin lead a session on newspaper design. He is a team leader at Gannett's Nashville Design Studio, where he oversees design for four daily newspapers. A graduate of Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, he also worked as a designer and presentation editor at The Miami Herald, The Baltimore Sun, The Oregonian and Lexington Herald-Leader. At right, students from all over the state, as well as publishers like Hugh Jones, Shelbyville Times-Gazette, at right, dropped into his session to see what new design skills they could learn.





DRIVE-IN TRAINING SESSIONS



**Niche Ideas**  
with Leslie Kahana, Advertising Director  
Chattanooga Times Free Press



**Design with Leslie Haines and Philip Loubere**  
with Associate Professor Leslie Haines, MTSU, and  
Assistant Professor Philip Loubere, MTSU



**Multimedia – Video on a Budget**  
with Karen Kraft, Multimedia Producer  
The Tennessean, Nashville



**Maximizing Your Local Coverage**  
with Terri Likens, Editor, Roane County News, Kingston, and  
Deborah Fisher, Executive Director, Tenn. Coalition for Open Government



**Maximizing Your Local Coverage**  
with Joel Washburn, Managing Editor, The McKenzie Banner



## DRIVE-IN TRAINING SESSIONS

### Engaging readers more with social media



Without a doubt, this session was the most popular of all of the Drive-In Training sessions. Harrison Keely, above, is a web producer and social media director for the Chattanooga Times Free Press. He manages social media for the paper and anchors the daily Times Free Press newscast. He joined the paper as a reporter in 2010. Harrison previously served as managing editor of the Smoky Mountain Sentinel in western North Carolina and a business reporter for the Washington Times in Washington, D.C.

### Student writing competition

Each year, the Tennessee Press Association Foundation (TPAF) provides scholarships for college journalism students wishing to attend Drive-In Training Day, part of the TPA Winter Convention & Press Institute.

While we want college students to take advantage of the training, we also ask instructors to work with them by having them cover the various sessions they attend.

Stories submitted by these students are published, along with their byline and thumbnail photo of the student, in this special section each year.

This year, The Tennessee Press decided to award a \$100 prize to the student whose story is judged as the best by the editor and managing editor of The Tennessee Press.

Three entries were submitted, all covering this session on social media.

This year's winner of the \$100 prize is Lorelei Goff, a student at East Tennessee State University and freelance writer living in Greeneville.

Congratulations, Lorelei!

The other entries were submitted by Jessica Fuller, also a student at ETSU, and Kayla Marie Stringer, a student at the University of Memphis.

We thank each of you for taking the time to write your stories and submit them. We wish you well in your future studies and careers.

Sincerely,  
Amelia Morrison Hipps  
Managing Editor  
The Tennessee Press



Lorelei Goff, in the hat, and Jessica Fuller are both students from East Tennessee State University in Johnson City. They participated in the Drive-In Training Sessions on the last day of the 2014 TPA Winter Convention and Press Institute. Both entered the Student Writing Contest and both wrote about the "Engaging More Readers with Social Media" session. Goff took first place in the contest.

## Social media: Riding the dragon

Breathing out free information and riding the winds of popular culture, social media plunged into a news industry steeped in disbelief that anything could challenge its sovereignty. Now journalists and publishers are climbing atop the beast and learning to ride it.

Harrison Keely, a web producer and social media director for the Chattanooga Times Free Press, gave journalists a crash course at the Feb. 7 Tennessee Press Association Winter Convention and Press Institute in Nashville, Tenn.

In the seminar, "Engaging Readers with More Social Media," Keely said newspapers must use Facebook and other social media aggressively and interactively to get the reader's attention, build relationships and establish trust.

"It used to be that people came to the news," he said. "... You'd have to pick up a paper. You'd have to turn to our channel. You'd have to visit our website. And that's really not the case any longer. Now it's about us coming to our readers."

Keely's key points included the need for great art and short posts with likeable wording to engage readers with content, posting content directly to pages rather than using links, and what he calls the Huffington Post effect.

"Leave them hanging," he said.



**FIRST PLACE  
WINNER**

**LORELEI GOFF**  
EAST TENNESSEE  
STATE UNIVERSITY

"Give them a reason to go on your link."

But knowing how to ride the dragon doesn't stop it from eating the profits, and the discussion turned to reining it in with paywalls.

Keely said a strict paywall can pose problems to managing social media. A metered paywall provides some free content before requiring the reader to subscribe, so that traffic or viral activity isn't hindered.

"I think the metered paywall is the best strategy when it comes to letting people on your page and working with it on social media," he said.

Frank Trexler, managing editor of The Daily Times in Maryville, agreed.

"We're in the middle of moving over to a whole new web strategy, a metered model," Trexler said during the discussion.

Andrew Dunn, assistant professor of communication at East Tennessee

State University, attended the seminar and said later that paywalls are a shell game. He said they shuffle print subscribers to online subscriptions without generating any new audience or profits.

"I think there's a tinge of arrogance in the industry where people say, 'Well, we have a better product, so they'll always come to us, and they'll pay for our services and not go to these free sites,'" he said. "That's just not true."

He said syndication may be a solution.

"Instead of asking the average citizen to pay for it, why not go after these news aggregators and say, 'We're not going to deal with you anymore until you deal with us as a syndicate, until we start sharing profits off all of this,'" he said.

For an industry struggling to maintain a profitable coexistence with evolving social media, Keely said that it's important for the press to stay at the forefront of social media trends.

"I encourage you to be open to experimentation," Keely said. "Try out new social media networks as they emerge."

He added: "Keep using what works. Remove what doesn't."

In other words, hang on and enjoy the ride.



## DRIVE-IN TRAINING SESSIONS

# Facebook more important to newspapers than most realize

Facebook notifications are starting to mean a lot more to newspapers nowadays, according to Harrison Keely of the Chattanooga Times Free Press.

"It is extremely important to be on social media, but I want to emphasize that it's a lot more important than you realize," Keely said at the Tennessee Press Association Winter Conference in Nashville in February.

Keely's class on engaging readers with social media instructed writers on the benefits and pitfalls of using social media for newsrooms. Keely manages social media for the Times Free Press. He says that social media is the key to generating more readers online.

"Facebook now sends more traffic to our website than any other referral site we have," Keely said. "And hopefully this just helps illustrate how crucially important social media is to do it right."

The Times Free Press has just over 65,000 likes on Facebook, but Keely says that these numbers are



**JESSICA FULLER**  
EAST TENNESSEE  
STATE UNIVERSITY

and show them this is what they should be looking at."

In addition to artwork, Keely also pointed out how short, simple text posts generated more user interactions than lengthy, detailed ones. Posts that are easier to read, Keely said, are generally more successful at bringing website traffic.

"We want our posts to be very conversational, we want it to be very friendly sounding," he said. "How you present one post can make a huge difference to your engagement and your interaction on Facebook."

Something every news organization wants to do is have content go viral, but according to Keely, there are steps that news organiza-

**Facebook now sends more traffic to our website than any other referral site we have. ... hopefully this just helps illustrate how crucially important social media is to do it right."**

*Harrison Keely  
Chattanooga Times Free Press*

just the tip of the iceberg. What's more important than the numbers, he said, was how many people like and comment on the content presented on the page.

"To us, it is incredibly important to get interaction," Keely said. "The first challenge is to get our posts noticed by people, so that they are noticed in the news feed."

Roughly 1,500 Facebook posts are competing for users' attention at any one time, according to Keely. The benefit of gaining interaction from fans ensures that content shows up in other people's Facebook feed, gaining more readers, likers and fans of the organization. Because of that, Keely said that he prioritizes art on social media.

"It's more important online because online you're not limited by art; in print you only have a set amount of space," he said. "This is our only chance to catch their eye

tions should take in order to manage viral content. He recommends placing viral content on websites in addition to social media to keep control of the content.

"The exposure from a piece of content like this will go a long way in bringing a lot of new fans and followers to your organization," he said. "These are people who are going to come back to your site, and they'll see your posts in the future."

As crucial as presentation is to being successful in adapting social media, Keely said that the content is most important above anything.

"When we post on Facebook, we need to make sure it's more than just a link," Keely said. "What we're doing is telling people why they should read this, because when people are scrolling through their news feed, this is our chance to show them our story."



Among those who sat in on Harrison Keely's "Engaging More Readers with Social Media" are on the front row, from left, Taylor Ackerman and Samantha Curry, both from the University of Memphis. Behind them, from left, are Jimmy Hart, director of News & Media Relations for Middle Tennessee State University; Dr. Thomas Hrach and Dr. David Arant, University of Memphis. Across the aisle from Arant is Chris Vass, metro editor, Chattanooga Times Free Press.

## Engaging readers with social media

The Chattanooga Times Free Press brought their expertise to a group of professional and student journalists in Nashville at the 2014 TPA Winter Convention and Press Institute in February.

Web producer and social media director for the Times Free Press Harrison Keely held a drive-in training session on engaging readers with social media, presenting ideas for news outlets to maximize their engagement with audiences on various platforms.

"The heart of social media is interacting with people to establish a relationship with fans to help build your brand," Keely said.

Keely, who has worked for newspapers in Washington, D.C., North Carolina, and Tennessee, began with the importance of being social. Since he has become the social media director at the Times Free Press, they have reached 700,000 people online and have had 6.4 million post views on their Facebook page alone, using the platform as their focus to drive traffic to their website.

Like the Times Free Press, it's important for companies to develop a focus, whether it's interaction, competition, or to earn a spot on people's news feeds in order to drive the number of views, likes, and shares up. According to Keely, in order to boost interaction, pages should have posts that include good photos, are easy to read, and leave readers hanging.

"People don't stop to read two



**KAYLA STRINGER**  
UNIVERSITY  
OF MEMPHIS

paragraphs of text, so make your post quick and conversational," Keely said. "Give them a Huffington post effect by leaving them hanging. People don't want to view links if they already know what will happen."

Ken Paulson, dean of the College of Mass Communication at MTSU, believes the growing digital world makes people want news that's fast and easy.

"Social media content attracts the most educated and affluent people in the world. Digital reading is faster because people read a tweet in about five seconds," he said.

With this in mind, social media and web designers should be sensitive to the amount of time readers give to social media and be effective with every post.

Another aspect of engaging readers with social media is presenting posts that make a difference, by using likeable wording, boiling down the lead, and asking questions. Amber alerts, product recalls, and weather and highway updates, when used sparingly, can be effective ways to get people interacting

as well.

In regards to doing viral right, it's essential that you maintain control of your content. Social media content spirals at a rapid pace, and posting content only to your website and social media pages allows you to have control over the news you are sharing through your brand, so people will learn to associate your name with the content being posted.

"Links don't go viral, content goes viral," Keely added. "Adding more than links diversifies your page."

Lastly, maximize your engagements by using app alerts, news feed updates, and desktop notifications to bring news to your audience. Photos are much more noticeable than text, so let them do the talking. Your goal should be to get a strong emotional reaction from posts and to capitalize on your company's unique strengths.

Remember that social media is free promotion every time you show up in someone's list of followers and it makes people aware that you are present and attentive.

Utilizing one or all of these techniques could mean the difference between companies who get a few shares per week and those who get a few shares per post. Social media's hasty expansion means it's time to build platforms that give readers information faster and more effectively than traditional media alone can provide.



## CLOSING LUNCHEON

Ken Paulson tells Tennessee Press Association that tablet devices play to content and presentation strengths of print platforms



Photos by Joel Washburn

Ken Paulson, dean of MTSU's College of Mass Communication, delivers the keynote address at Friday's session of the Tennessee Press Association's Winter Conference and Press Institute in Nashville.



## MTSU Mass Communication dean optimistic on newspapers

Submitted to TPA

NASHVILLE – The dean of Middle Tennessee State University's College of Mass Communication told Tennessee's newspaper editors and publishers Feb. 7 the idea that the newspaper business is dying is a myth.

Ken Paulson, the keynote speaker for the closing session of the Tennessee Press Association's Winter Conference and Press Institute, said, however, newspapers must shift in a new direction, as younger generations turn to social media and digital devices to get news.

The bright spot, he said, is the increase in popularity for tablet devices, which plays to the presentation skills and content strengths of newspapers.

He cited 2012 stats from the Online Publishers Association that said 71.4 million people are using tablets, more than half of which are from families making \$50,000 or more a year and are using news apps.

"I have been on panels stretching back as far as 1995 on the death of newspapers," said Paulson, the former editor of USA Today. "It's the same question you guys

get asked all the time: 'When are newspapers going to die?'

"With the advent of the tablet, for the first time, I'm saying never. At last, we have a medium that is a logical evolution from newsprint."

Paulson told the association that the traditional strengths of newspapers – "professionalism, readability, depth, accuracy and watchdog journalism" – remain its strengths today.

"Politicians come and go, residents move in and out. But the newspaper has been there forever, with a commitment over several lifetimes of residents," said Paulson, who is also president of the Newseum Institute's First Amendment Center in Nashville.

"Our streets and streams are cleaner, our governments more honest, our citizens more equal and our courts more just in part because of the work of generations of journalists and publishers who have never lost sight of the core mission of a free press," he said.

"As we move ahead in new and innovative ways, we must not lose sight of our oldest values."



## Until next year...

The Tennessee Press Association leaves you with these thoughts, until we see you again next year at the 2015 Winter Convention & Press Institute.

“Newspapers continue to reign supreme, however, in the delivery of local news. If you want to know what’s going on in your town – whether the news is about the mayor or taxes or high school football – there is no substitute for a local newspaper that is doing its job.”

“Wherever there is a pervasive sense of community, a paper that serves the special informational needs of that community will remain indispensable to a significant portion of its residents.”

Warren Buffett  
Business Insider  
March 1, 2013



# A VISIT TO THE MUSIC CITY CENTER



Starting top left and rotating clockwise: Carol Grubbe, Town News; Charles Primm, University of Tennessee, and Chris McKee, MediaSpan Group Inc. enjoy a moment together during the reception at the Music City Center that followed the tour of Nashville's newest convention center. The group of TPA members seemed very small in one of the cavernous exhibit halls. Going down the left side of the buffet, Alison Gerber and Chris Vass, both with the Chattanooga Times Free Press, and Henrietta Hayward, The Tennessean, Nashville, on the right side, check out the offerings of the reception's buffet table. TPA President Lynn Richardson pauses a moment to take a photo of the massive musical instrument and note artwork displays while on the tour. In the grey vest, Brad Franklin, The Lexington Progress, and Joe Hurd, The Courier, Savannah, fill up their plates.