

You Can Let us Be ‘Your Newspaper’

National Newspaper Week will be observed next week and this column will be about things the free press should do in order to serve the communities our weekly newspapers are published in.

After more than fifty-three years in the newspaper business I have learned that there are three guaranteed ways to avoid criticism. First, you can say nothing. Second, you can do nothing. And third, you can be nothing.

Those of you who have been a reader of our newspapers and this column during those years know that we do not subscribe to the above. We believe that if there are things you need to know we should tell you and often times we are criticized for that. But, it is our job and you expect that from “your newspaper.”

My wife of fifty-seven years would tell you that I am often wrong but never in doubt. Right or wrong I have no doubt that it is our job to keep you informed about your governments, your schools, your community and many other areas of happenings that you need to know about. Should we no longer do that we would not be worthy of you calling us “your newspaper.”

The mission statement in our newspapers says: “Our goal is to produce a quality, profitable, community oriented newspaper that you our readers are proud of. We will reach that goal through hard work, teamwork, loyalty and a strong dedication towards printing the truth.” By reaching our goal we will be worthy of you calling us “your newspaper.”

Strong newspapers build strong communities and newspapers that take a stand for what is good for their communities and take a firm stand against what is bad for their communities certainly help to build strong communities. You can rest assured that no other media cares more about your community than “your newspaper.”

“Your newspaper” reports history on a weekly basis in your community. Not only do we print the big news that happens but the small news as well. Things like community columns, births, honor rolls, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, obituaries and other news at no cost. We center our efforts on local news that you cannot get anywhere else because we feel this is what you want in “your newspaper.”

“Your newspaper” will never forget that we are the guardians of the First Amendment which protects the rights of those with whom we disagree as well as those with whom we agree.

Our editorial pages are a place for locally written editorials, letters to the editor, personal columns and occasional editorial cartoons. It is a place for you and us to sometimes vent our frustrations and where everyone’s opinions are welcomed.

Matthew Arnold once wrote, “America is the chosen home of newspapers.” Thomas Wolfe once said, “Americans love their newspapers.” Benjamin Franklin said, “I had

rather live in a country with no government and a free press than to live in a country with a government but no free press.”

Yes, America is still the chosen home of newspapers, most folks do love “their newspapers” and there is no doubt but that a strong free press is vital to our communities and to our nation as well.

Over the years we have faced some trying times for printing what we believe the people had a right to know. We have been sued, threatened with suits, cussed at and some of us have had our lives threatened. But we have survived those attacks and they have never stopped us from printing the truth and what the people have the right to know.

We want you to let us continue to be “your newspaper” in the years to come and you need to know that your community newspaper will be there for you in the future bringing you news about your community that no other media will provide for you.