



PENNSYLVANIA'S NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY *Gives Back*

Communities throughout Pennsylvania benefit from services provided by nearly 6,500 direct employees in the newspaper industry. Based upon assumptions derived from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Points of Light Foundation⁷ regarding donation amounts and volunteerism, income level and employment status, it is estimated that employees give nearly **\$3.9 million annually** in charitable donations and volunteer for over 100,000 hours, valued at **\$2.5 million**. In 2020, the combined impact of charitable giving and volunteerism from the commonwealth's newspaper industry totaled **\$6.4 million**. These benefits were in addition to the \$1.3 billion annual economic impact.

⁷ For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that 24.9% of staff donate an average of \$2,064 annually. Volunteer impacts are based upon assumptions found in the U.S. Census survey of charitable giving, and the value of a volunteer hour (estimated at \$23.56 per hour) was obtained from the Points of Light Foundation. For the purposes of this breakout analysis, it was assumed that 27.2% of staff volunteer for an average of 51 hours.



REGIONAL COMMUNITY IMPACT STORIES

NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA

Times Old Newsies Give Back to Erie Community

On the first Friday of every December, The Times Old Newsies, a group of more than 300 good-hearted volunteers from the community, give up a day of work to stand on street corners and in front of banks, stores and businesses to sell copies of a special holiday newspaper and collect money to buy food for families in need. In 2020, the newspaper printed an additional 19,000 copies that were wrapped in a special section for sale on the streets in the Erie market.

Most expenses for the organization have been covered by the Erie Times-News. This means that every single penny collected on sale day goes toward the purchase of boxes of food — serving more than 2,400 families. Because The Times Old Newsies group partners with the Second Harvest Food Bank, more than three times as much food can be purchased with the donations. Another team of volunteers gathers to pack the boxes, which are then delivered to families who have registered with various social service agencies.

Its first fundraising year, 1939, The Times Old Newsies group raised \$1,620.66. Now the organization collects \$70,000 to \$80,000 annually, raising a total of more than \$2.6 million over the last 80 years.

Note: All Regional Community Impact Stories Contributed by PNA

SOUTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA

The Spirit Brings Collaboration, Unity to Police and Citizens

When Paul Bennett, publisher of The Spirit, Glenolden, saw the national news of police brutality and racial tensions in the early summer months of 2020, he considered the relationship between the police and citizens in his own local news coverage area. While Bennett said there had been some intermittent, small issues, there had been nothing near the experiences in Minneapolis or Georgia. With this in mind, Bennett began a campaign to bring together the local police and the communities they serve to discuss what was happening nationally and locally.

Bennett recognized the intense need for open communication between the police and the citizens of the community, and he felt compelled to take a more active role in assisting his readership in achieving improved communication. “The role of community journalism has changed,” said Bennett. “We used to just tell the story. You tell side A, you tell side B, and then the community does the rest. We have found that the community doesn’t necessarily do the rest.”

The Spirit team organized the first in a series of meetings called the Summit for Serious Solutions on July 9. Bennett reached out to police chiefs from the 49 local municipalities and contacted the Pennsylvania State Police, which oversees municipalities without local law enforcement. He also reached out to the heads of the NAACP and other local activist organizations. Meetings were held at the Delaware County Emergency Services 911 Center, free of charge for the group.

Two critical issues were revealed at the outset. Police in Delaware County were, like the community, appalled by national events. And Delaware County law enforcement was not well-connected with the community; for that reason, the public was more likely to react to the national news. Following the findings of the first summit, The Spirit began a Behind the Badge feature to highlight police units and departments, as well as the individuals themselves. The goal was to connect Delaware County police and its citizens.

At a second meeting, police discussed recent initiatives and again addressed communication issues and needs. Bennett said the attendance for both meetings was bolstered not only by the presence of the police chiefs and activist group leadership,



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— Paul Bennett
Publisher, The Spirit

but also by the county law enforcement chaplain, local business leaders, and current and former members of the county council.

The ideas and initiatives culminated in a third meeting Sept. 9. “We are going to lead the creation of The Delaware County Police/Community Institute,” said Bennett. “We will have a nine-member board: three police officers, three individuals representing the community, and three individuals representing local businesses. Ultimately, this will be designed to marry police and community in a more formal and predictable way so that both entities will have a vehicle to express concerns and ideas they have and then work on them together.”

Bennett is no stranger to the creation and early work of a statewide nonprofit, having served as a member of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists more than 40 years ago. He said that the preliminary objective of The Institute would be to educate and institutionalize the relationship between the police and the community in Delaware County.

“Some of the leadership in the community today is really lacking,” said Bennett. “News organizations have a valuable potential role — where the leadership doesn’t exist, we need to provide it.”



CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

PA Media Group Provides COVID Coverage on Multiple Platforms

As PA Media Group saw the demand for COVID news and information on PennLive and in The Patriot-News skyrocket, the company rolled out several new platforms for coronavirus content in March 2020. These platforms included a daily electronic newsletter, a COVID vertical for essential news on the website, a supplement to the daily "Good Morning PA" podcast, and a direct text-messaging service for the most important news on the pandemic.

Marketing and Advertising's #Rally4Local initiative is providing free online and print listings to more than 470 small businesses and nonprofits struggling under the pandemic. In addition to the microsite, the initiative includes a series of free business recovery teleseminars and virtual job fairs.

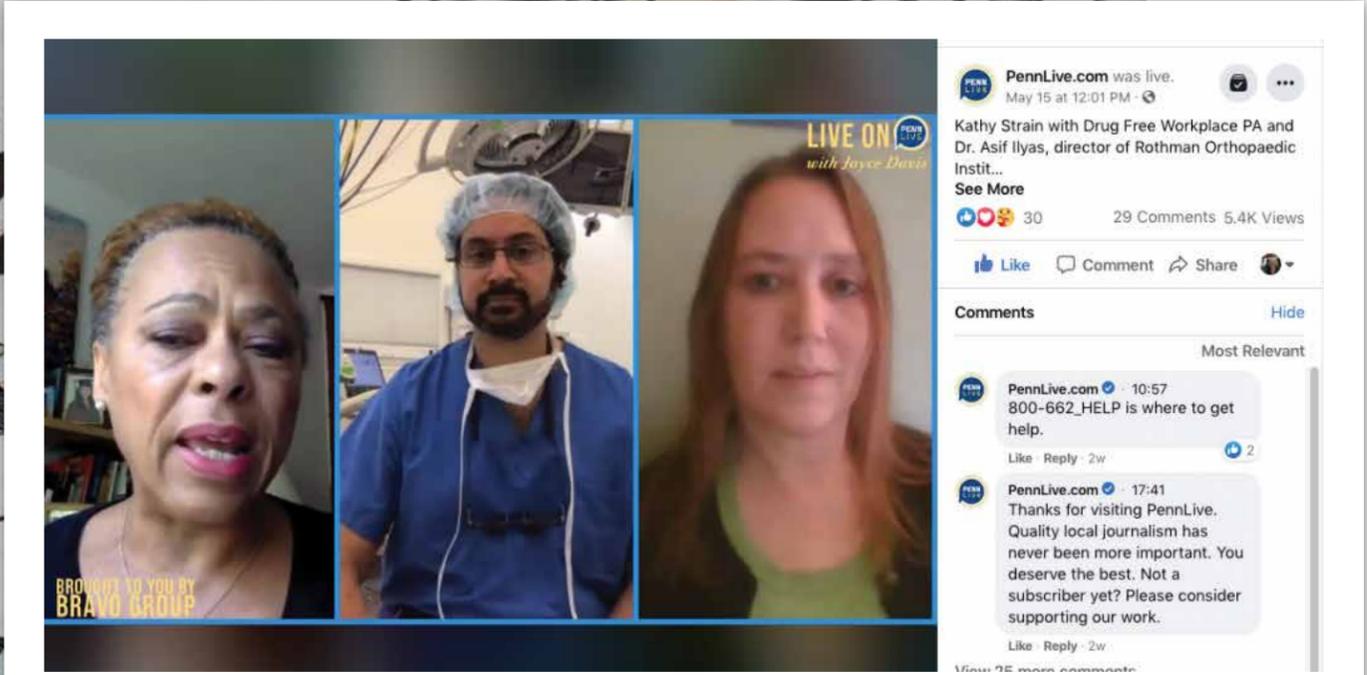
Other initiatives with the strongest reader response have included:

- PennLive's interactive data page following cases by county, nursing home deaths, regional reopenings and other statistics in progress.
- A new Facebook livestream show hosted by Opinion Editor Joyce Davis. Experts appearing on "Coronavirus Q&A" field questions submitted by some of the thousands of viewers watching every weekday.
- Explainer videos on social distancing, how COVID spreads, how to make a mask, etc., created by visual journalists and audio/video production house PennStudios.
- Facebook livestream reporting. The newsroom is making video a go-to platform

for major breaking news. Audience response was especially strong for coverage of the state shutdown protests at the Capitol and survivor stories.

- "School@home," fun and educational children's pages in every edition of The Patriot-News. These proved so popular that the Harrisburg School District requested copies to supplement its remote learning curriculum. Hundreds of papers are donated to families participating in the district's free lunch program.
- Photo essays. To document the home front, photographers launched an ongoing series of "Window of Hope" portraits showing life under stay-at-home orders. Photographers also profiled local restaurants making the best of the pivot to takeout and delivery service over in-house dining. Community engagement has been high.
- Virtual events. PA Media Group's biggest special events of the year take place in the spring and the company was determined they go on despite COVID's restrictions on large public gatherings. The PennLive Sports Awards and 28th annual Best & Brightest program for high school seniors were produced as video celebrations in May 2020.

Cate Barron, president of PA Media Group, said the company has received more positive feedback than in any other time in the more than 30 years she has been with the group. "We're hearing from many readers who recognize what reliable local journalism is worth — especially in these uncertain times."



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— Cate Barron
President, PA Media Group

“This is something that I think is good for everyone’s psyche during this time — to see that goodness is still happening in the world, and there are plenty of thankful people out there recognizing the good.”

— Jenn Bertetto
President and Chief Executive Officer, Trib Total Media



SOUTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA

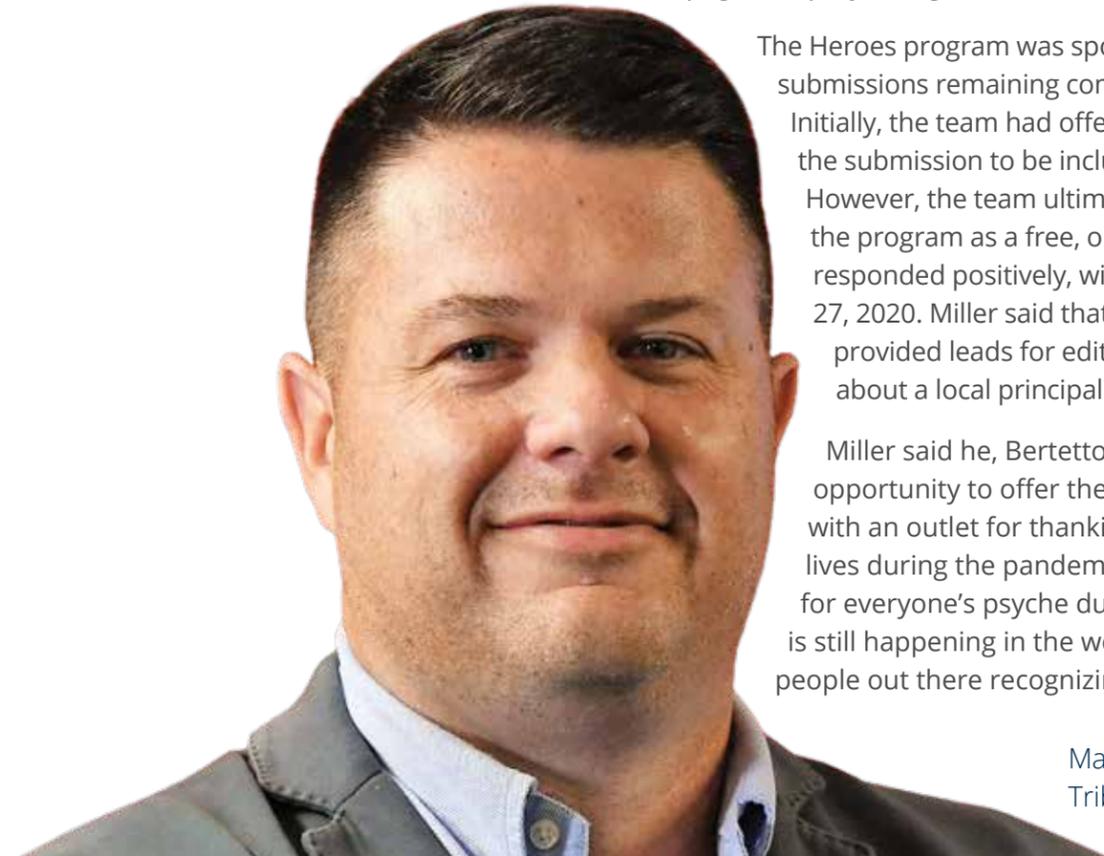
Trib Total Media Recognizes Community Heroes in the Face of COVID-19

In early April 2020, a reader reached out to Jenn Bertetto, publisher of Trib Total Media, with an idea to help the publication thank local medical and health care workers. Bertetto brought the idea to her team, including Matt Miller, chief revenue officer at Trib. Within a week the team had developed the idea into the “Thank you to the Heroes” program that launched April 12. “The idea really evolved quickly,” said Miller. “We went from only considering the health care workers and first responders to considering and including all essential workers — anyone who is a ‘hero’ during this time.”

Trib’s Heroes program launched with an article and devoted website where individuals uploaded their hero’s information including a picture, what the hero does and why the individual considered that person to be a hero. The information was then checked by a moderator and populated onto the page, located on TribLIVE.com. Miller said that the pictures and content for each submission varied, which created a bit of a patchwork look to the page. While the picture types and sizes ran the gamut, the team was able to superimpose the “Thank you to the Heroes” logo as well as several other logos with sayings such as “Not all heroes wear capes” or simply, “Hero!” onto each to tie the page and project together.

The Heroes program was sponsored entirely by Trib, with all submissions remaining completely complimentary to the readers. Initially, the team had offered a paid option that would allow the submission to be included in a print version of the page. However, the team ultimately decided to remove it and maintain the program as a free, online-only initiative. The community responded positively, with more than 200 submissions by May 27, 2020. Miller said that some of the hero posts have also provided leads for editorial content as well, including an article about a local principal.

Miller said he, Bertetto and the entire Trib team appreciate the opportunity to offer the program to readers and provide them with an outlet for thanking the important individuals in their lives during the pandemic. “This is something that I think is good for everyone’s psyche during this time — to see that goodness is still happening in the world, and there are plenty of thankful people out there recognizing the good,” said Bertetto.



Matt Miller
Trib Total Media

LEHIGH VALLEY, PENNSYLVANIA

Hyperlocal News Coverage: By the Community, for the Community



Since the company's inception, the Lehigh Valley Press has produced eight weekly newspapers with the distinct mantra of focusing community news coverage on the local areas they serve.

"We're family owned, and I've been with the company since 1996," says Deb Palmieri, editor of the Parkland Press and Northwestern Press. "So, I am more than used to the direction we should take as a local community paper." Each of the eight weeklies is charged with covering the region within its respective school districts. The eight weekly papers — including East Penn Press, Whitehall-Coplay Press, Northampton Press, Salisbury Press, Catasauqua Press and Bethlehem Press — were

created between the years of 1959 and 2005. "We cover police activities and incidents, churches, borough and township meetings — whatever happens within the municipalities in the school districts," said Palmieri.

"Twenty or 30 years ago we were being told the time of newspapers was limited. We are fortunate to be part of a corporation that took that warning seriously and diversified," said Pencor Executive

Vice President and TIMES NEWS Publisher Fred Masenheimer. "We continue to remain a strong and viable company in a time that has proved to be difficult for many businesses to survive."

Palmieri says that she and her fellow editors for The Press weeklies — George Taylor, Debbie Galbraith and Kelly Lutterschmidt — could not provide such consistent, in-depth news coverage if it weren't for the tremendous support from the Pencor (Pennsylvania Entertainment, Communications and Recreation) management team and the citizens of the community who regularly provide not only tips on local goings-on and events, but also the articles and photographs used in the weeklies.

"It wouldn't be hyperlocal if it wasn't for the freelancers who love their community," said Palmieri. "These are retired teachers, principals,



volunteer firefighters, lawyers and housewives who go out and cover issues and events, write articles, take photographs and share them with our papers. It's local coverage provided by local people."

Palmieri said that one of the regular features in the two weeklies for which she serves as editor, Northwestern and Parkland, are poems submitted by a reader who lives in one of the nursing facilities in the area. The Press graphic design team then creates images to accompany the poems. Palmieri said that the family-owned nature of the Lehigh Valley Press weekly newspapers is apparent as an employee. Employees receive a birthday card every year that includes a gift card to the ice cream shop for a sundae. Palmieri also says that the strength and stability of the Pencor and the Lehigh Valley Press family were incredible in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHOSEN WORDS



Masks

Due to the coronavirus,
we have been ordered to wear a mask.
Many people complain about this, but,
I don't consider it a task!

It is for everyone's protection,
So everyone remains safe;
If all of us follow that order,
We would be in a much better place.

Some people think they are untouchable,
The virus could never affect them;
That is simply not the truth; my friend,
It seems to have no end!

It strikes where ever it pleases,
Regardless of who you are;
If you are caught in its nasty web,
You will deal with the outcome, by far.

If you are one of the lucky ones,
You will eventually survive;
But, thousands of people were not lucky,
And sadly, they lost their lives.

I read this little saying;
it struck me to the core,
I want to share it with you,
so you pay attention more!

"Mask it or casket"

Pay attention to those words,
Take good care of yourself;
Protect the people around you,
Let's put this virus on the shelf.

Put it away forever!
So it can never strike again;

Let's show this virus who's in charge,
Let's wipe it off the earth;
Let our nation restore it's health,
And enjoy our new rebirth.

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CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

The Daily Item Provides Crucial Coverage During COVID-19 Crisis

The Daily Item has been serving the central Susquehanna Valley by covering important and breaking news for Montour, Snyder, Union and Northumberland counties for more than 80 years. As the COVID-19 global pandemic and its effects became a reality for its citizens and subscribers, The Daily Item was ready to support that same community, both digitally and in print. Dennis Lyons, editor at The Daily Item, decided to create an email newsletter devoted to COVID-19 coverage.

“We have several e-newsletters that people can subscribe to,” said Lyons. “We felt this issue and the coverage surrounding it warranted a specific, tailored newsletter.” Since the newsletter’s creation March 12, 2020, more than 5,000 people have signed up for it. Lyons says that’s the quickest takeoff for any of the newsletters to date.

The Daily Item’s COVID-19 newsletter features the publication’s top six or seven related stories of the day, and the publication metrics so far have shown those to be primarily articles about local topics related to the crisis. Lyons noted the two local hospitals and developments at them are chief among story topics in the newsletter, which is accessible to subscribers and nonsubscribers alike.

“Every COVID-19 story is labeled as ‘breaking news’ and every ‘breaking news’ article on The Daily Item website is completely free to the public,” Lyons said, citing the need for the publication to deliver the information and updates the community needs most. The Daily Item continues to print and deliver seven days per week and has, according to Lyons, seen significant engagement from a digital perspective since the beginning of the COVID-19 advisories.

Reader feedback has supported this mission. “We are hearing some really positive feedback, including from some of our longtime subscribers — things like, ‘I have been a subscriber since the mid-1970s and have never appreciated you more!’” Lyons said.

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