

Greenville Local History Group Newsletter

May 2023, Issue 314

Pioneer Newspaper– Mark Vinciguerra

Present: Johanna & Robert Titus, Bette Welter, Rachel Ceasar, Richard Ceasar, Peter O'Hara & John Garofalo, Anita Orsini, Sunnie Liu-Tiernan & husband Liam, Stephanie Ingalls, Christine Mickelsen, Doris Philipp, Mary Lou Nahas, Debra & Don Teator, and guests Mark Vinciguerra and Melanie Lekocevic (and maybe a couple more that eluded my sign-in sheet and my memory).

We commenced the 2023 programming year, our 36th year. Our usual start of April was cancelled as a result of the traveling Teators cruising on French rivers. The Teators agree: 'Tis nice to be back home.

It has been a long time since any program has talked about the newspaper business. Perhaps, we may have done so when the **Press** superseded the **Local** in the late 1990s. Then again, maybe this is a first. And I give credit to Mark Vinciguerra who contacted me about the idea.

Mark is President of the Capital Region Independent Media LLC. CRIM publishes our bi-weekly Greenville Pioneer and, thus, of course, is of strong interest to GLHG.

The Pioneer is but one piece of CRIM. Other local papers include the Ravena News Herald and The Columbia Paper (Columbia Co).

And the list keeps going with CRIM also publishing newspapers in Whitehall, Washington County, Granville, Lakes Region, dozens of magazines, and community



Mark Vinciguerra

guides. Their digital footprint will be detailed later.

Mark was present with Executive Reporter Melanie Lekocevic while Publisher Warren Dews was not able to attend. The program was titled: A (very brief) look at the state of the newspaper industry.

For a bearer of grim news, Mark certainly shone a hopeful optimistic note. A starting point: a community paper serving a community the size of Greenville probably cannot survive on its own.

THE LOCAL NEWS ECOSYSTEM

Slide #1



First, the tough news.

In a series of a half-dozen slides, Mark showed what is happening with print newspapers. (credit to Mark for the four slides)

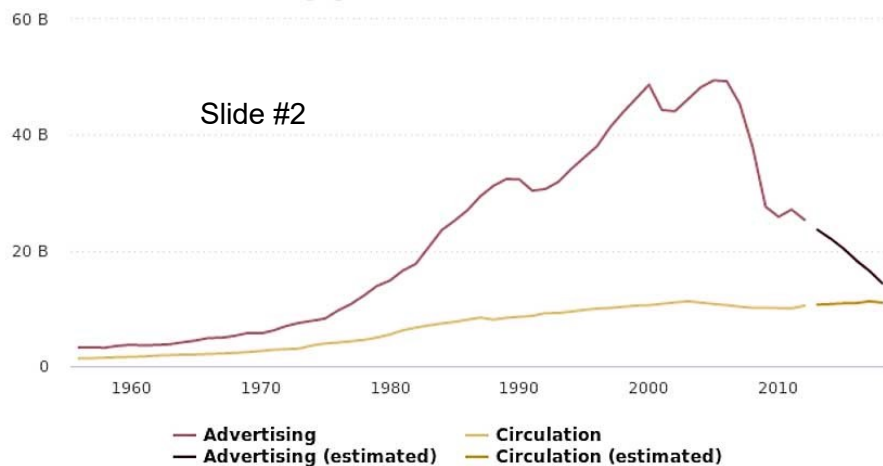
Slide #1 showed the number of types of newspapers: national (3), metro & regional (157), and community newspapers (over 6000). Mark indicated it is these smaller

newspapers that suffer from a different economy, changing viewing habits, and economy of scale.

Slide #2 showed that although circulation of US newspapers has remained relatively flat, total revenue has dropped sharply since 2010.

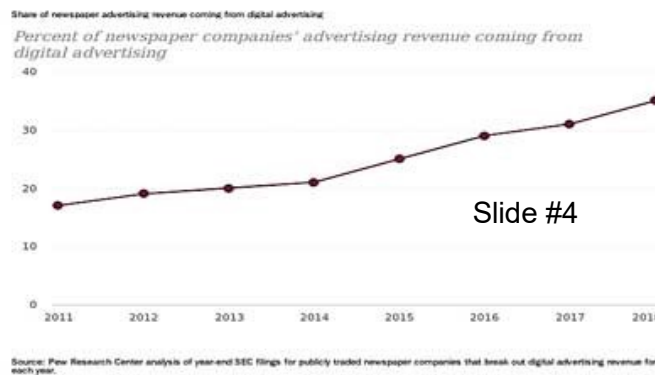
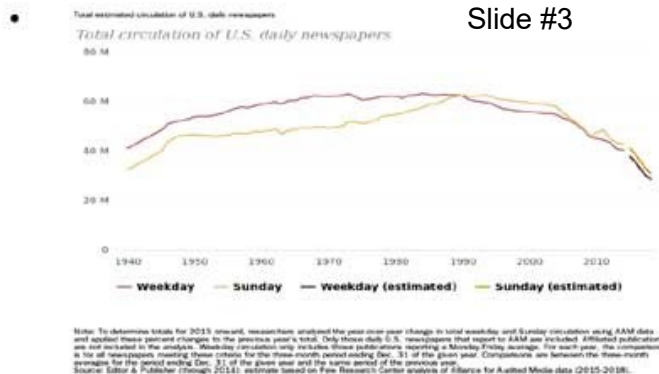
Estimated advertising and circulation revenue of the newspaper industry

Total revenue of U.S. newspapers (in U.S. dollars)



Source: News Media Alliance, formerly Newspaper Association of America (through 2012); Pew Research Center analysis of year-end SEC filings of publicly traded newspaper companies (2013-2018).

Print circulation of US Newspapers



Slide #3 showed a peak print circulation of newspapers in the 1980-1990 era, with a significant drop since.

Slide #4 showed a change of trends. The percent of newspapers companies' advertising revenue coming from digital advertising rose from near 20% in 2010 to almost 40% in 2018. Mark indicated that a half-dozen years has only added to that number. And we audience members could only surmise that a print-only newspaper would be falling on hard, or harder, times.

At some point, Mark asked where the audience received news. Being an older crowd, we GLHGers indicated we have stayed more with print although many of us revealed we received our news from a number of digital sources. We were proving Mark's point.

So, what was the good news?

One: Mark thinks he can publish community newspapers and publications successfully.

An important concept is economy of scale. Although each community is different, there are sections that each newspaper can utilize. Thus, certain articles can run in Ravenna as well as in Greenville and the other community newspapers.

Cost of publication for eight community newspapers should not be eight times the cost of one newspaper by itself. Shared costs of administration and publishing help reduce the total costs. And Mark continues to look for more efficiencies. One would be the actual printing, where one site for printing makes more sense than the three different sites he now utilizes. And that would mean a uniformity of newsprint size, something not true at the moment.

Two, in addition to economy of scale, Mark emphasized that a community newspaper has to matter to the community, to have emotion. What stories matter to the community?

Three, Mark had already shown that national trends point to the importance of digital content and advertising, and CRIM is already making use of these platforms.

Some of us who have already linked to theupstater.com website and have signed in now received three different emails each week – news, sport, obits. More is to come.

And a replica of the Greenville Pioneer is available at this website. Mark indicated that people have to care about their community news enough to support its continuation, whether print or digital. Advertisers are willing to advertise if people see the advertising. Your subscription matters.

Four, Mark noted both the print and digital additions of community guides. Go to <https://communityguidebooks.com/greenville/> for a

32 page resource of our area businesses and people. And this is true for five other communities.

Another avenue Mark mentioned was video, something I did not pursue but one should email Mark or the Pioneer if interested.

On a different front, Mark indicated new political trends. One would address the issue of digital companies taking content directly from print publishers without any compensation. Recently, news of the Google – New York Times relationship points to some help with this trend. And New York State is looking at legislation that would support newspaper publishers. If passed, the **Journalism Competition and Preservation Act** would allow news publishers to work together to establish distribution and payment deals with digital platforms that have at least one billion global monthly users.

GLHG thanks Mark and Melanie for a worthy evening with a topic that we historians care deeply about.

One more note:
for TheUpstater subscription offers – promotional offers, go to:
<https://www.wallitbits.io/theupstater-subscription-offers/>

Preceding Mark’s presentation about the current state of newspapers, I gave a ten minute account of the different

forms of our Greenville newspapers that we have seen over the years.

For a long time, The Greenville Local was the only newspaper that served our community (although the Greene County News did run a weekly Greenville section at times).

The Local had started in the 1880s and continued into the 1990s, except for a hiatus from 1919-1932. Then The Greenville Press started up as competition and out-survived the Local before it to gave way to the Pioneer. Changes in newspapers size were noted, a fact that makes archival storage a bit more complicated. Over 130 years of a local newspaper has shown Greenville will support a community paper.

From a historian’s point of view, the newspaper archives (copies of every issue from mid-1963) serves as one of our most important historical resources and, at times, just plain fun read-

Note #1

The Underpants: As I walked to the records room before our meeting, I realized the small community room was lit, and somewhat noisy. I was about to walk into a play practice! So, I invited the crew to visit us in the bigger room and to invite us to their production:

June 15-17, 7:30 pm; June 18, 3 pm. At Conkling Hall, Rensselaerville, NY.

Details of the play can be found at rville-stage-creations.square.site

Local talent, a play adapted by Steve Martine (yes, that Steve Martin)

Note #2

A thank you goes to our refreshment committee – Stephanie and Christine. My research was somewhat sketchy but it appears that Stephanie started providing the promised “light refreshments” since about 2014, marking nearly a decade of this good deed. Christine soon joined in. Stephanie and Christine provide this service at their own cost.

Note #3

Mary Heisinger lives on! A bench has been placed near the entrance to the Community Room in memory of Mary. In case anyone needs a reminder who Mary was, allow me to refer the 2015 recognition that is available at: <https://vedderresearchlibrary.org/mary-kler-heisinger>.

What a good idea!

Walter Henry

Many of you know by now that Walter Ingalls passed. And I am not sure quite what to say. Suffice it to say I could write a lot but a good starting point is the 2012 GLHG Calendar recognition, with a link found at: <https://vedderresearchlibrary.org/walter-ingalls>

Although I have valued my interactions with every single one of you, a handful of you have etched your presences in my memory sphere more strongly than others. Walter was one of those few.

For years, Walter was my Norton Hill resource. And my community resource. And my way of life resource. And he could tell stories like few others. For everything you have read in his calendar recognition, Walter was one of the most modest and humble people I knew. And that was not easy, given the importance of his business to the Town of Greenville and environs, the long history of the Ingalls family in the area, and just the general ease with which some people can inflate their importance.

The older I got, the more of a friend Walter became to me.



Walter, age 18, at college in Oil City, PA

Historical Marker News

After last year's spate of erecting four of the Town's historical markers, I thought that task was finished for another decade.

Ha!

The First School marker on the Chatterton corner (32 & Irving) disappeared one day, and Deb noticed the absence on her way from Albany one winter day. The next day, we felt compelled to look, just in case it was in the snow. Sure enough, the pole had rusted just enough that some last strong push broke it off and it lay covered in snow. Maintenance Dept Tim Fitzgerald and Cliff Powell fulfilled my request of safe-guarding until this spring.

And the marker about the Library that has always stood in the middle of the Library lawn went AWOL. How long it was absent, no one could tell but then it appeared, in plain sight, in front of the Boy Scout building. It seems it from the Library grounds a couple projects caused re-arrangements. When it was moved and re-sited, I do not know and, for some reason, I was not notified.

Both of these markers have been repainted by Debra Teator while the posts for



each have been erected (by Tim & Cliff), with the markers soon to be placed. A thank you to all three of you.

And then there is one missing (pictured). It was held in a wooden frame, sat on the library lawn, and may have disappeared at the same time as the other one on the library lawn. I have reached out to town officials but with positive results yet.

And then there is a new marker. And that will be a story for a future newsletter.



Just another view during lunch
More to see June 12

Note #4

The June 12 program is a Teator Travelogue, this one of Don and Debra's trip to Egypt this past year. I keep demurring that it is not local history but the drumbeat for a travelogue has been a steady request and Egypt/Nile was one of our more eye-opening trips. Deb and I will recount our experiences on our two week cruise, including four days in Cairo. If any of you have been there, feel free to join in also.