Feds could act soon on overtime

Labor mandate would double salary threshold

BY BETH BENNETT
WNA Executive Director

The federal Department of Labor (DOL) has proposed significant changes to the Fair Labor Standard Act’s overtime pay requirements, which has caused alarm for many in the newspaper industry and the small business owners we represent and serve. Right now, a worker needs to make more than $23,660 to be classified as a salaried, or exempt, employee. DOL is proposing to increase that threshold by 113 percent to $50,440.

While the threshold is due for an update, the proposed 113 percent increase is riddled with unintended consequences that are a real threat to both the financial health and journalistic integrity of many Wisconsin newspapers. The rule also creates significant challenges for small businesses, nonprofits, charities, local governments and universities.

The latest from Washington is that the rule could be finalized in the next week to 10 days. Please consider editorial support in favor of pausing the rule and reworking the increase so that it is more gradual and, perhaps, takes into consideration regional differences in cost of living. Some important points to consider:

A recent survey of Newspaper Association of America member newspapers found that the newspaper industry would have to spend more than $130 million annually to raise the salaries of exempt employees to meet the new threshold. With many newspapers struggling to make ends meet already, this new rule could literally cause papers to shut down.

The proposal has drawn concern from small businesses, universities (including the University of Wisconsin), nonprofits and charities like theYWCA and Habitat for Humanity. It is also opposed by local governments including the National Association of Counties and National League of Cities.

The rule takes millions of salaried employees and turns them into hourly ones. Many salaried employees like the status and flexibility that comes with not punching a clock. They understand that there are significant changes to the Fair Labor Standard Act’s overtime

FINDING THE FACES

How an act of kindness sparked a statewide search for missing photos

BY JAMES DEBILZEN
Communications Director

When veterans of the Vietnam War came home, they received less than a hero’s welcome. Many veterans have made it their mission to ensure that doesn’t happen again.

Publisher Andrew Johnson of the Dodge County Pionier in Mayville came to understand this firsthand during one of his family’s darkest hours. When his son, Army Lt. David Johnson, was killed in action on Jan. 25, 2012, in Afghanistan, Vietnam veterans were there to help in the aftermath.

“They escorted my son’s body while it was being transported in Wisconsin and Washington D.C.,” Johnson said. “We came to find out there were there for the family because these guys weren’t loved too much when they came back from Vietnam. They really want to show their love and support of the Gold Star families.”

Johnson said he would never forget the help his family received.

In the years since then, Johnson has been lending his support to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund’s “Faces Never Forgotten” campaign. The VMF is attempting to collect a photo for each of the 38,000+ names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., which will be displayed on a “Virtual Wall of Faces” in a new education center at the memorial. The photos can also be viewed on the VMF’s website at http://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/.

Last October, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial had a booth at the National Newspaper Association annual convention and trade show in Columbia, Mo. It was the goal of the booth to bring awareness of the Faces Project to community newspaper publishers and editor from around the country. From left: Andrew Johnson, Gold Star dad and National Newspaper Association regional director; Heidi Zimmerman, manager of communications and media relations, Vietnam Veterans Memorial; Laura Johnson, Gold Star mother; and Jessica McBride, UW-Milwaukee Journalism instructor.

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The effort to locate approximately 450 missing photos in Wisconsin began in 2012 with Wisconsin Public Radio and Wisconsin Public Television. Johnson became involved in the project after receiving a call from Kathy Mykleby, co-anchor of WISN Channel 12 News at 6 and 10 p.m., and Fraser Engerman, director of global media relations for Johnson Controls.


During his career, Baron has had a hand in some of the most important coverage in American journalism. Soon after taking over at The Washington Post, Baron was faced with a decision on whether to publish the story that exposed surveillance programs at the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA).

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See BARON, Page 4

WaPost’s Baron coming to MKE

Editor named ‘Sacred Cat Honoree’ by Press Club

The Milwaukee Press Club announced Wednesday that Marty Baron, executive editor of The Washington Post, is the club’s 2016 Sacred Cat Award honoree. The award, which has been given annually since 1973, recognizes excellence in journalism at the national level.

Baron will accept the award at the club’s annual Gridiron Dinner on Friday, May 13, at the InterContinental Hotel in Milwaukee.

The Milwaukee Press Club also will honor its 2016 Headliners Ted Kellner, executive chairman of Fiduciary Management, Inc. and Hannah Rosenthal, president and chief executive officer of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation. Winners of the press club’s 2015 Excellence in Wisconsin Journalism competition also will be recognized at the event.

Emcees for the Gridiron will be Kathy Mykleby, co-anchor of WISN Channel 12 News at 6 and 10 p.m., and Fraser Engerman, director of global media relations for Johnson Controls.


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Parents at businesses across the Fox Valley took their children to work last Thursday as part of the annual Take Your Child to Work Day. At The Post-Crescent, more than a dozen children of employees spent part of the day learning about the newspaper’s print and digital operations. Here, Sarah Riley leads a tour of the newsroom.

Danny Damiani photo | USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin

Among Friends

Kaitlyn Schultz photo

NEWSPA scholarship winner Zoe Johnson, left, is pictured with her mom and Common Sense adviser, Heather Vande Sande.

Common Sense, Cedarburg

The Cedarburg High School Common Sense newspaper staff earned one group award and 23 individual awards at the North-eastern Wisconsin Scholastic Press Association Journalism Conference April 20. Nineteen schools – bringing 325 students – attended the conference, which is held at the University of Wis-consin-Oshkosh each spring. One of the highlights of the day was the presentation of the annual NEWSPA scholarship, sponsored by the Wisconsin Newspaper Association. Senior Zoe Johnson was awarded the $500 scholarship. She was chosen from a field of several applicants after writing a 500-word essay, expressing why she is choosing to major in a journalism-related field.

For seven consecutive years, the Common Sense staff earned recognition for the overall publication. This year they were given Red Ribbon Honors. This year’s editors are seniors Emma Brauer, Emily To-manbek, Catherine Torner and sophomore Brenna Fischer.

Twenty-three entries placed in the writing or graphics divisions. Each newspaper can enter two stories in each of the 14 writing categories. NEWSPA has been serving high school students around Wisconsin since 1969.

Rice Lake Chronotype

Sam Finazzo, editor of the Rice Lake Chronotype, announced in a column last week that he plans to retire from the newspaper. His last issue will be June 1. Finazzo came to Rice Lake nearly 30 years ago, straight out of the journalism program at the University of Minnesota. He became managing editor in 1986 following the retirement of Warren Leary Jr. Finazzo will be succeeded by Ryan Urban, currently the Chronotype’s city editor. Finazzo said Urban “represents a new generation of journalists who will take The Chronotype and Rice Lake Online on their next steps.”

CNA

Samantha Fett has been named the new Customized Newspaper Advertising sales and marketing director. Fett, who succeeds Pat- terson Plank, will begin her new role on July 1. Pat-terson Plank became exec-utive director of the INA on April 1. Fett has more than 15 years of sales and sales management experience and has been the inside sales manager with CNA since 2009. She started her career with the Iowa Newspaper Association in 1999 as an intern, selling advertising into the newspaper directory and upon graduation became a full-time account executive. Fett also has experience in television and pharmaceutical sales.

In her current role, Fett leads a team of three account executives and one sales assistant in selling national newspaper media through newspaper networks. She oversees the budgeting process and the sales team. She has created new digital packages and an online network.

In her new role, she will oversee all CNA operations including display and network sales; media planning and placement; and CNA’s partnerships with other state press associations.
Member News

Free Member Content

This weekly free content, accessible at http://tinyurl.com/WNAfreecontent, is available for use at no cost to WNA members.

The Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism has made available a story that discusses a $50,000 tax credit award that was rescinded from W.W. Grainger after the Illinois-based company failed to create promised jobs and in fact sent some jobs to Panama. The credits were awarded by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp., but the agency pursued repayment through the state Department of Revenue after W.W. Grainger created none of the promised 130 new jobs and reduced its Wisconsin workforce by 361 jobs. A company spokesman said employment at W.W. Grainger rebounded this year, but the deadline for creating and retaining jobs was in 2013.

The story was written and reported by Center contributing reporter Cara Lombardo.

OVERTIME
Continued from front page

some days that require more than eight hours and some that require less—either way they like their job done. The proponents of the proposal argue the rule will ensure that employees receive overtime pay. While that may be true in some cases, most employers afford overtime and will instead force employees to stop working once they hit their hourly limit. That could be a real problem for a journalist tracking a story or a nonprofit leader providing help for individuals in need. It could also lead to employees earning less money as some employers may send workers home early when there isn’t immediate work to be done.

The salary threshold can and should be lifted. But not this much and not this fast. And, consideration should be given to the fact that wages and cost of living are different in different parts of the county. New Holstein is not New York.

The DOL should reconsider and redraft the rule. If it doesn’t, Congress should step in to press the process behind learning a new tool. Register here: http://www.onlinemediacampus.com/2016/04/storytelling-tools/

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WISCONSIN TAX FACTS

Wisconsin is one of 40 states that tax some personal property, but of our surrounding states, Wisconsin taxes more personal property than most.

WGSTAX Facts

Keep this number handy: (800) 362-2664

WNA-LEGAL HOTLINE

WNA-member editors, reporters and advertising staff may call toll-free to ask an attorney for immediate help when they face challenges to Freedom of Information (FOI) principles. Ad staff may also use the Hotline when questions arise about the legality of an ad.

Several seminars will be held on May 24:

First up: Watchdog Journalism on Tuesday, May 24, at the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. Co-sponsored by MPI, Investigative Reporters & Editors Inc., Journal Sentinel, and the Wisconsin Newspaper Association, the seminar will center on using the web and social media to assist in investigative stories, among other topics.

IRE Training Director Alex Richard will lead sessions on digging deeper with data and keeping track of non-profits and charities. Ellen Gabler of the Journal Sentinel will lead a session on FOI and open records.

The seminar will run roughly 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration is $25 and includes lunch. To register, email MPI Executive Director John Ryan, mryan@eu.edu.

Second seminar: Education Reporting: Expanding your beat beyond meetings, budgets and tests on Friday, June 24, at the News-Gazette, Champaign, Ill. Sessions on expanding coverage, engaging younger readers, data mining and other topics will be featured. More details will be forthcoming.

The seminar will run roughly 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration is $25 and includes lunch. To register, email MPI Executive Director John Ryan, mryan@eu.edu.

WNA sets two seminars

Topics: Watchdog, education reporting

Mid-America Press Institute has two one-day seminars planned for May and June.

Friday, May 6 10-11:30 a.m.: You’ve got your business set up on social media, now what? This presentation will highlight industry trends, tactics and best practices for utilizing online marketing to engage your audience beyond your friends and family. Presenter Bob Berting will walk us through the how and why of a three-step sales process to close more sales in less time. Presenter Bob Berting tried and tested this system over 15 years with a leading suburban newspaper chain where he averaged two cold contracts a week. This session will benefit new sales professionals as well as industry veterans. Register here: http://www.onlinemediacampus.com/2016/03/three-call-sales-system/

Creating Focus on Enterprise News: Best practices for digging deeper

Thursday, May 19 10-11:30 a.m.: Presented in partnership with GateHouse Media, The Medford Mail Tribune’s recent participation in GateHouse’s Better Journalism Project revealed several best practices for consistently creating enterprise news, as well as developing a highly visible campaign for readers. In this session, learn how to plan for, execute and promote enterprise journalism on a weekly basis. Register here: http://www.onlinemediacampus.com/2016/04/enterprise-news/

How to Market and Sell in Brutally Competitive Environments

Friday, June 3 10-11:30 a.m.: Landscape is simultaneously the best and worst in the history of human civilization. It’s the best because untold and unprecedented opportunity awaits savvy and sharp-eyed professionals. It’s the worst because there has never before been a market so loud, crowded and full of competing distractions jockeying for your clients’ attention. In this presentation, award-winning author Jeff Beals shows you how to unearth what your clients truly value while building trust, career-long relationships. Register here:.http://www.onlinemediacampus.com/2016/04/brutally-competitive/

Interactive Storytelling Tools: Enhance your readers’ experience

Thursday, June 9 1-2 p.m.: Journalists can tell digital stories using a variety of tools that not only enhance the experience more interesting and personal for the reader. This webinar will introduce you to some of these tools, demonstrate why they are effective and how to use them. Most important, we’ll explain the process behind learning a new tool. Register here: http://www.onlinemediacampus.com/2016/04/storytelling-tools/
There has been a flurry of news recently about various newspaper groups being bought and sold. And at the time I have gotten some version of the question: “Why would anyone buy a newspaper? Aren’t they dead?”

That question reflects conven- 
tional wisdom about the news industry and, as we all know, smart investors like to take advantage of bad conventional wisdom.

The newspaper business has changed a lot and is certainly much less profitable now than it used to be. But so what? Look around the country through ups-and-downs as technolo- 
gies and customer preferences change. Name an industry — cars, airlines, energy, retail, accounting, transportation, computers, the under- 
lying economic drivers look a lot different than they did in the 1970s and ’80s when they were “dead” businesses. People want and need the un- 
derlying products and services and the industries adapt to be- 
successful in the new world. It’s not always a pleasant or prety transition—but the ulti- 
mate winners are the compa- 
nies that focus on underlying fundamentals and what the future could be, rather than what has been.

So what are the underlying fundamentals of the news industry:

1. People want and need the product – and the market is expanding. There is more and more hard news than ever, including millennials. The idea that the only nearly young people, don’t consume news is flat out wrong and not at all supported by data. This

fact is that when I was young, the “news” was limited to what landed on the driveway in the morning and what was on the " expresses. The vast (and expanding) availability of news sources today means that con- sumption is just that much easier. And they haven’t figured out how to automate reporters yet, so there is no need to feed the news beast. Bottom line—core demand for the product is high and expanding.

2. Consolidation presents a tremendous business oppor- 
tunity: The industry is highly diffused. There are currently thousands of independent- 
y-owned newspapers across the United States and they generally don’t compete with each other. Any MBA will tell you this presents a tremendous opportunity to grow sales operations (“one call, one bill”) and rationalize corporate and back office expenses. This

is exactly what has happened in the radio business. The trick will be maintaining unique journalistic and editorial perspectives with each indi- 
vidual paper in order to keep connecting with the community. The newspaper in Waco, Texas, should probably look and feel different in Portland, Ore., even if they have the same corporate own- 
ership and sales operations. (Personally, I think that radio has gone overboard in the nationalization of pro- 
gramming, such that there are now too few radio stations that genuinely reflect the musical and news interests of their individual communities.) Consolidation also allows for greater leverage in negotiating with the major digital platforms and delivery channels.

Inevitably, whenever there is a new product or a new idea people express concerns about “reduced diversity of voices” in a culture that began in a very 1970s view of the news business. The advent of One World, One News began before the internet, and it is even less relevant now that there are so many online voices. Newspapers are neither “dead” nor “monopolist”—and they certainly can’t be both!

3. Established brands matter a LOT in news: When it comes to news, trust is every- 
thing. When a big event hap- 
pens, people immediately look for information from sources they know and trust. Estab- 
lishing that trust is hard—and growing the newsrooms and reporting culture that support it is harder still. This is one area where incumbency has huge advantages. If you could get a great brand at a price that is undervalued by conventional wisdom, why wouldn’t you do it?

4. The print parts still make money: But you should probably look and feel it.

David Chavern
Newspaper
Association Of
America

The 36-page section, which is designed to appeal to personal- 
zation, includes stories highlighting the efforts to find the images and spaces for ad- 
vancing opportunities.

“I hope what we’re doing in Wisconsin will inspire other states to do the same thing,” Johnson said.

Many members can access PDF and Q & A fea- 
tures of the special section, along with featured photos included in the tab and copyright releases, by clicking on the following link: bit.ly/ WNAFacesTab.

An example of the Pioni- 
er’s sales flyer can be found here: https://www.dropbox. 
com/s/88zaqo13ejhupj3/wis- 
sconsin%20Faces%20flyer2016.pdf?

Photos of the soldiers, which can be sorted by city or county by clicking on the "Locations" tab, can be accessed at http:// 
vwm.org/Wall-of-Faces.

And the Wall of Faces, which members represented a diverse community of media-focused professionals and is available online at www. wna.com newswire.

Questions regarding the project can be directed to WNA Member Services Director Julia Hunter at 608-283-7622 or Julia. hunter@wnanews.com.
For Sale

For Sale — Two profitable weekly newspapers in Wisconsin. Owner financing with 10 percent down! Contact james.debilzen@wnanews.com or 608-283-7623.

For Sale — Two Northwoods weeklies. Asking $175,000. County seats. Gross sales $395,000 last year. Net income $40,000 after owner’s salary. Call (715) 622-0543.

Regional Editor — The Country Today, an award-winning weekly Wisconsin rural-life newspaper, is seeking a full-time regional editor in the west-central Wisconsin area. The successful applicant will work from a home office and occasionally from the newspaper’s office in Eau Claire. Primary duties will include writing agriculture- and rural-oriented content and feature stories, taking photos, attending various statewide rural events, and assisting with some newspaper layout as needed. The qualified applicant will have a college degree in a related field with writing, reporting and newspaper layout experience. A background in agriculture/rural life is a plus, but the ability to write quality stories in AP style on deadline is required. Candidate also should be comfortable shooting photos and video and augmenting reporting through use of Facebook and other social media. Benefits available. Vehicle required for traveling with a valid driver’s license and an acceptable driving record according to Eau Claire Press Company policy. A pre-employment drug test is required. Please email a cover letter, resume and writing samples by May 6 to Editor Jim Massey at jimmassey@jmg.com. No phone calls.

Reporter — Join the six-member news staff of an award-winning weekly newspaper that is part of the APG-Wisconsin regional news and information team. We are looking for a reporter with the skills and desire to work as both a print and digital journalist. Some experience is a plus, but we will consider a recent graduate with the right talents. The job will entail work on a wide variety of stories for our weekly newspapers and daily website. Successful applicants must be familiar with the AP style guide and be conversant in social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, etc. Basic photo and video capture skills, including editing also are desired. APG-WI provides the full range of job benefits, including 401K match. Pay rate will be commensurate with experience and demonstrated skill. Send resume and brief portfolio of work to newsroom@chronotype.com or Chronotype Publishing, P.O. Box 30, Rice Lake, WI 54868; Attn: Sam Finazzo. (FN)

Advertising Sales Representative — The Tomahawk Leader, a family-owned weekly in the picturesque Northwoods of Wisconsin, is seeking a full-time advertising sales representative. Comes with an established account list with lots of room for growth. Help businesses and organizations reach and motivate customers through newspaper/print and online advertising opportunities. Work out of our Tomahawk office with some weekday travel to neighboring communities. Sales/marketing experience desired and compensated. Job is deadline driven. Must be able to multi-task multiple projects. Good math and organizational skills. We offer a base salary, plus commissions, travel expenses, bonuses/incentives ensuring hard work is rewarded. Simple IRA employer match and dental plan options available. Family atmosphere. Our work setting is relaxed yet energetic. New ideas encouraged. Send cover letter, resume and references to kathryn@tomanhawkleader.com or Tomahawk Leader, P.O. Box 345, Tomahawk, WI 54487. (0510)

REPORTER — CNI/now Newspapers, located in Wauke-scha, Wisconsin is accepting resumes and work samples for a full-time Reporting position. We plan to fill this position with an energetic journalist with solid reporting and writing skills who can produce quality copy. The ability to meet deadlines is critical. This general assignment role includes city government, school district, police and fire, human-interest features, issues and trends, and occasional project reporting with other duties as assigned. Bachelor’s degree, preferably in Journalism, newspaper experience, including college programs, preferred. Must be able to communicate and work effectively with internal and external customers, staff and supervisor. Must have demonstrated writing and reporting skills. Skills in photography, video, audio and social media (especially Twitter and Facebook) helpful. Due to the creative nature of this position, work samples are required to be considered for this role. Please include either your website where samples can be viewed or attach a document to your profile (you will be prompted to do this). Mailed submissions are not accepted and cannot be returned. Apply to: sue.sattler@img.com (0504)