

# Ryan's Rhetoric

*Once you learn to say 'hello,' it's time to say 'goodbye' apparently*



*By Ryan Spoehr, editor*

I returned to News Publishing Company last summer by taking the editor position at the Clark County Press. After a short tenure in the position, it is time to transition to a new one.

When I returned to the company last June, it was a strange time for me. I had questions about my place in the business. Without going into any details, I was unhappy with how my journalism career was going and people I know had floated the question, "Have you ever thought of public relations?"

I wasn't really sure about that route, but last spring I had given it more thought than I ever had. In the end, I wasn't too keen on the idea and wanted to stay in newspapers somehow. Then, the right opportunity came along.

I stayed in contact with Press general manager Kathy Potter after I left News Publishing Company in 2015. She was interested in bringing me back as the editor at the Press. I accepted her invitation and offer.

At times, it may have been a hard transition because I had grown used to living within 30 minutes or an hour away from family, but the last six months have been some of the most enjoyable in my career. I'm back to writing stories interesting to me again and I have enjoyed working with everyone at the Press.

I've also enjoyed being a part of the community. I will look back at covering events like Heritage Days and the Clark County Fair fondly.

After the first of the year, I will be a reporter at the Banner Journal, the News Publishing Company paper in Black River Falls. I was a reporter there immediately after college. Sometimes, my work appeared in the

Press. So, my work may still be seen in the Press from time to time.

As far as the editor position at the Press, Kathy contacted me in mid-October about me going back to the Banner. She also asked for suggestions for filling the editor position after I left the Press. I told her that if she wanted to post the opening, that would ultimately be up to her. In my mind, however, I thought there was only one person to consider.

During that phone conversation, I suggested Valorie Brecht for the editor role. She is a very talented and intelligent writer who has developed journalism skills rather quickly. Valorie is from Clark County and has spent some time now accumulating experience at the Press.

Valorie is also a very kind, caring person with a good heart. Why wouldn't I suggest her for the role? I couldn't have asked for a better co-pilot for the Press during the last six months. Actually, I've often thought she would have been a better fit than me as the editor in the past six months.

If it wasn't obvious already, Valorie has my unqualified endorsement and support to be the Press editor.

As long as I have the platform, thanks to Dee Zimmerman for the insight, support and all the stories about local history. History is one of my favorite subjects, so she certainly had me intrigued on numerous occasions. In fact, one day a couple months ago when my dad drove up from Lake Mills for lunch, Dee intrigued him with some stories about a local hang-out he frequented when he hunted in the area.

Also, a thank you is in order to Nancy Curtin for the help in finding sources for stories as I was settling in to the Neillsville area. Another fond memory for me at the Press was on my first week on the job. I was a month removed from a seizure and couldn't drive, so Nancy drove and we went out storm chasing for a story in the paper. It was an exciting first week.

In closing, I'd like to wish the best of luck to incoming reporter Kyle VonRuden. In the first week, it was nice getting to know him and working with him. It seems like he will be a good fit here at the Press.