



The Blair Press office has been closed since the passing of publisher Lee Henschel on Jan. 9. (Times photograph by Andrew Dannehy)

Death of publisher leaves Blair paper in question

*By Andrew Dannehy
Times Editor*

As of late last week, no decisions had been made on the fate of the Blair Press after the death of publisher Lee Henschel.

Henschel, 62, passed away on Jan. 9, leading to a halt in the printing of the Press, a weekly publication located on Gilbert St. in Blair. The Press has not printed editions in either of the last two weeks. As of last week,

Legion Post 186 to meet Feb. 5

Sura-Wiersgalla American Legion Post 186 will meet next Monday in Independence. The regular monthly meeting will be held Feb. 5 at the East End Bar. Lunch will be served following the business meeting.

Winners of the December Scholarship drawing were: Tina Slabk \$100, Bill Maliszewski \$90, Chuck Blaschko \$60 and Martha Halama \$30.

a family member stated they had not yet decided whether or not to close the Press.

Henschel purchased the Blair Press in June of 1998 from Jerry and Liz Hjornevik. That was the 100th year the Press was published, Henschel was the 16th publisher in the history of the publication. The Hjorneviks had owned the paper since 1972.

Originally from Princeton, Minn., Henschel came to Blair after serving as the news editor at the Redwood Gazette for eight years. In addition to serving as the publisher of the Press, Henschel was the news editor, reporter and business manager.

Trempealeau County entered the 2000s with seven newspapers, but that number would be down to two — the Times and the Tri-County News — should the Press close. The Independence News-Wave was purchased by and merged with the Whitehall Times in 2002. In 2011, the Whitehall Times, Galesville Republican and

Arcadia News-Leader were purchased by News Publishing Company, located in Black Earth, and merged into the Trempealeau County Times.

According to the 2018 Wisconsin Newspaper Association directory, the Press had a circulation of 902, while the Tri-County News is at 1,152 and the Times is 4,225.

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