



ANDREW AND LAURA JOHNSON

End Of My Journey As Owner Of This Paper

By Andrew Johnson

There is a time and season for everything. My time as your hometown newspaper owner/publisher has come to an end.

Working at this newspaper has been an amazing journey. It was not just a job, but a way of life for me and my family.

Community weekly newspapers are special. They are not just ink on paper or electronic fonts on computer or phone screens. They are the face and glue of a community.

Transferring owner-

ship of this newspaper to the Wood family this week was good for all concerned. The Woods have a proven track record of running successful community newspapers in Wisconsin for two generations. They believe in newspapers and in the communities they serve. They will bring resources, technology and economies of scale to reduce expenses to this paper that will enable it to survive and even thrive in the future.

Our families share the same personal values of the importance

of family, integrity, faith and the importance of helping those in need when possible.

For example, it was Publisher Pat Wood who headed the state-wide initiative last year with the Wisconsin Newspaper Association to help the homeless people in Wisconsin. Pat, your new publisher, will be writing a column next week about his perspective of this transfer and this newspaper.

**End Of My Journey
Continued on Page 2**



Continued From...

End Of My Journey As Owner Of This Paper

The past few months Laura and I reluctantly decided to stop the probable depletion of our retirement funds to carry our paper during these trying times.

In addition to running this paper, I have been traveling around the country fighting for community newspapers for the National Newspaper Association for the past seven years. Last year I was its president. My term as past-president will finish in September.

After working nearly 36 years, including nights and weekends almost every week, it makes sense for me to take a break. However, I will continue to volunteer to help with building the rest of the Gold Star Memorial Trail and the 9/11 Memorial in Kewaskum.

Finally, I will then have time to finish upgrading the windows, doors and workshop in my home, as well as build a swing set for my grandkids before I am too old to do it.

The Sunday before last, I was put in contact with Pat Wood. He expressed his concern for these papers and offered to run them. Laura and I transferred ownership to his family yesterday in order to give this community the best possible chance of keeping a vibrant local newspaper (in print and online).

It was a unique and special set of circumstances that made this transfer possible including the fact that both companies are family operated. Laura and I think this community is a worthwhile investment. This community is very lucky Pat accepted this transfer. It is my strongest recommendation to the members (subscribers and business advertisers) of this community to support this paper, especially right now.

Laura and I will be assisting the Wood family with the transition over the next several months and possibly partner with them in the future. We plan on remaining in the area and will continue advocating for the newspaper industry.

I want to express my deepest professional appreciation to all of our loyal friends, subscribers, advertisers, people running our local governments, and the many community organizations that continue to make this special paper (in print and online) each week. I also want to recognize the many present and past dedicated team members who worked very hard in publishing this special community newspaper. I also want to recognize my Lord who enabled me to work all these years.

It would only be fitting that I mention my family's gratitude to all of the members of this community that showed our family love and support after our son David was KIA in Afghanistan in 2012. Thank you.

I was deeply fortunate to have been the grandson and son of titans in the printing and newspaper industry. My grandpa, Edward Kerber, started and owned the largest plastic mat (used to transfer advertising images before offset printing) company, Progressive Matrix, in the U.S., located in Chicago. My dad, Ken Johnson, was instrumental in the early use and application of the rotary web offset presses (with Staley McBrayer from Houston, Texas) to print community newspapers in the U.S.

I should note that Pat Wood's father, Frank Wood, was also a titan in the newspaper industry. My grandpa told me after my dad sold his group of newspapers in 1983 that I should consider purchasing a small community newspaper in a rural town in Wisconsin. He told me to make a positive difference and enjoy living, even if I didn't make much money at the paper. Grandpa said it would be a good life and that is exactly what my wife and I did. I am forever grateful for my dad and grandpa believing in me enough to get me started with my own newspaper in Mayville in 1988.

The end of a story was marked by the symbol "-30-" in the time when newspaper stories were created with hot-type (both the Johnson and Wood families did this). It is a longstanding tradition that is still used today from time-to-time. This is the end of my journey as the publisher/owner of this paper. God bless the people of the United States, this community and this publication.

So long.

Andrew And Laura Johnson's Family Newspaper Ownership And Andrew's Career Highlights

•1977-1983 – Andrew worked for family newspapers part-time and in summers at the Free Press Newspaper Group in Carpentersville, IL.

•1988 – Purchased The Mayville News from Gehrke estate.

•1989 – Purchased the Horicon Reporter from Marolla family.

•1989 – Started the Lomira News edition.

•2004 – Purchased the Campbellsport News from Gerry and Delores Ninnemann.

•2009 – Combined The Mayville News, Horicon Reporter, and

Lomira News edition into the new Pioneer.

•2011 – Served as president of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association.

•2013 – Joined the Vietnam Veterans Faces Project as volunteer using newspapers from around the country in finding missing photos. More than 20,000 missing photos at that time; now there are less than 300 missing in the entire U.S.

•2015 – Purchased the Kewaskum Statesman from the Kuehl family.

•2018 – Testified as one of two newspaper witnesses in International Trade Commission trial on newsprint tariffs in Washington D.C. (This newspaper was one of three pieces of evidence in the trial.)

•2018 – Inducted into the Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame.

•2019 – Served as president of the National Newspaper Association.

•2020 – Andrew and Laura transferred ownership of the Pioneer, Campbellsport News and Kewaskum Statesman to the Wood family.