

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat is virtually back—in the sense that it began publishing Dec. 8 in the virtual reality of the Web. The print version of the old Globe remains dead, but the new version is attracting readers and even a few advertisers.

True to its predecessor, the web news version is heavy on crime, local news, sports and conservative punditry. Publisher of the Globe Web news site, Dan Rositano, 39, said he's encouraged by response to the web publication in its first month.

Rositano said he feels his Internet presence is strikingly different from the St. Louis Beacon, which is a news site operated by a group of former St. Louis Post-Dispatch editors and reporters.

"Our goal is to stay on top of news of interest to the St. Louis region," Rositano said. "This includes crime and sports, which the Beacon mostly ignores."

Rositano said the Globe venture has already created jobs and tapped the talent pool of local journalists. National news is also being offered with many stories from UPI. Weather reports and a printable TV guide also are offered at the site.

Online publications in San Diego and Seattle were studied as part of the planning. Advertising will help support the Globe, but other income will be sought from business and media partnerships and platforms that will allow other operations to use the Globe's ability to reach readers.

Internet subscribers can receive the publication for free. They can arrange to get the Globe's daily news reports at Globe-Democrat.com. The Globe's office is at 5125 Lemay Ferry Road, though most staffers connect to its Web headquarters from their own computers.

Some of the local writers for the new Globe include Rob Rains, Jim Rodenbush, Steve Birmingham, Alvin Reid, Dan Barger, Howard Balzer, Lynn Venhaus and more. Staffers are being paid and a network of paid contributing writers also is being formed to assist the Web product.

Dodging a bullet

The rollout of the new Globe was hardly announced when the paper faced a potential legal hurdle. Afftonative Steven DeBellis, who has been publishing a free paper for 15 years under the moniker of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, told Rositano: Not so fast.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, in business for 134 years, used to be owned by the Newhouse newspaper chain. In 1986, the Globe, a favorite of area conservatives for its editorial page, ceased publication and the rival St. Louis Post-Dispatch triumphed as the only daily in town. Newhouse then shared profits with the Post.

After the Globe folded, South County's DeBellis took



THE GLOBE LIVES AGAIN AS AN ONLINE NEWS SOURCE

By Don Corrigan

the name for his entertainment tabloid, which he has been publishing six times per year. DeBellis's version of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat is largely a recount of historical events, usually focused on a particular year. The paper has a whimsical bent and includes some local brand-name contributors such as Johnny Rabbitt, a long-time radio personality in St. Louis.

The 25,000 circulation editions published by DeBellis are free and supported by advertisers. The paper is circulated in entertainment venues such as movie theaters.

Johnny Rabbitt of St. Louis Hills, otherwise known as Ron Elz, said he hopes to continue as a columnist in the DeBellis print version of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

"My take is that Steve DeBellis has every right to that name as he has been using it for 15 years," said Elz. "I have every expectation that he will continue publishing a St. Louis-Globe-Democrat—where history repeats itself."

Elz said his own columns in the paper are period pieces covering events of big years that the paper focuses on in history, such as the year of the 1904 World's Fair. An issue with a banner headline "MOE DEAD" on the death of Moe Howard of The Three Stooges focused on the television and movie comedy team that made frequent appearances in St. Louis.

There was nothing comical about the squabble over who had the rights to the Globe name, but by the end of 2009, legal representatives for DeBellis and Rositano reached a rapprochement by which each could use the moniker and not get in each other's way.

Sports & politics

Rob Rains, a former baseball reporter for the defunct daily Globe-Democrat, said he hopes to provide the best sports writing in St. Louis as the new sports editor for the web-based St. Louis Globe-Democrat being organized by Rositano.

"The sign-ups for the e-mail updates for the new Globe have been phenomenal," said Rains. "We are now the second most active Facebook site in news in St. Louis and that happened in 24 hours. Only KSDK-TV's site is doing better."

"Politics is not my side of things, but we are already having success with that and I think that is attracting people," said Rains. "We already have signed up columnists like Patrick Buchanan, Michelle Malkin and David Limbaugh (Rush' brother) and that's not the end of who we are getting on the right side of things."

Adding more conservative pundits is in the works and media watchers theorize that Rositano hopes to capture some of the audience that was still around in the days when the print version of the Globe gave a voice to the right.

Media watchers also have some hunches as to where

continued on page 25

RADIO HISTORY

Continued from page 16

dence of a promissory note or a security agreement surrounding the deal's financing. Another raises the question of what would happen to the station if Gateway were unable to meet its payment schedule.

SJR attempted to get comments from Gateway's president, but no response was received.

Garziglia addressed the two problem areas pointed out by the petitioners. "The FCC's staff will probably request that the proposed promissory note, and any security documents for the promissory note, be filed as part of the FCC application," he said. The funding problem may not be so easy to overcome, however.

A review of Gateway's recent federal tax returns shows a heavy reliance on public support and underwriting for income—in excess of 90 percent coming from such donations. The organization's IRS Form 990 from 2007 shows revenues of \$1.5 million and an operating deficit of over \$107,000. In 2008, the revenue was comparable, but the loss had risen to over \$172,000.

But Garziglia said he was not aware of any assignment of license application being denied on the basis of a lack of a buyer's financial qualifications. "Only if a petitioner could conclusively prove that the above certification was false would there be a possibility that the FCC might deny the application. For such to occur," he said, "it would likely require that the person who signed the buyer's portion of the application, Sandra B. Brown, the president of Gateway Creative Broadcasting, to state in an affidavit or declaration under penalty of perjury that she falsely certified the financial qualifications of Gateway Creative Broadcasting, Inc. Since that is highly unlikely to occur, it is likewise equally highly unlikely that the application would be denied by the FCC based upon the buyer's lack of financial qualifications."

And if the application for ownership transfer were delayed, there's slim chance it might help consummate the sale, since it would give Gateway more time to raise money. ■

SPORTS AND MEDIA

Continued from page 17

will Wolfner, who owned the team, and her husband, St. Louisan Walter Wolfner, who ran it. Coach Frank (Pop) Ivy, Stuber and team publicist

Eddie McGuire also were there. So were several copies of the Street & Smith Football Magazine and similar publications, from which we learned about players that Stuber had not seen in person. Other clubs used equally primitive scouting tactics, and it was rather weird, but among the Big Red draft choices that year were Larry Wilson, Jackie Smith, Mike McGee and Charley Johnson, all of whom had successful NFL careers. McGee's time was shortened by injury, but he returned to his alma mater, Duke, and a lengthy tenure as athletic director.

I was fortunate—or unfortunate—enough to be part of the NFL during the first decade of the Pete Rozelle years, when the NFL became the biggest money-maker of all professional sports, thanks to the genius of Rozelle, the rise of television's technical excellence (like instant replay) and the Colts-Giants title game. When I went to work for the Cardinals, in 1961, and attended my first NFL public relations meeting, there were 15 attendees, representing 14 teams. By my last, in 1972, teams sent so many people representing marketing, halftime directors, assistants and assistants to assistants that we had to go into executive sessions of one p.r. staffer for each team to get anything accomplished.

The NFL was growing into a corporate structure of monolithic size and solidity. Individuals were being phased out in favor of committees. I found it unbearable. All the free spirits whom I had admired or learned from were gone.

Georgia Frontiere was a free spirit. Maybe her children have inherited that admirable quality. ■

AD/PR

Continued from page 21

gious views and external influences. People with liberal political and religious views and people working in larger agencies scored higher in moral development.

Some conclusions from the study:

— These public relations professionals are good ethical thinkers, showing similarity to other professionals with comparable levels of education. . . . This is good news for a profession that is often characterized as engaging in unethical practices.

— Public relations professionals see their role as connecting clients to the larger world, primarily through journalists or the news

media. To accomplish this function, they need to maintain the trust of both parties, but particularly the trust of journalists who are already skeptical of both their institutional role and their individual motives. Consequently, honesty and a lack of willingness to deceive those who receive information are critical in effective public relations practice.

— The fact that higher levels of ethical reasoning correlated with self-reported liberal bias is again consistent with other DIT studies, both empirically and philosophically. The DIT is a test of social ethics, hence the American version of political liberalism which finds a role for government intervention on various social issues such as "what is good for society," is one element of principled ethical thinking.

— These public relations professionals also scored as predicted when religion was the issue. Those who characterized themselves as more fundamentalist regardless of religious sect scored significantly lower in moral reasoning. This finding is consistent with many other DIT studies. Again, because high levels of ethical thinking demand critical analysis that allows individuals to question both rules and authority, such a finding is empirically consistent with the literature on the subject.

Some of the unethical communications practices that plague current public discourse come from the political realm rather than the public relations profession, she said. "The people in the business of political campaign tactics are not public relations practitioners. Their loyalty is not to the body politic, it is to their candidate and winning. Too many of those folks get involved in a lot of money and power and those things can be quite seductive." ■

GLOBE-DEMOCRAT

Continued from page 18

the money is coming from to support the startup—and the benefactors include the names of well-known conservatives in the media and in business.

Rositano wouldn't answer the main question. Who is putting money up for the startup and who are the Web site's backers?

"They don't want to be named," Rositano said. ■

(Some information for this story was contributed by Roy Malone.)

Don Corrigan is a professor in the School of Communications at Webster University and also edits three weekly newspapers.