

# The Kentucky Press

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Number Seven

## The Correspondents' Weekly Dozen

UNDER THE TITLE OF "THE Correspondents Weekly Dozen," Mrs. Margaret E. Allen of the Topenish (Wash.) Review and Tribune, gives twelve good suggestions for the help and guidance of correspondents in gathering and preparing copy for the typical weekly newspaper. With a few changes, to adapt the suggestions to local conditions, publishers of papers in other states may find them useful for their correspondents. The list follows:

Rule 1. Report all events of your community and don't forget farm news.

Be sure to report every wedding, birth, death, fire, accident, ball game, party, child's party, the return of an absent friend, the winning of any athletic, agricultural, literary, oratorical or any other prizes, any unusual achievement or anything at all of this nature which will be of keen interest to your readers.

Our paper cannot get too much farm news of the right kind. Report any unusually heavy yields, unusually good prices, any unusual crop condition, acreage in the various crops in your district, especially when there is anything unusual about this, any new or unusual method of seeding, cultivating, thinning, spraying, or outstanding successes of any kind. New kinds and varieties of crops, attempted or proved successful should make very good stories. Don't neglect livestock and dairy news which should be handled in much the same way as the general agriculture.

Make it a rule to try to mention as many different names of people in your community as you consistently can each week, and above all, be sure you have their names and initials correct.

Rule 2. Be sure to give important and interesting details and strive to be exact.

A. Here are some helps for getting details on particular events of importance. An attempt has been made to mention such details in order of relative importance.

1. Weddings—Full names of bride and groom, time and place of wedding, length of residence of both in community, future home, occupation of groom, previous occupation of bride, initials of parents of both bride and groom. If neither bride nor groom are well known wedding notices should be short.

2. Births—Boy or girl, parent's name

and initials, time and place of birth, weight at time of birth and baby's name, if known.

3. Deaths—Full name, length of illness, cause of death, length of residence in the community, funeral, place of burial, names of surviving relatives (immediate family only), membership in grange, church, etc. Don't make death notices too long.

4. Fire—What was burned, when, how serious, amount of damage, cause, insurance. One sentence is enough for small fires.

5. Accidents—Tell who was hurt and how badly, how much other damage was done, how accident happened. If accident was very serious try to get stories from both sides of how it happened and report these without comment. Never express your own opinion as to who was to blame.

6. Ball Games—Teams, who won, score, time and place of game. This is enough except for important games.

7. Elections—Get results. If it is necessary, phone them. Don't say, "An election was held."

8. Farm News—Be exact and definite whenever possible. Tell exact number of bushels per acre (better than "very large yield"), the exact number and breed of cows a dairyman bought, and the exact price per ton. If necessary be indefinite, but don't guess.

B. Don't write trifle or unimportant details or news stories. If a man makes a business trip to Yakima three or four times a week, or a daughter spends nearly every week-end at home, this is not news worth reporting in the paper.

C. Never fail to give all details necessary to a complete understanding of the story. Many an interesting item has to be left out because it doesn't "make sense." Look your items over to be sure they give the necessary who, what, when, where, why, how—sometimes all of these.

D. Make exactness one of your first aims. Don't say "one day last week"—give exact day. Don't say "a large number" of friends attended a party—say "fifty," etc.

E. It should not be necessary to caution correspondents not to give their own names and those of their families too prominent a place in their notes.

Rule 3—Always be absolutely accurate.

1. Be as accurate as it is humanly

possible for you to be. Get your information from those most directly concerned whenever it is at all possible, especially if news is important.

2. Be sure that all names are spelled correctly and that initials are absolutely correct. This is very important.

3. Check up on all rumors or news not definitely proved to you, however, reasonable or authentic they may seem. The best news stories sometimes sound like the most groundless rumors until traced down and proven true.

4. Although this paper wants exact details as advised in Rule 2, don't give these unless you are sure of them. It is better to be indefinite than to guess.

Rule 4. Be sure your correspondence reaches us on time.

2. If you correspond for the Review your items must be in this office by Wednesday morning to assure publication.

2. If you correspond for the Tribune your items must be in this office by Monday morning to assure publication.

3. If your letter is late it may be reduced by half or left out entirely.

Rule 5. Make every effort to leave your own opinions out of the news. This is one of the first principles of good news writing and unfortunately one of the most often ignored.

1. Don't let your items take sides on any questions. Tell the facts and let the reader judge for himself. This is much the more forceful way in any case.

2. Tell the facts and let the reader decide for himself whether a party is "delightful," an accident "terrible," a death "sad" or whether some boy deserved "great credit" for winning a prize at the fair.

An illustration—The item "The community was shocked by the sad death of Mrs. Mary Jones," would be much better told this way: "Mrs. Mary Jones a widow and mother of six small children, passed away early Monday morning..." The fact that everybody in your community knows Mrs. Jones is a widow and mother of six small children makes no difference. People like to read the facts in the paper they already know.

Another illustration—It is better to say "Tom Jones, a ten-year-old Apple Corner boy, won first prize at the state fair on a dozen ears of corn from (Please Turn to Page Three)

## The Kentucky Press

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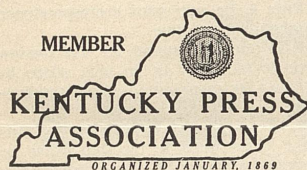
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### NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING BEST

The Merchants' bureau of a Washington town recently conducted a survey to find out just what caused people to buy things, and, incidentally, what kind of advertising paid the best dividends. Local newspaper advertising won again. The results of the survey follow:

1. Local newspapers, 30.
2. Attractiveness of window displays, 26.
3. Friends' opinions as to where to purchase, 16.
4. Circular letters and catalogues from mail order houses, 5 each.
5. Handbills, 4.
6. Billboards, 3.

—Washington Newspaper.

The merchants of Auburn, N. Y., recently made an extensive survey by asking their readers "What type of advertising attracts you most?" and the result should not hurt the cause of newspaper advertising.

Out of the 221 replies received the vote was as follows:

- Newspaper advertising, 173.  
Window displays, 86.  
Friends' opinions, 46.  
Circular letters, 10.  
Mail order catalogues, 8.  
Hand bills, 4.

Highway bills, 3.  
Radio, 2.  
—New England Newspaper Bulletin.

It is only a small thing, but L. R. Brodrick of the Advocate-Democrat, Maryville, Kan., thinks his paper has started something by omitting the period after all "banks" and one-line headings. Of course, periods are never used after the heavier lines in a heading, and there would seem to be little reason for using them after the supplementary lines, yet the custom of doing so is quite general; and it is also the general custom to place a period after the single-line heading of an editorial. The editor of the Advocate-Democrat says he is not gunning for the infinitesimal, but he can see no sense in wasting time and ink on a useless practice.

The North Hollywood (Calif.) Press encourages home talent and obtains some good local features by offering small prizes for news and other stories limited to 200 words and describing unique, unusual or humorous events or objects around the town. The Press has also been creating reader interest with a series of travel stories by its city editor, Clarke Irvine, who recently returned from a jaunt of 33,000 miles among the islands of the South seas, the mainland of Australia and adjacent archipelagos. Stories of especial interest pertain to the Great Barrier reef of Australia.

The Daily Freeman-Journal, Webster City, Iowa, believing that the use of black headlines and body type is a survival from World war days that will soon be supplanted by lighter effects, proposes to be in the van of change. Recently the publication accomplished an entirely new dress within 24 hours, coming out not only with new body type, but with banner, ribbon lines, headlines and many of the advertisements in the lighter garb. It was quite a radical change to be accomplished in such a short time, and we believe with the editors that, when such a departure is in contemplation, it had better be done all at once; it attracts general attention and the discussion it engenders advertises the publication.

So very much has been said about the weather, that one is forced to the conclusion that it must be a subject of general interest. Most newspapers print the forecasts, but the Lake Mahopac (N. Y.) Weekly has hit upon the unique idea of also reviewing the weather for the week. It carries a regular department giving the temperature readings, the clouds, rain and sunshine and the hours at which changes occurred of each day of the week ending with publication date.

### CLIO HARPER SAYS:

It's a wise reporter that knows his own story.

Print all the news that's fit to print—and then some.

When you're chasing a scoop the libel law is the limit.

Publish every rumor you hear, then go jump in the lake.

There are more good stories in the wastebasket than on the front page.

A good editor is one who knows what to leave out.

Many a good editorial reputation has been ruined making after-dinner speeches.

Never print anything you have to apologize for.

To mis-spell one's name should be a capital offense.

Even a poor newspaper makes good wrapping for onion sets.

Be sure you're right then you'll not be sorry.

Remember even the office towel is having a hard time of it.

Never refer to your competitor in complimentary terms—he wouldn't understand.

(Continued from Page One)

the first crop he ever raised..." than "Tom Jones certainly did something to be proud of when he won a prize on his corn at the state fair."

3. Opinions are not altogether barred. If you feel that your story will be improved by it, quote the opinion of some one else whose ideas on the subject will have weight. A quotation may be made either directly or indirectly.

As an illustration—Suppose that Howard Brown is the leading farmer in your community. Now let us report the story of Tom Jones in this way: "A most unusual achievement," declared Howard Brown, when he learned that ten-year-old Tom Jones had won a premium at the state fair on a dozen ears of corn from the first crop he ever raised." Be careful that all quotations—especially direct quotations—are exact. A good illustration of the indirect quotation is: "A. H. Johnson, deputy coroner, said he believes the death was unquestionably a result of suicide." How much better than this

A. Always use first name or initials  
(Please Turn to Page Three)

(Continued From Second Page)

is—and incidentally safer—than to say, "He committed suicide."

4. It is sometimes permissible to use the word "reported" or the expression "said to be" when the writer wishes to express an opinion without quoting anyone particularly. This should not be done too often.

5. In reporting athletic contests and social events it is sometimes permissible to use adjectives that may reflect the opinions of the writer.

6. Never use first or second person pronouns in your items, as "I," "we," "you," "us," "our," etc.

7. Never try to be humorous in your correspondence. Always remember that many of your readers have no sense of humor and few laugh at the same things you do. Do not attempt to give advice through the paper.

Rule 6. Write your news when it is news.

1. Unless it is very important, news is out of date if it is over a week old. Something which happened a long time ago, but has just been found out—as a secret marriage—is an exception to this rule.

2. Two suggestions may help you to keep your correspondence news.

(a) Anticipate happenings whenever possible. Tell as many things as you can that are going to happen instead of waiting until they are in the past.

(b) Emphasize the latest development in your stories, tell them first. If a friend was badly hurt in an accident just after you sent in your last week's letter, and later his injuries proved not so serious as at first supposed, begin your item by telling this last fact, then tell when the accident victim was hurt and all about it.

3. Use past or future tense depending upon when the item will appear in the paper, not when you write it. If you are writing of a meeting which is to be held on Thursday and the paper will come out on Friday, remember to say "was held" although it is still an event of the future so far as you are concerned.

Rule 7. Prepare your copy carefully.

1. Write on one side of the paper and your name on the first paper or page and number the pages.

3. Use the paper we send you or paper the same size.

4. Leave margins on all sides of the paper and plenty of room between items—both for ease in reading and corrections. If typewritten, double space.

5. Use a soft pencil and write as plainly as possible always. Print unusual names.

Rule 8. Certain styles of expression are preferable to others.

1. The proper use of names, initials, and titles sometimes proves difficult.

with every name that appears in your items, the first time it appears in each item. Never say "Grandma" Davis or "Preacher" Brown. But use the initials or first name. It is not necessary to repeat the first name or initials the second time in the same item.

B. Men's names and titles—when a man's name appears alone for the first time in an item it should always be written with the first name or initials, but without the title "Mr." If the name is repeated in the same item the title "Mr.," is used without the first name.

As an illustration: "Mr. and Mrs. Tom Jones, Rev. Ralph Brown and Arthur Smith made the trip to Seattle by car together Monday. Mr. and Mrs. Jones will visit relatives at Tacoma for a week, while Reverend Brown is attending a series of evangelical meetings in Seattle. Mr. Smith is returning to his home in Everett, after a visit with relatives in this community."

2. Married women's names and titles—A married woman's name is always accompanied by the title "Mrs." The first time a married woman's name appears in an item her husband's first name or initials are used, (if she is a widow she probably will use her own first name). If the name appears a second time the title is used with the last name.

3. Speak of a girl as "Miss" if she is old enough to be honored as "Miss," use her first name without the title the first time the name appears in an item and the second time use the title with the last name only. This last is a good rule when speaking of girls of high school age (between fourteen and eighteen). If girls are younger than twelve or fourteen no title should be used. Both first and last names appear the first time in an item and after that the first name may be used alone.

C. Say "Mr. and Mrs. John Brown," not "John Brown and wife" and say "Rev. and Mrs. James White," not "Reverend James and Mrs. White."

D. In giving a list of names of people, the preferable order is, (1) married couples; (2) unmarried women; (3) married women (when names are mentioned without their husbands); (4) men.

E. Use the best expressions you can for all your news items and avoid awkward expressions.

1. Never say "took in," but "attended" a show, party or game.

2. Never say "took dinner with," but "were dinner guests of."

3. Say "open" or "begin," not "take up" a meeting.

4. Avoid the word "last," it makes your items sound old when they should be as new as possible. If your correspondence is published on Friday and you speak of "last Tuesday" in one, this should refer not to the Tuesday

of the same week, but to the Tuesday of the week previous.

5. Avoid such awkward expressions as "It being his birthday."

Rule 9. Follow the rules of good English.

1. Use the best English, grammar, spelling, sentence construction, capitalization, punctuation, you can. A dictionary is helpful but we will not object to the lack of one if you will do your best at all times. You are held responsible for the spelling of the names of the people living in your own community. The only way to find out how a man's name is spelled is to ask him.

Rule 10. Study published items.

Study your correspondence after it is published for corrections and improvements. This will be a big help to you and the paper. Study the work of other correspondents to see how you can improve your own.

Rule 11. Certain subjects are barred.

1. Never take a partisan stand in politics, or participate in any way in a community dispute in church, civic, school or Sunday school affairs through the paper.

2. Never report any lottery or raffle in your items as it is against the law to send such printed matter through the mails. Be very careful to observe this rule as forgetfulness might bring serious trouble to the paper.

3. Do not send in stories about hunting, fishing or trapping on the reservation as the Indian service lands. Probably most of these stories can be centered around such events as picnics, camping or outing parties.

4. It should not be necessary to remind correspondents never to try to "get even" with anybody through the paper, either by publishing an item or leaving it out, or in any other way. Even a hint of this sort of thing cannot be tolerated.

Rule 12. Always use your very best common sense.

1. The use of good common sense is so important that it supersedes all other rules.

2. Whenever possible tell the good news and emphasize the happy side of life.

3. Don't forget Toppenish. Try to emphasize in your correspondence, visits in Toppenish, attendance at Toppenish parties, games, shows and shopping events in Toppenish.

4. Don't report items in detail that take place outside of your community, unless they are very closely connected with the life of your community and of keen interest to your readers.

5. If something important happens after you have sent your correspondence in, phone this office at our expense.

6. Read your correspondence over before you send it in. This will avoid many embarrassing and troublesome mistakes.

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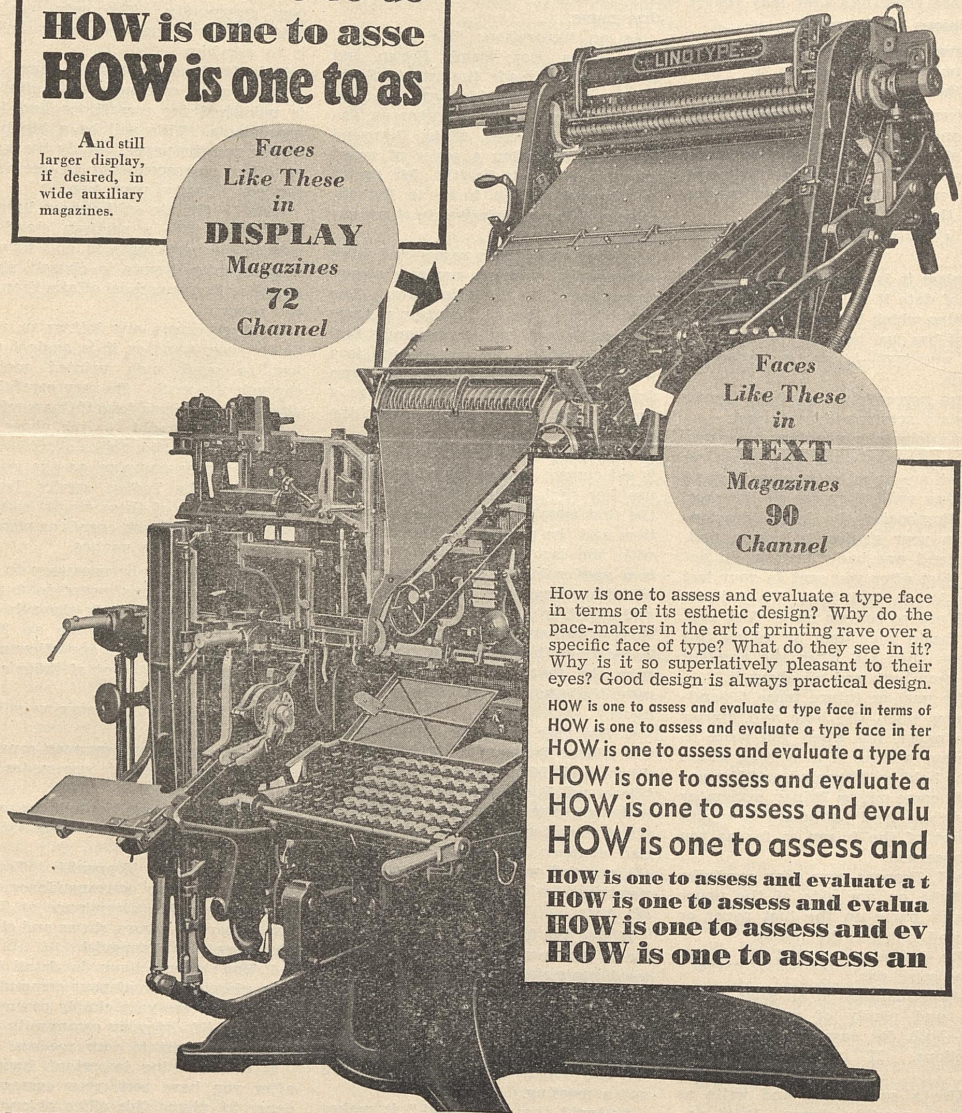
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How is one to assess and evaluate a type face in terms of its esthetic design? Why do the pace-makers in the art of printing rave over a specific face of type? What do they see in it? Why is it so superlatively pleasant to their eyes? Good design is always practical design.

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