

New owners of Bergen papers make changes

Continues from Page 3

advertising, and instant access will make Bergen Newspaper Group a model of success.”

The team has brought the papers into the electronic age, going from paste-up to pagination in a matter of weeks. They have gone full-color with higher quality reproduction, offering expanded opportunities for local organizations to supply photos of their activities and members.

Additions & alliances

Improvements include: expanded local sports coverage, new puzzles, and new features such as Mayor's Corner, a forum for local mayors to voice their opinions and keep their constituents abreast of events that have an impact on their communities. The papers now have Business Spotlight, a human interest feature that profiles local businesses and describes the paths taken by local entrepreneurs.

Another addition is an alliance with the website PolitickerNJ.com. “Many of New Jersey's most important legislators come from Bergen. The 2010 race for county executive is one of the most important in the state, and local issues like the future of the Meadowlands and the Passaic Valley Sewerage Authority have a statewide audience,” said Christopher Barnes, president of Observer Media Group, parent company of PolitickerNJ.

Since January, fashion highlights from StyleCaster have been in every weekly issue of the papers. Launched last June, StyleCaster is a premiere platform for consumer engagement in the women's lifestyle space. It had more than 1.2 MM unique visitors in January.

The papers boast expanded food coverage. In addition to providing featured recipes from local restaurants, food news from Behind the Burner is being served up, including expert content about food, wine, mixology and nutrition. This includes videos, articles and blogs at behindtheburner.com.

“The new BergenNews.com will be a great extension of our newspapers. Readers who sign up and choose a username may comment on any BergenNews.com content, post their own photos, video, writings etc. Readers will be able to rate all content. Highly-rated content will be featured on the front pages of our sites,” said CTO Christopher Mattioli.

Video features of local events and places will also be a big part of the new BergenNews.com. Advertisers can have professional quality video commercials linked to their own websites.

Additionally, the Bergen Newspaper Group has added the *Edgewater Residential* to its cadre of papers. A monthly, it will soon become a weekly with expanded coverage into other towns.

Looking back at a journalistic rebirth

By Jerome Aumente

When Rutgers' journalism curriculum entered a precarious fight for its survival in the 1970s, Livingston College played in keeping journalism alive at the university. This story will be one focus of a special “legacy” program sponsored by Livingston alumni on Wednesday, April 21, 7-9 p.m., at the school's Student Center, room 201, in Piscataway.

Key players will gather to remember the past. But the program will also examine future challenges as print and broadcast news media redefine themselves in light of the new media and Internet revolution.

Alumni, faculty, students, editors, publishers and journalists are welcome to join the discussion that Marty Siederer, the Livingston alumni president, and I will moderate. The School of Communication and Information Alumni Association and Livingston Dean Lea Stewart are co-sponsors.

NJPA's role

New Jersey Press Association (NJPA) played a critical role in lobbying successfully for the “re-creation” of a journalism department after the School of Journalism, one of the nation's oldest, was deactivated at Rutgers College and replaced by a Department of Human Communication in the early 1970s. A ground swell of concern from publishers and editors resulted in the university's provost authorizing me to reconstitute the journalism department on the New Brunswick campus.

In 1978, the Rutgers Board of Governors and the state Department of Higher Education approved creating a new Department of Journalism and Urban Communications at Livingston at a time when the individual colleges such as Livingston, Rutgers, Cook and Douglass controlled their own free-standing curricula.

A year later the university's governing board and the higher education department also approved creating the Journalism Resources Institute (JRI), which I founded and directed. Over 14,000 journalists participated in programs during my tenure, and again, NJPA support from its publishers, editors and reporters was crucially important.

SCILS born

When the New Brunswick campus was consolidated into arts and sciences and professional studies faculties in the early 1980s, journalism at Livingston went campus-wide. The directors of the library sciences and communication programs and I were asked to design a new entity to bring our related disciplines under one tent. The School of Communication, Information and Library Studies (SCILS) was born with the Journalism Department and JRI able to preserve their identity and join the new school as full partners.

SCILS was a pioneer — one of the first in America to bring together journalism,

communication and library studies as sub-disciplines with their own identities but able to interact in the new world of communication and information that was changing rapidly. Together, we formed a critical mass strong enough to survive the storms of budget crises, and enjoyed superior facilities, shared computer and audiovisual resources, and vastly expanded interdisciplinary opportunities for both students and faculty.

Journalism today is alive and well at the School of Communication and Information (SC&I), the new name for SCILS, with a solid department of Journalism and Media Studies, a long track record of service to the profession through the JRI, and a new dean, Jorge Schement, who is committed to a vibrant journalism program at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

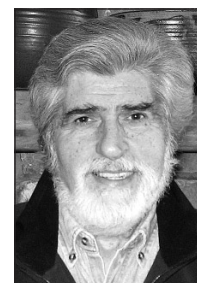
The Livingston legacy program on April 21 will include among its panelists, Dean Schement; Roger Cohen, emeritus professor in journalism and former acting dean of SCILS; John O'Brien, executive director of NJPA; John Pavlik, chair of the journalism department at SC&I and director of JRI; four of my former students, two of whom also taught at Livingston — Barry Orton, professor of telecommunications at University of Wisconsin-Madison and Jay Miller, professor and chair, Communication Studies and Theater, Ursinus College — and Robert W. Snyder, associate professor and director of journalism and media studies, Rutgers-Newark, and Jim Simon, professor of journalism at Fairfield University.

Why Livingston?

The legacy series can point to many programs that Livingston College influenced and that are campus-wide at Rutgers University today such as journalism; computer sciences; urban planning, policy and community development; comparative languages and literature, anthropology etc. They all had their roots in the exciting but controversial incubator that Livingston was, as the newest college on the New Brunswick-Piscataway campus, opened in 1969.

Livingston's founding dean, Ernest Lynton, and his successors nurtured an experimental, “let's try it” atmosphere. Livingston faculty later dispersed among the larger, consolidated campus faculty in the 1980s, bringing with them their own special brand of commitment to students as individuals, engaging them in a humane, proactive, interactive learning environment they developed at Livingston College.

In my case, I joined the university faculty in 1969 after 10 years in journalism and



Aumente

a recent Nieman Fellowship to Harvard. Having first accepted an offer to teach at Rutgers College, I instead decided to join the Livingston faculty at the urging of Dean Lynton, who could be a compelling advocate for his dream of new approaches to university curriculum and learning.

The core courses in reporting, editing and multimedia documentation formed a natural platform upon which we built the revived Department of Journalism when the opportunity arose. Richard Hixson, a respected senior journalism professor, switched from Rutgers College to Livingston because, he said, that was where journalism now thrived. Other faculty including Roger Cohen, David Sachsman and Thomas Hartmann brought additional strengths, and a strong adjunct faculty of journalism professionals gave us added lift. The code name for it all might as well have been “Lazarus” because journalism was back from the dead.

In my book, *From Ink on Paper to the Internet: Past Challenges and Future Transformations for New Jersey's Newspapers*, is a chapter tracing the origins of journalism at Rutgers University. It all began with a few courses organized by NJPA and by 1926 it evolved into the School of Journalism at Rutgers College. Yes, the school was deactivated in the 1970s but the embers were kept glowing long enough for journalism to be rekindled on the Livingston campus, and then introduced back into the entire New Brunswick — Piscataway campus through SC&I by the early 1980s.

Jerome Aumente is Distinguished Professor Emeritus and Special Counselor to the Dean, School of Communication and Information (SC&I) at Rutgers University. He can be reached by e-mail: aumente@rutgers.edu or telephone: 540-635-6395.

NYT signs deal for hyperlocal content

Another big news publisher is beefing up its hyperlocal content offerings. The New York Times Co. announced in March that it has signed a deal with Fwix, which aggregates hyperlocal content.

The deal gives NYTCO's various newspaper properties access to Fwix's technology, which aggregates hyperlocal content online by combing blogs and other publications for relevant stories and posts (with light human editing to ensure relevance). Fwix drives traffic to the source sites and also has an ad revenue-sharing agreement.

Fwix is currently aggregating and distributing local news content in 175 markets in the U.S. and Canada.

Fwix is just one of several services dedicated to helping newspaper Web sites and other online publishers aggregate and distribute hyperlocal news content.