

# Ownership Changes at your Local Newspaper

## *Michael Stumpf takes over 100% ownership of local Newspapers*

By Debra Fisher

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As of October 1, 2021 Michael Stumpf, has taken over sole proprietorship of the local newspapers serving a large region that spans from Eau Claire, Wisconsin to Rochester, Minnesota. The mastheads include: The Courier-Wedge, The Buffalo County News, The Tri-County Area Times, The Wabasha County Herald, The Plainview News and The St. Charles Press/Lewiston Journal. The Star Shopper and The Tri-County Advertiser round out the conglomerate of affiliate publications.

The Stumpf family has been in the Newspaper business since 1969, when patriarch Gary purchased the Wabasha County Herald. Gary Stumpf with the partnership of his sons Mike and Dan, continued to buy up local papers and at one time owned 15 unique publications. Always looking to achieve a better product, consolidation and rebranding

of local newspapers has helped to provide a stable local news source throughout the region.

What does the sale mean to our readers and advertising customers you ask? Stumpf said, "We plan to continue the same way we have for decades. Our number one priority is to our readers and advertisers. Our strength lies in the fact that we are a locally owned company. By leveraging our resources on both sides of the river we are able to quickly make good decisions and offer our customers great service. Our roster of editors share stories from all over our region as well as photographs. We continue to add weekly columns to add more variety and with our stable and growing list of subscribers and through our shoppers, we are able to offer advertisers a lot of opportunity to reach a large area."

"The local newspaper is important to our economy", said Mike. "I want to ensure that this conglomerate of print (and

digital) publications remain a vital and viable business in this area. I want to continue to support local businesses, give back to our community and show our appreciation for our faithful readers and business advertisers for supporting us through these recent tough times".

Time is something that the new proprietor has put into this career. Mike started in the business at a young age, starting with sweeping floors, running press, and advertising sales to now owning the business. The newspaper business is a life-long pursuit for Stumpf. "Owning a newspaper, being involved in this as a career, it's a part of you," said Stumpf.

It's not just about newspapers. We offer a wide variety of print services from posters, newsletters, envelopes and flyers to raffle tickets and lamination. The commercial print shop, like the newspapers themselves continue to evolve and offer more services. Much

of the commercial printing is now based in digital technology.

Will the paper ever move fully to a digital platform and stop publishing a weekly hard copy? For the foreseeable future, the short answer is 'no'. "We do offer a digital platform for our subscriber," said Stumpf. "It is a great way to get the news a full day prior to print. Our newspapers are full of the news of our local communities, that is why we are the best source of news in our area.

"It's always great to have input from our customer base. Our subscribers and advertisers are the people who continue to support these newspapers. As a business owner, I am always interested in what you have to say."

For all your news, printing and advertising needs, call one of our local offices. Remember, "Building your business is our business."