

Mulvaney retires; new editor named

By **NICOLE VIK**
Staff Writer

After 22 years with the Monroe County Herald, this week will be Pat Mulvaney's final week as editor of the Herald as he plans to begin his transition into retirement.

Mulvaney started with Monroe County Publishers in 1999 as a reporter covering every beat there was from local human-interest stories to local government. At that time the publishing group produced two local papers, the Sparta Herald and the Monroe County Democrat.

In 2005, Mulvaney took over as the editor of the Sparta Herald. During that time, he was also the assistant general manager and vice president of the Monroe County Publishers Board of Directors.

When the papers were acquired by Evans Print and Media Group in 2015, the two papers were consolidated into one, the Herald, and owner Greg Evans named Mulvaney editor. The coverage expanded from Sparta to all of Monroe County.

Mulvaney plans to continue contributing to the paper on occasion, but he intends to spend the majority of his time doing the things he hadn't had time to do before retirement, such as home improvements, traveling and more.

Taking over for Mulvaney will be Wisconsin Rapids-native Kariann Farrey, who has been in the newspaper business for the past 20 years in various positions.

Farrey started in the business pasting up pages at her hometown

Pat says goodbye,
Kariann says hello
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Mulvaney



Farrey

newspaper.

Through the years she designed newspaper advertisements and designed pages on the computer.

Wanting a change of scenery, Farrey took a job at the Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter as a second-shift supervisor for the creative department designing ads. She eventually transitioned into the newsroom working as a copy editor.

Farrey then moved to Rapid City, South Dakota, where she worked for Lee Enterprises covering music at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally for three years.

She then worked on the copy desk at the La Crosse Tribune. Most recently she worked as a freelance copy editor for a newspaper in Buffalo, Wyoming.

Having lived in the La Crosse area since 2005, Farrey is looking forward to getting to know the Monroe County area, attending local events and meeting new people.

It's been a great run

After the better part of a quarter century with the Sparta newspaper – in all its iterations – it appears I'm headed for the pasture. My final day as editor of the Herald will be this Wednesday, but don't be surprised to see my byline on a less-regular basis.

It's difficult to sum up my career here in a single column, so I'll keep it brief. Over the years I've written thousands of stories and attended several million meetings. That comment about the meetings may be hyperbole but when you're doing time in captivity, the minutes turn into hours.

I've met some great people in my time with the newspaper and covered every beat -- schools, courts, county and city government.

But perhaps the most interesting part of my job has been telling the stories of local residents. I hope I've done justice to those whose stories I've recounted.

There are the downsides to this job -- long hours, late nights, early mornings and of course, the errors. Unlike most workplaces, the



From the Editor's Desk

Pat Mulvaney

mistakes, factual and grammatical, that find their way into this paper are there for all to see into posterity. In fact, I may have left one or two in here for those who enjoy looking for them.

I pass the reins to a very competent successor, Kariann Farrey, whose strength is in copy editing, so the frequency of those grammatical faux pas should wane.

A newspaper is the heart of a community, and this area is

fortunate to have one. While other community newspapers are falling by the wayside at an alarming rate, the *Monroe County Herald* is holding its own. I applaud Publisher Greg Evans for his commitment and success in keeping this newspaper alive and growing in an era where newsprint is struggling. I wish him and his son, Kyle, the best of luck.

I said I would keep this brief, so in closing, I just want to say thank you to the newspaper's staff, past and present. It's been a joy working with you and I'll be seeing you around – only not too early.

Adjusting my lens

As a newspaper professional, I spent decades poring over the fine details of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The hard-and-fast rules brought me satisfaction and comfort – a little something I had control over in a world that isn't so cut and dried.

It's black and white work – the rules all spelled out in various dictionaries and style books. Solving microscopic problems made me feel like I was part of a worthy movement to make a teeny right in a microcosm of wrong. My telephoto lens, if you will.

But now it's time to let go of

(some) dangling participles, split infinitives and eliminating the Oxford comma.

Now it's time to snap on my wide-angle lens for a panoramic view.

Though I've worked in the newspaper business for more than 20 years, being THE editor is a new role for me.

As an editor in chief, I'm charged with focusing on so much more:

Who is the best source for



My Little Red Pen

Kariann Farrey

knowledge on a particular local issue?

Which are the most important governmental meetings to attend while also

balancing who is available to cover it with a small staff?

Who do I call at the city or county level to get the information I need? (Give me all your business cards.)

How do I navigate sticky political issues and still remain neutral? (Rest assured, I will be neutral.)

Where is the Monroe County Justice Center? (OK, just kidding. Nancy, my phone's disembodied GPS voice, has that covered.)

What are the best places to eat lunch in whichever community I'm reporting from? (Recommendations surely welcome.)

How can the paper begin to mend the love lost between Tomah and Sparta? (C'mon folks, can that ever be let go?)

These are the things I need to weigh to provide the community with the best comprehensive coverage.

Being the new kid on the block can be an intimidating prospect for anyone. I have some gigantic shoes to fill with the retirement of your stalwart editor, Pat Mulvaney.

Pat has been a part of your

community for more than two decades. His in-depth knowledge of the issues and the relationships he has built will take me time to build on my own. I'm grateful he has given me a good head start before he departs.

I have my work cut out for me, honestly. And here is where I make my plea to you, dear reader:

Tell me what you want to see in your newspaper. Pepper me with story ideas that are important to you. Let me know what is or isn't working.

My fresh start is a new chapter for you, too; I've been entrusted to a newspaper that belongs to you.

I want your paper to tell your stories – your blessings, your trials; your wins and your defeats; what you're proud of and what you hold dear.

In the internet age, our view of the world is splashed all over cyberspace. With a twice-weekly paper, we have the opportunity to zero in on our human connections to one another, which is the balm that binds us together.

Drop me a line at editor@monroecountyherald.com and give me your thoughts on how we can serve you better.

I'd be happy to talk with you as well. Please give me a ring at (608) 269-3186 or stop in to introduce yourself.

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Gregory M. Evans, Publisher
Kariann M. Farrey, Editor



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