

New owners at Colfax

No 40 hour week in publishing weekly newspaper

By Sam Dale
COLFAX — "Being editor and publisher of a weekly newspaper, you don't have to put in 40 hours a week, you have the privilege of putting in 60 or more," says Chuck Hagen, new owner of the Colfax Messenger.

For Hagen and his wife, Lorraine, that privilege will soon settle into a routine. Last week the couple bought the Colfax Messenger from former editor and publisher Lyle Christianson.

The exchange happened only five months after the Hagens had decided to quit the newspaper business, presumably for a more relaxed lifestyle.

In July, Hagen took a job with a commercial printing company in the Twin Cities after selling the merged Cornell Courier and Cadott Sentinel.

"We had the idea to get out of the newspaper business," he explained, "but it didn't work out like I thought it would, so I decided to get back into something I knew."

Started in 1966
The couple first entered the weekly newspaper field in 1966 when they bought the Cornell publication. They added the Cadott newspaper in 1971, merging the two. During that time, they converted the papers from letterpress

printing to offset, a modern system employing extensive use of photography in printing.

Hagen said they have no immediate plans to convert the Messenger to offset printing. "We're going to leave it alone if it's feasible."

They have hired Christianson as shop foreman to handle most of the printing processes.

Hagen, who before buying the Chippewa County publications worked in the production of two other newspapers including the Eau Claire Leader-Telegram, hopes to be the "backbone" of a community weekly.

Christianson had published the Colfax Messenger since 1968. He cited long hours and inability to hire employees qualified to operate letterpress machinery as reasons for selling it.

Meeting to discuss flood control in city

Flood control in Eau Claire will be the topic of an informational meeting at 9 a.m. Jan. 14 at First Congregational Church.

Dr. Kenneth Foote of a citizens' advisory committee on flood control will conduct the meeting. The public is invited.

The Eau Claire League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women are sponsors.

across; we aren't afraid to get out and talk to people."

Local paper
The Hagens hope to include more local feature stories in the paper and to dig deeper into local news and sports events.

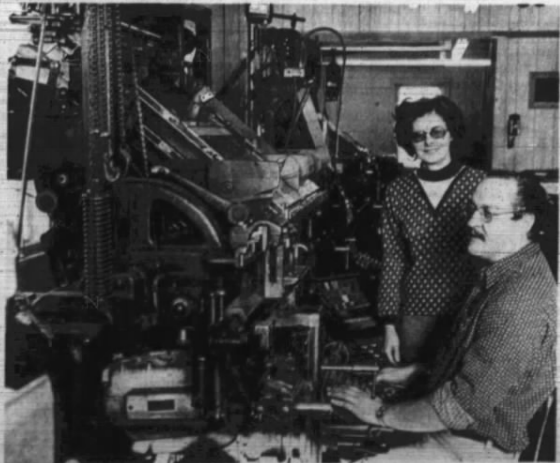
While some journalists question the value of the so-called "gossip columns," which feature such items as "The Robert Joneses of Wheeler visited and ate supper at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Smith here Sunday," Hagen said they will stay.

He believes the columns to be the "backbone" of a community weekly.

Christianson had published the Colfax Messenger since 1968. He cited long hours and inability to hire employees qualified to operate letterpress machinery as reasons for selling it.

He said his decision to sell "was a tough one, but you can't burn the candle at both ends."

Christianson worked in the production department of the Chippewa Herald-Telegram with Hagen before deciding to buy the Colfax paper.



BUY NEWSPAPER — Chuck and Lorraine Hagen are new owners of the Colfax Messenger in Colfax. The couple bought the small weekly newspaper from former editor and publisher Lyle Christianson, who has been hired as shop foreman for the Hagens. (Staff Photo)

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