

World and Nation

Raleigh Times' closing reflects trend

By WAGNER DOTTO
Staff Writer

The Raleigh Times, an afternoon newspaper owned by the company that publishes the News and Observer, ceased publication Thursday after 110 years of circulation, confirming a nationwide trend of decline in the number of afternoon newspapers.

The Times was losing readers; its circulation had dropped from 35,000 in 1984 to 21,000 last October.

Between 1960 and February 1989, 318 afternoon newspapers closed, merged or transformed into morning newspapers, according to Editor & Publisher, a journalism trade magazine. The average in this period showed that one afternoon newspaper ceased publication every month.

Afternoon newspapers, also called p.m. or evening newspapers, are of particular concern because they comprise the majority of titles published in the country. Today there are 1,141 afternoon newspapers, representing about 70 percent of all American daily newspapers. In spite of being the majority, they are responsible for only 35 percent of the total circulation. There are only 529 morning newspapers in the United States.

"Today we have cable TV, commu-

nity newspapers, newsletters, many more magazines," said Philip Meyer, a UNC journalism professor and former research director at Knight-Ridder, the second largest newspaper chain in the country, which publishes the Charlotte Observer, the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Miami Herald, among others. "The market is more competitive."

Meyer said the majority of American big cities tend to have just one newspaper, one reason for the afternoon newspaper's death. Because the afternoon newspapers are in general weaker and No. 2 in their markets, they are more susceptible to being closed, Meyer explained.

Two other factors also have contributed to this decline, Meyer said. First, traffic in the cities has jammed central areas, creating problems for delivery service.

Second, the American work force has changed to become more dedicated to another sector of the economy. Newspaper readership today is in fact more associated with breakfast, different from the habits in the 1940s and 1950s when newspapers were read in the afternoon.

The Nov. 2 closing of the Los Angeles Herald Examiner is the most recent example of this trend. The Herald

Examiner, founded by William Randolph Hearst in 1903, had the largest circulation in the country in the 1960s, about 700,000 copies a day. Long-lasting problems with unions and the switch in the audience preference for morning newspapers made the Herald Examiner's circulation steadily decrease.

The newspaper was strategically transformed into a morning newspaper in 1982. Its management team improved the newsroom staff and stabilized the circulation, but the team succeeded neither in reducing the newspaper's \$18 million annual losses nor in beating the Los Angeles Times, the top-selling newspaper in that market. With the demise of the Herald Examiner, Los Angeles, the second largest city in the country, now has only one newspaper.

Another example is the Knickerbocker News, which closed in April 1988. The Knick, as the newspaper was known, was the second most important in Albany, New York's capital, and had been published for 145 years. The Capital News, owner of the title, tired of seeing readers and advertisers diminishing, decided to close the newspaper. Today, without the Knick, the

Union Times is the only newspaper specifically serving the Albany area.

"The newspaper industry is at its most critical point in its history," said Frank Bennack Jr., Hearst Corp. president and chief executive officer, in an interview with Presstime, a journalism trade magazine. "I don't want to be overly dramatic but the fact is that we are living through decisive times for the future of newspapers."

Meyer said the industry was going through a transition period. "In the future we'll have one umbrella paper with many zoned editions." Zoned editions have been a resource newspapers have used to retain and gain readers in the suburbs. Sections in the newspaper contain news and advertisements targeting specific areas.

The Boston Globe, the Miami Herald, the New York Times and a few North Carolina newspapers have adopted zoning editions. The Durham Morning Herald, for example, created the Chapel Hill Herald, a section that wraps the Durham Morning Herald and circulates in areas such as Chapel Hill and Hillsborough. The Miami Herald has gone further by publishing a section entirely in Spanish to gain readers in Florida's Hispanic community.

Soviet president proposes summit to unify Europe

From Associated Press reports

ROME — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev proposed Thursday that a summit of European nations, the United States and Canada be held next year to speed up the integration of European nations.

Gorbachev said the 35-nation meeting should be moved up from 1992 as originally called for under the 1975 Helsinki Accords on human rights and security in Europe.

Residents flee battle zone

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador — Many residents of the affluent Escalon neighborhood, including about 20 U.S. citizens, took advantage of a brief guerrilla truce and fled the battle zone Thursday.

The leftist rebels launched a second assault on the capital Wednesday and turned their weapons on wealthy districts, forcing Americans to take refuge in the U.S. Embassy.

The rebels had declared a six-hour truce beginning at 6 a.m. (7 a.m. EST).

Czechs to open Austrian border
PRAGUE, Czechoslovakia — The

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government said Thursday it would tear down the fences on its border with Austria, and members of Parliament proposed the repeal of laws used to imprison and fine dissenters.

Government spokesman Marcel Jansen said the Interior Ministry would begin the "removal of technical equipment" on the frontier with neutral Austria.

The Communist Party said it would announce a new program to include a revision of its attitude toward the 1968 reform movement.

Filipino forces attempt coup

MANILA, Philippines — Mutinous soldiers seized two broadcast stations early Friday and claimed to control the headquarters of the Philippine air force in a bid to topple President Corason Aquino.

The Aquino government, facing one of the most serious threats of its nearly 4-year-old rule, appealed to all mayors to mobilize local police forces to defend the administration.

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AIDS

Brad said one reason he waited so long to be retested was because he was denying the possibility he was infected.

"I went on the assumption if I had the virus I was going to get sick immediately."

Brad still does not have the symptoms of an advanced AIDS case. He is naturally thin, but he does not look sick. He coughs some, but no more than anyone else who is experiencing the first cold of winter.

Brad does not know if he will definitely develop AIDS, but he thinks he will. "I am coming to terms with the fact that I may die from this."

Because the disease can take as long as 10 years to surface, present research has not been conducted long enough to indicate whether everyone who tests positive for HIV will die of AIDS, said Charles Van Der Horst, director of the UNC AIDS clinic trial unit.

Research indicates that so far about 50 percent of the people who have tested positive for HIV have developed AIDS, he said.

Although Brad has been fighting a battle with depression, he is optimistic about the future. He is hoping for more

medical progress with drugs that can at least give AIDS victims a longer life, if not cure the disease.

Brad is seeing a psychiatrist for therapy right now, but is not involved in a support group. He said it would be too depressing.

Support groups are available in the Triangle area, said Jenny Warburg, coordinator of the client services at AIDS Services Project in Durham.

Brad said that he felt fine now but that he was a little tired from AZT he is taking to counter the disease. His immune system is starting to show signs of weakening, he said.

Brad's sister is the only member of his family who knows he is infected. "It's not the kind of thing where you can go home and say 'Hey, Mom, I think I might have AIDS.'"

His sister, a nurse, reacted more optimistically than he expected. He has also told a few friends.

He is uncomfortable with telling people about his problem. "I don't want to feel discriminated against, and that's inevitable right now."

Brad has not told any of his co-workers, and he has a difficult time

explaining all the time he takes off.

"You don't want people to get suspicious. You could be kicked out of your job if they found out, or out of your apartment or whatever."

North Carolina has passed a law prohibiting discrimination against AIDS victims, but he is dubious about its success.

Since Brad discovered he is infected, he has put his life on hold. He said he didn't really want to make any long-term plans. "It does put you in a predicament of not really knowing what's going to happen to you."

His perception of AIDS has changed since he discovered he is infected. Before Brad got infected he didn't think he needed to worry about the disease. He said he thought only promiscuous people, drug-users and prostitutes had to worry about getting the disease. "I didn't know it was so easy to catch."

AIDS is just another disease, Brad said. "It's not the evil monster the media seems to build it up as. It's just a dis-

ease."

AIDS has become what cancer used to be. "People whispered about people with cancer. Now people whisper about people with AIDS, or people with AIDS whisper."

Brad decided he wanted to share his story because he sees a lot of apathy. The media is communicating very little information, and what is out is reactive instead of informative, he said. "The more it hides in the corners, the more it's ignored — it's not going to get better. I'm not trying to scare people."

A lot of misconceptions surround AIDS, Brad said. People do not get AIDS by being in the same room with a person, by sharing glasses or eating after them.

The virus is in the blood, but it can be passed through semen. Anal intercourse is the easiest way to pass the disease. It is possible to pass the disease through vaginal intercourse, but it is unlikely to be transmitted through oral intercourse, said Van Der Horst.

Many people also think it will be obvious if a person has AIDS.

"A lot of people have a misconception if you have a virus you're sick. I'm not like that. I'm continuing on with my life."

Brad's prognosis is a life expectancy of about five more years, depending on advances made in the medical field. "It's there all the time. It's not easy when you get around a lot of people. There's a clock with minutes ticking away."

He said he had not started making the best use of the time left, though. He said he would like to write about his life experience. "I just want to write something letting people know you can be a Christian (with AIDS). I know I wouldn't have the virus if I hadn't had the encounter, but I'm only human."

Brad said he was concerned that people with the disease were being treated as "undesirables." Many church and civic leaders have failed to deal with the issue, and some of the ones

who have did so in a negative way, he said.

"Fundamentalist churches now have even more to condemn these people for."

Probably about 20,000 North Carolinians are infected with the virus, Van Der Horst said. Most don't know they are infected.

People should get tested if they think they are at risk, Brad said. "If they have had an experience with another guy, especially since the late 1970s, they should really consider getting themselves tested."

"I have a feeling people are going to read this article and say, 'He's gay. What's that got to do with me?'"

Everyone should be aware of the risk of getting AIDS, particularly people who are sexually active, he said. "I have no doubt there are a lot of people on this campus who are infected and don't know — not just gay people, but heterosexuals and bisexuals, too."

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Downtown

said. "We want to get people to do their shopping, dining and entertainment in downtown. We're also interested in more diversity of shops and businesses."

A public marketing survey conducted by the commission in February to find out what types of stores residents wanted in the downtown area showed a wide array of preferences.

Residents identified things such as a sporting goods store, more ethnic restaurants, a cafeteria and a moderate priced clothing store for both men and women, Dibbert said.

Rimer said he would like to see any type of store except another sweatshirt shop.

"You currently have your choice of many sweatshirt shops downtown. There used to be a nice mix of stores, and I'd like to see that again."

Another goal of the commission is to promote growth within downtown Chapel Hill. Dibbert said the group was

in the process of developing a marketing package for businesses interested in locating downtown.

The package will contain specific listings of downtown spaces available, demographic information on the area and data on the area's concentrated shopping zones.

"Right now, we're providing the package to businesses that contact us, but we're working to expand the service so we can make the initial contact," Dibbert said.

A big addition to West Franklin Street will be under construction beginning next year, pending approval from the Chapel Hill Town Council. Pavilion on Franklin, an \$11 million, five-story commercial and office center, will be built at the intersection of West Franklin, Church and West Rosemary streets.

The complex will be developed by First Orange Limited Partners, which

comprises West Franklin Preservation Partners and Davidson and Jones Corp. of Raleigh. The project will include three floors of office space and two floors of upscale shops and restaurants. A two-level garage and an open plaza will also be included.

One new retail merchant to downtown, Homeward Bound, located at 214 W. Franklin St., is a home interiors store owned by Pam Pace and managed by Irene Gattis. The store opened in late September in the building that used to house the Gulf station.

"We feel absolutely welcome on Franklin Street," Gattis said. "A lot of people from other businesses have dropped by to see the store, and some have even sent customers by."

Gattis said the location was chosen in part because Pace did not want to be in a mall.

"It was very important to Pam to have a free-standing building, as opposed to being inside of a mall. The great thing about us is that we have parking in the front and at the side of the store."

Haber said within the last year, seven stores that were located in downtown have gone out of business. Included in this number were Logos, Benetton, Foister's and Haagen-Dazs.

Rimer said he thought the business owners were leaving because they were unable to make money due to the high rents. Benetton did close up shop in fall 1988 because of the rise in rental rates on Franklin Street.

"They (the high rents) are driving the businesses out of town," Rimer said. "If rent is what it takes, we need to stabilize a reasonable rate."

Brown said she was not sure why the stores had left, but she was interested in

looking into the causes. She also said she considered downtown to be a stable place of business.

"I've lived in Chapel Hill for a good number of years, and I can go up and down Franklin Street and see a number of older stores still here."

Some of Franklin Street's old standbys are Sutton's Drugs, Huggins Hardware and Jeff's Campus Confectionery. These stores have remained the same for about 60 years.

Keeping business downtown is critical to the success of any community, Dibbert said. She added that other cities and towns shared the commission's desire to keep businesses.

With the number of smaller stores going out of business or closing down, Rimer expressed some concern that downtown Chapel Hill may become overly commercialized.

He said there needed to be a thorough mix of downtown businesses to prevent commercialization. "I'm interested in seeing small, local businesses come into the downtown area."

Dibbert said she did not consider commercialization a problem for downtown. "I don't think we're losing our businesses, so I'm not too concerned."

Haber agreed with her and said new small businesses were replacing the outgoing ones.

"I don't see commercialization as a problem, because for every store that's left, the empty space has been filled by another small business."

The commission's goals for downtown include bringing the two areas of Franklin Street together, Dibbert said. "We're starting to see more businesses move into the area between Airport and Merritt Mill roads. That area's always been kind of an eyesore."

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