



# Alabama Publisher



Summer 2025

Volume 78, Number 1



# Cooler Choices Start Here

Energy savings aren't one-size-fits-all. That's why we offer tips, tools and resources designed to help you save energy in ways that fit your needs.

Visit [alabamapower.com/summer](https://alabamapower.com/summer) to learn more.



© 2025 Alabama Power







### Alabama Press Association

Alabama Newspaper Advertising Service Inc.  
2180 Parkway Lake Drive  
Hoover, AL 35244  
(205) 871-7737  
[www.alabamapress.org](http://www.alabamapress.org)

#### Board of Directors

**Darrell Sandlin**, Chairman of the Board  
TimesDaily, Florence  
**Teresa Woodruff**, President  
The Moulton Advertiser  
**Robert Bozeman**, 1st Vice President  
The Evergreen Courant  
**Jeff Martin**, 2nd Vice President  
The Montgomery Independent

**Brady Cox**, East Lauderdale News  
**Arlan Blevins**, Mountain Valley News  
**Catherine Hadaway**, The Selma Times-Journal  
**Paige Windsor**, Montgomery Advertiser  
**Eddie Dodd**, The Abbeville Herald  
**Tippy Hunter**, The Outlook,  
Alexander City  
**Vince Johnson**, Gulf Coast Media  
**Ashley Trice**, Lagniappe, Mobile  
**Michael Lambeth**, The Monroe Journal  
**Charles Whisenant**, The Arab Tribune  
**Barnett Wright**, The Birmingham Times

#### APA Staff

**Felicia Mason**, Executive Director  
**Brad English**, Marketing/Governmental  
Affairs Director  
**Leigh Leigh Tortorici**, Senior  
Marketing Representative  
**Parrish Wright**, Network Coordinator  
**Jaclyn Langan**, Membership Coordinator  
**Cassidy Armstrong**, Tearsheet Clerk  
**Evans Bailey**, General Counsel  
**Scott Goldsmith**, APA Accountant

# Welcome!

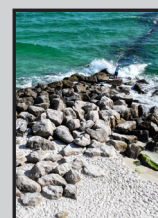
I am delighted to welcome you all to the Alabama Press Association's 2025 Summer Convention in Orange Beach. This annual event is not just a meeting. It's a celebration of the crucial role that news writing plays in our state and communities. Charged with delivering the news (and all that comes with that!), we get the opportunity to inform the public, foster transparency, and enhance civic engagement.

Our summer convention is an opportunity to come together, share best practices, and learn from one another. We hope you take this valuable information back to your own newsrooms to better serve readers and advertisers.

The highlight of our convention will be Saturday night at the awards ceremony, where we'll honor the exceptional work done in 2024. The APA Media Awards recognize the dedication, creativity, and hard work of our news organizations. It's a moment to applaud achievements and inspire each other.

We will also celebrate Felicia Mason for 38 years of dedication to APA and our industry, and wish her all the best in her upcoming retirement in September.

Teresa Woodruff  
President, Alabama Press Association



**Cover Photo:**  
Courtesy of  
Gulf Shores &  
Orange Beach  
Tourism

# Program Speakers



Sen. Katie Britt



[www.britt.senate.gov](http://www.britt.senate.gov)



Rob Curley



[robcurley@spokesman.com](mailto:robcurley@spokesman.com)



[www.spokesman.com](http://www.spokesman.com)



Evans Bailey



[ebailey@rushtonstakely.com](mailto:ebailey@rushtonstakely.com)



[www.rushtonstakely.com](http://www.rushtonstakely.com)



Natalie Steed



[nsteed@americanvillage.org](mailto:nsteed@americanvillage.org)



[www.america250al.org](http://www.america250al.org)

## Sen. Katie Britt

In 2023, Senator Katie Boyd Britt was sworn in as Alabama's first elected female Senator and the youngest Republican woman ever elected to the U.S. Senate. She is an important voice in Congress as one of the only moms of school-aged kids serving in the Senate. Senator Britt is proud to champion hardworking families as she fights to grow opportunity and preserve the American Dream for generations to come.

In the 119th Congress, Senator Britt serves on the Committee on Appropriations, where she is Chairman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee; the Senate Committee on the Judiciary; the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, where she is Chairman of the Housing, Transportation, and Community Development Subcommittee; and the Committee on Rules and Administration. Her committee portfolio strongly positions her to fight effectively for Alabama's people, interests, and values as she continues to identify and achieve tangible, meaningful solutions to the pressing challenges facing Alabama and America.

## Rob Curley

Rob Curley is the executive editor of The Spokesman-Review (Spokane, Wash.) and joined the newspaper in 2016. He has previously held leadership positions at The Orange County Register (Santa Ana, Calif.), Las Vegas Sun, Washington Post and Lawrence Journal-World (Kan.). His work in newsrooms, dating back to the 1990s, resulted in some of the largest and most award-winning news sites on the internet, but local journalism and community engagement have always been the main focal points of Curley's work. He has started several, large-scale community initiatives through the newspaper — including the Northwest Passages events series and the largest, paid high school newspaper internship program in the country. During his time, the newspaper has become a national leader in philanthropic-funded journalism and the use of Creative Commons. This alternate funding has allowed The Spokesman-Review to become the smallest newspaper in the nation to have a bureau in the nation's capital, to continue to have a bureau in Olympia, WA., covering statewide issues and politics, and

— with one of the nation's largest Ukrainian populations in the nation — The Spokesman-Review was one of the smallest news organizations in the world to send a reporter to Ukraine to cover the war with Russia through the eyes of its own community. In 2023, the news nonprofit Curley founded — the Comma community journalism lab — received its 501(c)(3) status from the Internal Revenue Service, and helped relaunch the region's Black newspaper, The Black Lens.

## Evans Bailey

Evans Bailey joined Rushton Stakely in 2008, and became a shareholder in 2016. He has worked with APA as general counsel and on the Legal Hotline since 2008.

His practice is devoted to civil litigation with a focus on commercial litigation, insurance defense, professional liability, collections, construction law, media law, and appellate practice.

He has experience handling a variety of matters in all state trial and civil appellate courts, federal district court, bankruptcy court, and the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals.

He has represented newspapers,



television studios, podcast producers, builders, banks, lawyers, small businesses, insurance companies, cooperatives, and manufacturers of products large and small.

### America250 Alabama

America250 Alabama was formed to help Alabama celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States' Declaration of Independence by supporting and promoting a multitude of programs and events that educate, engage, and unite

Alabamians around the nation's founding principles.

Goal 1: Enrich the awareness and understanding of the principles of our Declaration of Independence, how we achieved independence in the American Revolutionary War, and how we established our system of constitutional self-government.

Goal 2: Advance the cause of liberty and American self-government through promoting civic knowledge and practice with emphasis on the roles of active and engaged good citizens.

Goal 3: Educate students and the public to increase knowledge and appreciation of the breadth of American history and the centuries-long quest for "liberty and justice for all." Share the stories and contributions of all the people who have inhabited our Alabama land.

Goal 4: Emphasize the service and sacrifices of veterans of all generations who have secured and preserved American independence and freedom and encouraging Alabamians to honor them through our State's Veterans Register of Honor.

## Hey Alabama, Let's Celebrate!

**America250AL.org**

Countdown to  
America 250  
**July 4, 2026**  
The 250th anniversary  
of the signing of the  
Declaration of Independence

**AMERICA**  
**250**  
**ALABAMA**

**AMERICAN VILLAGE**  
CITIZENSHIP TRUST  
Alabama's Celebration  
Capitol for America 250



1987

As advertising director of The Crimson White, she was awarded the James E. Jacobson Management Award her senior year, and graduated from the University of Alabama with a bachelor's degree in marketing. That same year, she began working for APA in Tuscaloosa as a sales rep.

1990

Promoted to advertising manager for ANAS and began adding to the advertising client base, calling on large agencies in Birmingham and around the state.

1992-  
1996

# Farewell to Felicia

## It's a see you later, not a goodbye!

by Leigh Leigh Tortorici

At the APA fall board meeting in November of 2024, Felicia Mason announced her plans to retire later in the following year. About a month later, she had emergency surgery to replace the mitral valve in her heart.

There may have been a flaw in her heart, but Felicia has been the heart of APA for decades, and brought APA into the 21st century, seeing massive changes in journalism over her 38 years.

Customer service has been Felicia Mason's mantra since serving as the advertising director at The Crimson White student newspaper at the University of Alabama. In every job, customer service is a requirement...no, a necessity. And she has drilled that into her staff and our member newspapers ever since.

Felicia has set the example, and whether that customer is a member newspaper, an advertising client, or a random caller from Timbuctoo asking about the open records laws in Alabama, Felicia makes sure they get what they need. She has always led by example and been up to the task.

Felicia received a bachelor's degree in marketing from the University of Alabama. While still in school, she was awarded the James E. Jacobson Management Award by the Media Planning Board her senior year. She began working for APA in 1987 as an advertising representative when the office was still in Tuscaloosa. She worked hard to develop new advertising clients and led a series of ad sales training workshops all around the state in the late 1980s. Felicia



Directed ANAS staff in putting on annual ad conferences offering training and motivational speakers that attracted almost 200 ad sales reps from member papers.

1998

Under her leadership, ANAS trained members on PDF capabilities helping papers convert to the pagination process, called "Project 2000". Created BamaNet as a way to post ads for papers to download and place ads directly on their pages.

2000

Named the 11th APA executive director and first woman to hold that position in APA's 129 years.

was hired by Ad Manager Mike Ryland under Executive Director Bill Keller, who oversaw the move from Tuscaloosa to Birmingham with a goal of being closer to the larger ad agencies in the state. When APA moved to Birmingham later in 1987, Felicia commuted from Tuscaloosa for three years.

When Bill Keller left in the fall of 1990 to become publisher in Talladega, Mike Ryland was named executive director, and Felicia was promoted to advertising manager for the Alabama Newspaper Advertising Service. Under Felicia's leadership, APA and ANAS began offering an annual advertising conference that by 1995 was attracting almost 200 delegates. She also worked to diversify and grow the client base from about 10 to almost 50 clients by 1996, including landing large accounts with Strong Automotive for Chevy and handling statewide ad placements for the Alabama Power account.

As ANAS was growing with her sales efforts, Felicia went back to the well and hired Brad English in April 1991, who had succeeded her as ad director

at The CW. Later that year, she hired Leigh Leigh Tortorici as a tearsheet clerk, and the team was complete. But not for long.

When Mike Ryland unexpectedly passed away from a heart attack while lobbying for APA in the statehouse in March of 1992, a bond was formed by the existing staff that shaped the next 30+ years at the association office. With the strong support of the board, and Bill Keller returning as executive director to help steady the ship, Felicia and her staff became very busy building a strong client base, offering training opportunities to member newspapers, and placing over 90 Ala-SCAN Network ads in member newspapers every week. In the late 1990's, Felicia oversaw Project 2000, with the crucial expertise and foresight of then-college student Bill Smith (of The Eufaula Tribune Smiths), and later Kevin Slimp who helped the APA staff train the newspapers so they could learn everything they needed to know to fully paginate their papers electronically using the newest software and PDF capabilities. No more shipping veloxes to the papers for ads!





She also began lobbying in Montgomery for open meetings, open records, and other bills that could affect member newspapers, and earned her MBA at Samford University.

2000

In 2000, Felicia was named APA executive director when Keller took a position at Alabama Power. Felicia became the 11th executive director and the first woman to hold the position in APA's 129-year history.

*"Felicia has guided APA with grace, determination and a strong respect for her members. She has guided the association through profound changes in the newspaper industry, and she has helped make sure that APA adjusted to those changes,"* said former APA Executive Director Bill Keller.

Felicia's accomplishments are long and distinguished, and detailed on the timeline across these pages. What's important to know is that Felicia made a difference in everything she did. For members, she preached the virtues of customer service, placed tons of advertising, and lobbied in Montgomery for open records, open meetings, and preserving public notice. She poured herself into her work life, and became genuine friends with members, and still goes to visit current and former publishers all over the state. Felicia even spends weekends occasionally with some of her close, South Alabama APA buddies, riding on boats and sipping wine when her busy schedule allows.

The needs of the members have always come first, and Felicia addressed every single one that she was aware of. She has always done it with unbiased

integrity and respect. And her reputation with ANAS clients was impeccable, giving each one the attention it deserved.

Felicia also made an impact at a national level. Years ago, she would attend conferences for National Newspaper Association (NNA) along with APA current presidents, especially when members like John Stevenson from The Randolph Leader also served as NNA's national president. Felicia has had a significant effect on her counterparts in other states, too. Newspaper Advertising Managers (NAM) is a group of association executive directors from all states that she was actively involved in. Bill Keller noted, *"Her work with APA gained the respect of her peers around the country, when she was elected president of Newspaper Association Managers. Indeed, she has had close friends in NAM from Massachusetts to Georgia and from Minnesota to Mississippi."*

Felicia's counterpart in Mississippi is one of those that has become a lifelong friend. MPS Executive Director Layne Bruce said, *"Felicia was one of the first of my fellow execs to reach out and welcome me to the squirrely world*





2003

UA Media Planning Board awarded her the Sarah L. Healy Award, their top award given for service to students.

In the early 2000s, she participated in Kiwanis; UA College of Communications Board of Visitors; advisory board of the Summer High School Multi-Media Journalism Camp at Miles College; Alabama Council of Association Executives; and is a graduate of Leadership Alabama.

2019

Named one of the Top Women in Alabama Media by Business Alabama, along with Dee Ann Campbell (Choctaw Sun-Advocate), Jennifer Cohron (Daily Mountain Eagle), Glenda Curl (Wilcox Progressive Era).

*of association management many years ago. And she has been a tremendous well of encouragement and good humor for me through the years. Her sense of humor is a perfect fit for our often-irreverent profession, and her contribution to the Resolutions Committee of NAM has been putting a smile on our faces for years."*

Robin Rhodes, retired Georgia Press Association executive director, agrees: "Felicia and I met over 30 years ago at a Georgia-Alabama Advertising joint meeting in Birmingham, and I knew then we would be lifetime friends. Her leadership and friendship within NAM has made every member of the organization a better person. The NAM family will miss her sound advice and her humor, but her retirement doesn't mean she will be leaving her friends. Once she is a friend, she will be a friend forever."

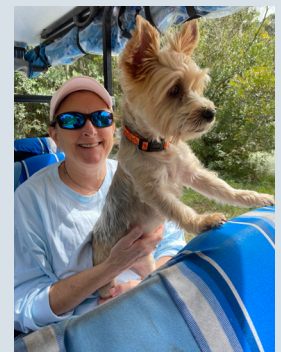
The APA/ANAS staff has always been grounded by the leadership Felicia has shown. She created a culture of hard work, but having fun while you do it. The staff learned by her example of how to treat both

members and clients, and how to do it with grace even in difficult situations. She is always learning, even earning her MBA from Samford University at the age of 40.

APA staff member Jaclyn Langan said, "I am forever grateful for the opportunity to work at APA, but more importantly, I feel incredibly fortunate for the chance to work alongside people I learn from.

Felicia's mentorship has been invaluable to me. Not only is she a thoughtful leader, but also a truly wonderful, caring (and hilarious!) person. Her guidance and support has helped me grow and gain confidence in my role here. She will be missed day-to-day more than I think any of us know."

Felicia liked to bring inspirational quotes or stories to weekly staff meetings, and several times hosted her own version of a book club to the chagrin of the APA staff, to sneak in some sales and leadership training, but always finding a way to make it fun. She did these things to lift each staff member up to their potential, and always pushing to





2022

Awarded the Betsy Plan Distinguished Achievement Award by the UA Communication and Information Sciences department honoring those who have demonstrated a lifetime commitment to mentoring and have had a profound impact on others, who in turn, have gone on to generate influence and foster relationships within their organization, community and profession.

2025

Served APA for 38 years with integrity and nurtured and empowered newspapers and journalists in every corner of the state. Thank you for your dedication to our members and our industry. You will be missed!

get better. This was probably ingrained in her from her schoolteacher mother, and her father who ran the local grocery store and served as mayor of her hometown, Pine Hill, AL, in his 70s and 80s.

Brad English shared memories and well-wishes, "I've known Felicia for more than half my life. (I've stopped counting the years, but trust me, it's a lot.) She's always been a great boss, but more importantly, she is a fiercely loyal friend who genuinely cares for the people around her. I've seen her cry more times for others in the office than she ever did for herself. She could be tough when circumstances demanded, but she could also be the first one to pick you up when you were down.

I've learned more than I realize working beside her all these years. And I'll miss the countless conversations we used to have, not about work necessarily, but just about life. She truly is an amazing person. One who will be missed greatly, especially by the APA staff, who

*worked shoulder-to-shoulder with her for such a long time.*

*We once had a cabinet in the office that had more boxes of staples than one could count. FM said many times she would know it's time to leave when we ran out of staples. After 40 years, it finally happened. The staples are gone. Time to relax, Felicia. You deserve it."*

Felicia believes in humans answering the office phone and working until the dot of 5pm, however her consideration for what goes on in the lives of her staff and the members shows her immense compassion and devotion to the organization and all the people in it. Leigh Leigh Tortorici said, "APA has been my work family since I graduated college, and I have Felicia to thank for that. She hired me as a tearsheet clerk, and I believe her strong support and guidance pushed me out of my comfort zone in the best possible way, and may have been the key to keeping our core staff together for 34+ years."

Following retirement, Felicia will work part-time on a contract basis with APA to manage APA Journalism Foundation activities, so this is not a final farewell, but definitely a salute to a job well done!



## RUSHTON ♦ STAKELY

Lawyers Since 1890

Rushton, Stakely, Johnston & Garrett, P.A. has been serving clients for over a century and serving Alabama newspapers, television, and radio stations since the 1980s.

334-206-3100

**J. Evans Bailey**  
General Counsel  
Alabama Press Association

*A rule of the Supreme Court of Alabama requires the following: No representation is made that the quality of legal services is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.*

## Stephen Bradley & Associates knows Alabama.

We have over 100 years of combined career experience in Alabama. Dealing with Alabama issues, Alabama media, Alabama decision makers. We have the relationships to achieve results. Stephen Bradley & Associates is the only public relations firm with a proven track record of excellence in both public relations and governmental relations. If you need public relations counsel in Alabama, welcome to our territory.

• Public Relations • Environmental Issues Management • Media Relations •  
Public Affairs Strategic Planning • Legislative Relations • Coordinated Public  
Affair Programs • Governmental Relations • Crisis Communications

### STEPHEN BRADLEY & ASSOCIATES LLC

*Alabama's only full-service public affairs firm*

217 Country Club Park, No. 103  
Birmingham, AL 35213 • 205-933-6676

3066 Zelda Road  
Montgomery, AL 36106 • 334-203-5322

[www.PRAlabama.com](http://www.PRAlabama.com)

## Who is PowerSouth?

# Let's Talk.

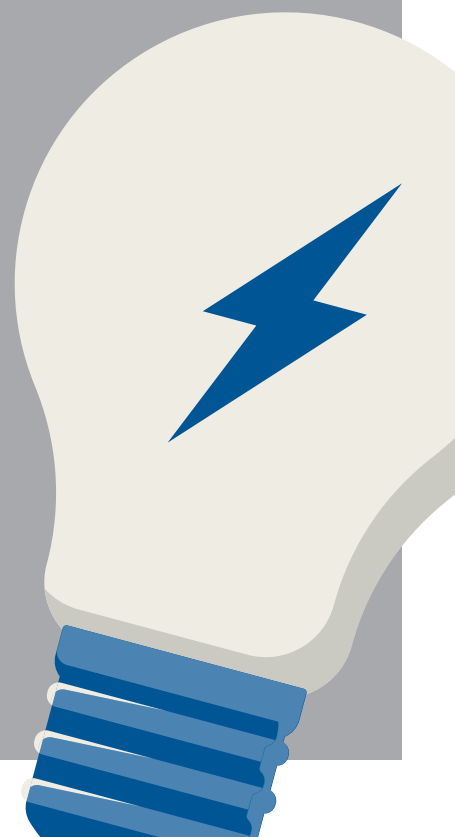
PowerSouth serves electric cooperatives by generating and providing the power that flows to those cooperatives and, then, into the homes and businesses across our communities.

Our goal is simple: keeping the lights on each and every day as affordably as possible.



**POWERSOUTH<sup>®</sup>**  
ENERGY COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative 





A wise person once told me that sometimes the best man for the job is a woman. I'm proud that APA chose Felicia to succeed Bill Keller all those years ago and that the years have verified that wise person's premise. Enjoy the next phase, Felicia.

Cy Wood, retired publisher,  
The Valley Times-News

AL.COM

NEWS

## Mission completed, Mason moves on

Congratulations, Felicia, on your retirement from APA!

Felicia: God bless you for your monumental stewardship of the Alabama Press Association. You were always way ahead of us!

Michael Marshall,  
retired editor, Mobile  
Press Register

Sept 3, 2025 Vol. 74 No. 35

# RedstoneRocket

PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF PERSONNEL AT REDSTONE ARSENAL, AL

www.theredstonerocket.com

## 'Good luck and Godspeed'

You made a difference over the past 38 years. Thank you!

*Felicia,  
Alabama needs great journalists, and  
you have nurtured and empowered  
them in every corner of the state. We  
owe you more than you'll ever know.  
Fair winds and following seas, my friend.*

K.A. Turner, Alabama Media Group

**Atmore News**  
*The Community's Newspaper*  
**EXTRA! EXTRA!**  
**Felicia Is Retiring!**  
*We wish you the best.*

Congratulations, Felicia Mason, on your retirement! Thank you for your contributions to the Alabama Press Association and our local newspapers.

Daily Mountain Eagle (Jasper)

All the Best from all the Rest of US at the Sumter County Record-Journal & Moundville Times.  
*Tommy, Travis, Herman, Kasey, & Tiffany*

**Felicia, You have always been the 'face' of the APA to me, and I have LOVED working with you. You made my year as APA President one of the most memorable years of my career! Thank you for your hard work and for making the association such a vital part of our newspaper 'life'. Most of all, thank you for your friendship! Happy retirement! You definitely deserve it.**

Dee Ann Campbell, publisher, Choctaw Sun-Advocate



*Thank you for being the head chief when I was president, or I would have probably been scalped.*

*Joe Thomas, publisher/editor, The Tri-City Ledger*

**the Observer** **The LaFayette Sun**

## Key Media reports that it has Observed Felicia Mason no longer waking up with The Sun

*Congratulations on your retirement*

Thank you for your dedicated service and consistent support.

John and Carol Zippert, Co-Publishers,  
Greene County Democrat

**THE MOULTON ADVERTISER**

Alabama's Oldest Weekly Newspaper - Serving Lawrence County Since 1828

\$1.00

Thursday, June 12, 2025

moultonadvertiser.com

**STOP THE PRESS..... Felicia is Retiring!**  
**We wish her all the Best! Congratulations!**

*Felicia, we came into this business almost together, me as a publisher in 1984 and you with APA in 1987. We went out on the same timetable. I sold in 2023 and you are retiring in 2025. We've had some times over the years, serious stuff but more importantly, laughter and fun, too. You were good for APA and are a good friend. Enjoy your retirement!*

*Jim Cox, retired publisher,  
Clarke County Newspapers*

Congratulations on your retirement Felicia! It has been a pleasure working with you over all these years. I hope your retirement is as fabulous as you have always been!

Paula Bryant, General Manager,  
The Northport Gazette and West  
Alabama Gazette

Felicia, your unwavering support and clear communication were instrumental in helping Latino News successfully navigate and grow within the Alabama Press Association's internship program. We are deeply grateful for your guidance and wish you a joyful and fulfilling retirement—you will be missed!

Latino News, LLC

**TN ValleyMedia**

They say "nobody likes a quitter",  
but we still do! Thanks for everything  
and best of luck in retirement!

Felicia, for 38 years you have been our gallant leader and friend. The APA has grown under your leadership. Thank you so much for your dedication to the needs of the APA. Enjoy your retirement and keep in touch.

Linda H. Breedlove



## Mason Etches Retirement In Stone.

Felicia, You've been an excellent leader through challenging times. No one could ever replace you, but you've left APA in capable hands. If we could only celebrate your retirement at Jubilee! Thanks for your friendship. **Scott, Tammy & Pepper Brown**

Dear Felicia,

Congratulations on your remarkable 38 years of dedicated service to the press of Alabama! Your unwavering commitment and passion for journalism have made a positive impact on the whole state of Alabama. It has been an honor and privilege to work with you.

As you embark on this new chapter of your life, may your retirement be filled with joy, relaxation, and countless new adventures. Wishing you all the best in the exciting journey ahead!

*Dennis Bailey, retired APA legal counsel*

## The Clay Times-Journal

*"Devoted to the upbuilding of Clay County"*

Volume 115, Number 31

Friday, June 13, 2025

1 Section, 8 Pages

### BYE FELICIA!!!

#### *Goodbye Tension-Hello Pension!*

From headlines and deadlines to red wine and reclines! May all your days be filled with unscheduled naps, questionable life choices and a healthy dose of procrastination! Wishing you a retirement as amazing as the impact you have made at the APA. You will be greatly missed!

Sincerely,  
The Clay Times-Journal Staff



Felicia, you've been a good friend to me, Auburn's journalism department, and to all of us connected to newspapers. Thank you for representing APA so well all these years, and toasting you to a well-deserved retirement.

Your friend, Ed Williams, journalism professor emeritus, Auburn University



**Tallapoosa Publishers, Inc.**

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE AUDIENCE.

*Felicia,*

*It has been an absolute pleasure working with you. You will be missed and remembered well.*

*Enjoy your retirement, and take full advantage of this new, wonderful time of your life.*

*Much love & respect,  
Kenneth, Tippy & Lizi*

*"To be idle is sometimes an excellent way of being busy."  
— Thomas Carlyle*

I was a part of her 40-year career span with APA, and I couldn't think of a more perfect person for the job. She has always been very personable, accommodating and very helpful whenever we called about something.

David Proctor, publisher,  
The Clay Times-Journal

## The ATMORE ADVANCE

*Serving the residents of Atmore and Escambia counties since 1927*

**Felicia, you're advancing into retirement! We wish you nothing, but the best!**

*Felicia,*

*Thank you for helping bring Alabama newspapers through both prosperous and trying times and for keeping the Press Association strong and relevant. We enjoy working with you and being your friends, and we hope you like retirement as much as we do.*

*Steve and Patrice Stewart, retired journalism professor Troy University and owner/publishers of The Monroe Journal*

### A Modest Resolution

WHEREAS Felicia Mason is retiring as executive director of  
The Alabama Press Association;  
WHEREAS O-negative ink coursed through her veins as she  
tirelessly toiled 38 years for the editorial and economic strength of the  
Alabama newspaper industry;  
WHEREAS she suffered no fools in the hallways of government, ever hell bent  
to let in sunshine;  
WHEREAS she's as sharp as a well-honed editorial;  
WHEREAS she's been as indispensable as bourbon to editors and publishers;  
WHEREAS she's as funny as a "shirt-sale" typo a year after it's published;  
WHEREAS she's far more charming than a well-lubed Resolution Committee;  
WHEREAS if she ever swung from a Perdido chandelier, no one can prove it;  
therefore be it  
RESOLVED that Felicia Mason shall forever be held in the highest esteem by  
the newspapers of Alabama that she so dearly loved.  
HEREBY SUBMITTED  
by David Moore, former APA President

Hey Felicia! Thanks for all the  
help and encouragement  
through the years!  
Scott Richardson and  
The Tuskegee News



**After 38 Years. . .**

**Felicia Mason Walks Out!**

*(Editor's Note: Technically she is retiring, but we call her a Quitter! Thank you for 38 wonderful years and we hope you stick around for more.)*

Felicia Mason has been the face of the Alabama Press Association for practically all of my 36-year career with the Advertiser-Glean. But I didn't really get to know Felicia until I had the honor of serving on the Journalism Foundation Board. Felicia is the consummate professional, seeing to every detail that needs attention, but she also has a heart for people. She truly gets to know our members, and she becomes a fast friend to we who are coming up the ranks. I thank her for her service, applaud her for her contributions to our beloved profession and wish her the very best in retirement.

Anthony Campbell, editor,  
Advertiser-Glean (Guntersville)



## FELICIA IS FLYING THE COOP!

Felicia, you've had a great 38 years at APA! We  
will miss you, and hope you enjoy retirement.

***Felicia, you've been a trusted  
friend to both me and my father,  
guiding two generations through  
the APA. I'm grateful for your belief  
in me, your steady leadership, and  
your prepared remarks.  
The Foundation is lucky to keep  
your wisdom close.***

**Jeff Martin, publisher,  
The Montgomery Independent**

Our Felicia has been a "jack of all  
trades" to many of us who have called  
on her seeking help in many capacities.  
She is a jewel that we will truly miss at the  
Alabama Press Association, but we send  
our appreciation to her for her services  
and wish her the very best as a retired  
lady! We love you and will miss you!

Rebecca Beasley,  
The Clayton Record



Felicia, we are so grateful for everything that you have done for newspapers across the state of Alabama. You have been such an instrumental figure and are more than deserving of this day. Enjoy your retirement!

Alec Etheredge, publisher,  
Shelby County Reporter

# SHELBY COUNTY REPORTER

Saturday, June 28, 2025 | ALABAMA'S BEST COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER |

ShelbyCountyReporter.com | \$1.00

## BYE, FELICIA!

*We thank you and wish you the best in your retirement*

**Felicia, thank you for your 38 years of service to APA! Most importantly, thank you for being my friend for 38 years and being a friend to Mary as well! It's not good bye, but "see you around"!**

**Eddie and Mary Dodd, The Abbeville Herald**



*Felicia: I can't thank you enough for all that you have done for me, but more importantly what you have done for journalism and media in the state of Alabama. You've steered the APA through many disruptions in the industry, and we remain strong because of you.*

*Barnett Wright , executive editor,  
The Birmingham Times Media Group and  
Former Foundation Board President*

No one deserves a wonderful retirement more than you do, Felicia.  
**Mary and Ben Shurett** send our thanks for so many years of fantastic leadership. We miss you and send blessings to you.

Your leadership of Alabama Press Association has enabled the working press to fulfill its role in keeping Alabamians aware of news in their communities. Your efforts are appreciated by many.

Mike and Peggy Kelley, retired,  
The Clanton Advertiser

Felicia so happy you can retire after 38 years of excellent service. Maybe now you can come back home more often and you and I can have some fun.

Your special friend,  
Glenda Curl, publisher  
Wilcox Progressive Era

Felicia has guided APA with grace, determination and a strong respect for her members. She is the longest-serving executive director of APA, with 35 years on the job, with many more years of service before that as associate executive director, ad manager and ad sales representative and lobbyist.

She has guided the association through profound changes in the newspaper industry, and she has helped make sure that APA adjusted to those changes.

Her work with APA gained the respect of her peers around the country, when she was elected president of Newspaper Association Managers. Indeed, she has had close friends in NAM from Massachusetts to Georgia and from Minnesota to Mississippi.

She has also gathered around her what is one of the most respected staffs among NAM in the country. APA is fortunate that they will remain behind to guide the association.

I join her friends and colleagues to salute her and to wish her well.

**Bill Keller, former APA executive director**

Felicia was one of the first people to reach out to me when I moved back to Alabama for my role at the Alabama Broadcasters Association. She immediately became a trusted friend, an advisor, and a true partner in our efforts in the AL legislature. I'll always remember how we've worked so well together over the years but most of all, I will continue to treasure our lasting friendship. Best wishes for your retirement!

**Sharon Tinsley, President,  
Alabama Broadcasters Association**

## The Florala News

ESTABLISHED 1900

Location Of One Hundred Fifty-Four Consecutive Annual Masonic Celebrations

### Best Wishes On Your Retirement Felicia!

Well, Felicia, where do I begin? Years ago (decades, really), we were young media professionals, and our careers have greatly changed since then.

At the APA, you have grown and advanced while guiding the association through many challenges and changes.

You deserve all the accolades -- and a rest. Speaking as someone who is mostly retired: Come on in, the water's fine. Hope to see you along the sunny beaches.

Dan Meissner, The  
University of Alabama

**Shoals  
Shorts**

### 38 YEARS: a Long Time

Felicia, we appreciate your many efforts on behalf of the Alabama Press Association and its wide membership over the years.

You deserve some time off with family away from all the pressures and the stresses of what lingers at work for Monday.

Here's to the blessings of great health and many rewarding years in retirement!

*Tom Magazzu and  
the staff at the  
Courier Journal!*

## The Print Community Will Miss You!

Volume 141 Number 35

June 25, 2025

POSTAL PATRON

# Courier Journal

Serving Northwest Alabama and beyond with direct mail, saturation coverage

Serving northwest Alabama since 1884

219 W. Tennessee St. Florence, AL 35630 256-764-4268

USPS Circulation Verification Available



## Wishing Felicia Well!

### Mason's Retirement Leaves a Void in APA's Management Team

Since Felicia Mason dates back into the 80s, she remembers the days of film processors, waxers, blue line markers, X-acto blades Amberlith, and the legendary Compugraphic typesetters.

Those were the days when we marveled at the new 3.5" floppy disks that could hold the

McDraw software program AND our fonts... a whopping 356K worth of disc space!

The new concept of FAX machines helped eliminate the drives across town with customer ad proofs. A primary concern was if someone remembered to order another six rolls of fax paper. So much fun to look back on now!



**KAMEN & CO.  
GROUP SERVICES, LLC**

Print & Digital Media  
Appraisers | Brokers | Accountants



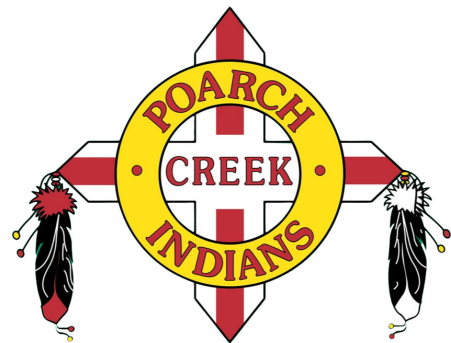
**Kevin B. Kamen**  
*President/CEO*

626 RXR Corp. Plaza  
Uniondale, New York 11556  
New York: (516) 379-2797  
Cell: (516) 242-2857  
E-mail: info@kamengroup.com  
www.kamengroup.com

*Thank you to our  
2025 sponsors.  
We are so appreciative  
of your participation in  
and support of our  
association and members.*



**Alabama  
Power**



**PUBLICATIONS PLUS**

**AMERICA**



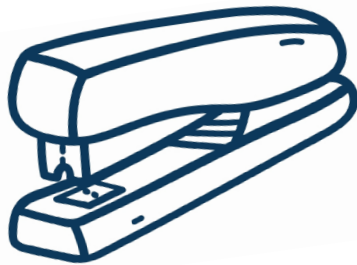
**ALABAMA**

# We ran out of staples

by Felicia Mason



My first day at APA was September 1, 1987. I was raised in rural Alabama and driving to a job in downtown Birmingham was daunting, to say the least. We had a small office in the Commerce Center. It was so small our office supplies were behind a partition in the back corner.



It was a bit funny to me that the few shelves we had were loaded with boxes and boxes of staples. I could not imagine how we could ever run out of them. I made the statement that when we ran out of staples, it would be time for me to go.

We actually ran out of staples many years ago, but I guess I knew whether it was the staples or some other sign, I

would know when it was time for me step aside.

I am eternally grateful to Bill Keller and the late Mike Ryland for taking a chance on me. Also, Jim Oakley and Ferrin Cox who put in a good word for me when I was hired.

Brad and Leigh Leigh joined a few years later, and we have worked together for 34 years. Along with Jaclyn, who joined our staff eight years ago, they are family to me.

In March of 1992, APA had four full time employees. Mike Ryland was the executive director, with Brad, Leigh Leigh and me as staff. When Mike died suddenly, we were three young and mostly inexperienced staff members trying to figure out the Better Newspaper Contest, among many other day-to-day tasks. That experience created a bond between the three of us that is hard to put into words.

I think the association's strength is that it is a family. I have developed so many

wonderful friendships within APA and with my counterparts with other state press associations. These are friendships I will take with me and hold dear forever.

There is no doubt APA is in the best hands possible. Brad and Leigh Leigh will provide strong and steady leadership moving forward. The value of their years of experience cannot be measured.

Stepping away from APA is a bag of mixed emotion for me. I am thankful the APA Journalism Foundation is allowing me to continue that work on a contract basis. I believe in the mission of the Foundation, and I'm excited to continue advocating for our industry with the journalism schools across the state.

To say thank you to APA for the last 38 years is inadequate. It has been an honor to work for the newspapers in Alabama and for the people I admire so much.





# *Alabama Press Association*

## **SUMMER CONVENTION**

# *Agenda*

### **Friday – June 27**

10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	APA/ANAS Board Meeting Lunch	Salon E
12:30 - 6:00 p.m.	Registration Desk open	
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.	Journalism Foundation Board Meeting	Sand Dollar
3-4 p.m.	Audience Engagement Program Rob Curley, The Spokesman-Review	Salon FGH
4-5 p.m.	Barristers and Brews Evans Bailey, APA Legal Counsel	Salon FGH
6:30 – 8 p.m.	Opening Reception Sponsored by Alabama Power	Beach Deck

### **Saturday – June 28**

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.	Breakfast Natalie Steed, America250 Alabama Sponsored by America250 Alabama	Salon ABC
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Community Funding Rob Curley, The Spokesman-Review	Salon D
11:00 – Noon	Headshot Clinic	Registration
11:00 – Noon	Newsroom Roundtables	Salon D
12 noon – 1 p.m.	Luncheon and Membership Meeting <i>Speaker: Sen. Katie Britt</i>	Salon EFGH
5 – 6 p.m.	Resolutions Committee	Sand Castle I
6 – 7 p.m.	AMA Exhibit Reception Sponsored by The Poarch Band of Creek Indians	Night Reef I & II
7 – 9:30 p.m.	Awards Banquet and Reception	Salon ABCD

