JOURNALISM HONORS THESIS
A Redesign of Weekend Magazine
For Larry Horney
By Cindy Lynn Strafford
May 8, 1983
COVER STORIES

Winter Quarter:

Huggy the Clown: Profile of a wife-abuse victim
Scanning the Skies: A professor and UFOs
Movie Trivia: Trivia contest kick-off
Epcot Center: Disneyworld's newest section
Anorexia/Bulimia: Dangers in dieting
M-TV: A look at music on cable television
Foreign Students: Language houses on campus:
Ghosts of Emens: Past concerts at Ball State
Pizza: Comparing local pizzas
Finals: Preparing for end-of-the-quarter tests

Spring Quarter

White River Park: A new look for Indianapolis
Life behind bars: Students view prison life
Fitness at Ball State: Exercise on campus
Weekend Enquirer: Special April Fools edition
The Academy Awards: Oscar predictions
Play Ball: Special baseball edition
Toughlove: Parents with teens in trouble
Interracial Dating: A profile of two couples
Jackie Means-Bratsch: The first woman Episcopal priest
Meg: One student alcoholic's story
WEEKEND GOALS

Weekend is a news/general interest magazine which appears every Friday as a supplement to the Daily News. Its goals are simple: to inform, to entertain and to provide some services to the reader. It is under no authority beyond the limitations of the Weekend editors, the Daily News editor, advertising layout and finances budgeted for it by the Daily News.

Weekend serves an audience composed mainly of college students, faculty, administrators and college employees. With this audience in mind, the magazine attempts to address issues which are either on campus, campus related or relevant to people in this area.

Weekend should have 10 issues per quarter, of at least 12 pages per issue. A viable goal is 16 pages per issue.

The goals of the magazine should include seeking out the best content available; recruiting and helping writers to produce the best writing they are capable of; exacting the best work out of the photo staff, advertising staff and paste-up crew and editorial staff. With these quality standards constantly in mind, the magazine should strive to maintain its image as a tough competitor in the Indiana Collegiate Press Association’s annual contest — not only for the recognition involved, but also to maintain credibility and the knowledge that the magazine is indeed serving and informing its readers to the best of its ability.

Weekend’s goal for basic writing style is a solid, feature-style format of the type found in quality magazines. Story length and paragraphs may be longer, more description is used and the stories are colorful rather than a systematic listing of factual material.

BASIC COPY CONTENT

In the past:

As an news/general interest magazine, Weekend has emphasized both "news" and "general interest." Under the editorial reins of Norm Shaw and Pam Records in the fall and winter of 1981, the magazine explored topics such as living together, the Society of Professional Journalists lawsuit against the administration and landlord/student relationships. In the spring of 1982, under the guidance of editor Doug Long and managing editor Scott Langford, drugs, religion and cheating were explored.
Winter and spring, 1982-83

In the winter of 1982, when I became co-editor with Doug Long, we formulated a story file in an effort to make Weekend more “balanced” — that is, for the magazine to have a good ratio of entertainment and serious topics over the course of a quarter. In our file, we made a list of possible cover stories, then separated them according to their entertainment value or newsworthiness. Then, we attempted to alternate between news and entertainment each week. For example, our first issue of Winter Quarter was a news/feature profile on a victim of wife abuse (Huggie the Clown, Dec. 3, 1982). Our second issue was on the lighter side, featuring a professor who studied UFOs (Scanning the Skies, Dec. 10, 1982).

We did not always succeed in keeping this “rhythm” going throughout Winter Quarter and Spring Quarter, especially in the spring. Once in a while, a reporter would have trouble completing an assignment, resulting in a postponement of a cover story and an advancement of another. Occasionally, a student from a magazine-writing class would come to us with a completed story or a story idea which was better than a cover story we had originally planned, thereby calling for a substitution (Ghosts of Emens, Feb. 4, 1983; Meg: Portrait of a Student Alcoholic, May 13, 1983). When situations such as these arose, almost 100 percent of the time we decided to be flexible in order to have the best quality, rather than sticking to a rigid schedule and settling for less.

In an effort to give Weekend more unity than it had in the past (many issues had a single cover story and no other related stories in the issue), we also attempted to have at least one cover-related story in each issue of Weekend. An example of this is our pizza issue (Pizza, Feb. 11, 1983), which featured related stories on prices of local restaurants, how pizzas were made and the origins of pizza. In an effort to link each story, we took the cover “Pizza” emblem, shot it down on the process camera and inserted the logo on the top of each page with a pizza-related story. This helped to tie the issue together into one, neat package.
In the future:

One of the most critical factors in the success of Weekend's quality of writing is good story planning. In planning the covers before the beginning of the quarter, the editors have time to find competent writers for each assignment; the writers have adequate time to research a story and interview a number of people; and the editors have more time to review and critique a story.

Although the emphasis of planning may be on the covers, it is equally as important to plan the other stories for an issue. Most cover stories have great potential for related items, such as sidebars, photo pages or separate stories on a different angle than the cover story. Having at least one other cover-related story in an issue will make Weekend stronger as a whole magazine, rather than just as a collection of unrelated feature stories.

As in the past two quarters, I think it is best for Weekend editors to adopt a rather flexible attitude towards changing cover stories. Although I believe good planning of cover and related stories is essential to the success of the magazine, a rigid attitude could result in a lessening of the quality of writing.

SPECIAL PAGES

In the past:

During the 1981-82 school year, the centerspread for Weekend was located on pages 2 and 3. All other pages were designed according to the discretion of the editors. Reviews, columns, photo pages and the staff box were put in different locations in the paper each week.
Winter and spring, 1982-83:

In an effort to have some continuity in Weekend, Doug and I placed the staff box, Billboard's Top Ten record hits and a movie review on page 2 each week. Our centerspread was placed on page 6 and 7, in order to draw the reader through the rest of the magazine.

During the middle of Spring Quarter, Billboard presented a problem. Since this copy is a service of the Associated Press, we had to depend on them to send it by at least 4 p.m. each Thursday. And unfortunately, it became undependable. With this in mind, we decided to permanently eliminate this copy from page 2 and lengthen or add graphics to our movie review.

In the future:

In redesigning Weekend, I would suggest more continuity to each page every week. For example, I would leave the centerspread on page 6 and 7 for the reasons stated above. The two back pages would be a spread with low ads called "Entertainment," and contain a crossword puzzle, a word search puzzle, TV highlights, TV listings, and answers.

Reviews would appear on the page preceding "Entertainment" each week.

Page 2, and if needed, page 3, would be labeled "View point," and consist of rotating bi-weekly columns, essays, the staff box, letters to Weekend and an editorial. An editorial cartoon would also appear on this page, but unlike the Daily News cartoon, Weekend's would be illustrative of the written editorial.

Although this would not always be possible, due to advertising fluctuations, Weekend should have 16 pages in stead of 12 whenever possible. The number of pages could be negotiated with the advertising staff each week, or as soon as they have a solid idea of the ads they will have for an upcoming edition.
SPECIAL ISSUES:

☆☆ In the past:

The only evidence of special issues of Weekend in the past is a “National Enquirer” issue. At least three issues with this theme have survived.

☆☆ Winter and Spring, 1982-83

Weekend did two “special” issues over the course of the two quarters I was co-editor. The first was titled, as in the past, “Weekend Enquirer” (Weekend Enquirer, April 1, 1983). The issue, as its name indicates, was a spoof of the “National Enquirer,” a sensationalist publication with questionable journalism ethics, usually found at grocery store counters.

Our timing for this issue was both good and bad. Since it was published on April 1, April Fools’ Day, we thought it was appropriate and of interest to our readers. However, some problems resulted. The issue was published at a time when the Daily News was under strong observation by those in the college and those outside. The university investment series, published earlier in the year, had gained nationwide attention, and many in the community and outside of the community scrutinized the Daily News for its credibility. Because of this, our advisor, David Knott, and others in the department of journalism, strongly disagreed with our decision to run the issue. Since, with a free student press, the decision was mine and Doug’s, we decided to run it with some stipulations. One was that all stories were in fun — none were overly in bad taste, libelous or with intent to hurt a person or organization. To this end, much of the copy was killed at the desk by us both, including spoofs on religion and all profanity. The other stipulation was that we ran a disclaimer on the first inside page to inform the reader that all copy was fictional. We also changed the appearance of the design and copy so it did not appear as a regular Weekend edition.

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Our second special issue was "Play Ball," a 16-page tab dealing almost exclusively with baseball-related stories (Play Ball, April 15, 1983). A four-color cover photo greatly enhanced this issue, as well as some out-of-state coverage on the Cincinnati Reds.

☆ ☆ In the future:

Special issues can be special. For the readers, they can be appealing because of the in-depth nature of such an issue, and, if done well, will enhance the over-all image of the magazine in the reader's mind. If not well planned, they may have exactly the opposite effect.

An editor should not take a special issue lightly, nor should such an issue be overdone. Since they are "special," the decision to publish one more than once a quarter (which is two out of every 10 editions) should be carefully examined.

The topic should be an appropriate one, with enough offshoots to provide related story ideas for the entire issue. If you can't think of 10 good stories for a special issue, it probably isn't worth doing — it may be better as a regular issue.

Design is an important part of a special issue, and may signify that the issue is different to the reader. For example, in our "Weekend Enquirer" (April 1, 1983) edition, we used two different spot colors for the first time on the cover in stead of one, and our cover design and nameplate were entirely changed. Some of our inside headlines were done in reverse type, and all were sensationalist after the manner of the "National Enquirer." Our story lead-ins were done in large point sizes; progressively becoming smaller through the first few paragraphs until they reached the normal 10-point copy size. In our baseball issue (April 15, 1983), we used a color photo on the cover, something we do only once a quarter if finances permit. Throughout the issue, we used a "baseball" emblem at the top of each page to show the continuity of the theme.

Special issue story ideas should be assigned at least two weeks in advance; the cover story should be planned well over a month-and-a-half ahead of time. There are several reasons for this; if color photos are used, they take several days to be processed and must be given to Marion a week ahead of time; if press credentials are needed for any of the stories, they take time to be obtained; and the cover story should be
one that needs some in-depth work and time to complete. By preparing a special issue well ahead of time, you can also come up with better story ideas and have a larger selection of copy and photos to choose from.

INDIANA COLLEGIATE PRESS ASSOCIATION

☆☆ In the past:

In the 1981-82 ICPA news/general interest magazine competition, Weekend Magazine placed second overall to Verbatim Magazine, defeating Notre Dame Scholastic Magazine. Weekend earned first place honors in best essay, best news or informational article and best column; second in best review and best interpretive or investigative article; and third place in best cover design and best column. In addition, the Weekend advertising staff earned second place for the magazine.

☆☆ Winter and spring 1982-83

In the 1982-83 ICPA news/general interest magazine competition, Weekend again finished second overall. However, it was defeated by Notre Dame Scholastic Magazine, and it won over Verbatim Magazine.

Weekend placed first in best feature story; second in best feature story, best art and copy combination, best interpretive/investigative article or series and best make-up of a single issue; and third in best review and best news or information article. In addition, Weekend's advertising staff earned the Advertising of the Year award.
In the future:

Weekend’s weakest category was in editorial writing. This year, we had no entry for editorial writing and our entries for essay writing stretched a point, as did our column entries. Our photos did not place. Indeed, out of a year’s worth of Weekends, we were hard pressed to come up with three strong photos. For Weekend to defeat the Scholastic and Verbatim publications, strength must be developed in these areas.

An editorial/essay/column page in every issue of Weekend would aid in developing some solid contest material, as well as being of interest and service to the reader. Because of the nature of Weekend, an editorial could be prepared a week in advance, giving the author time to do some in-depth formulation of opinions. Essays would be appropriate on this page, as would columns. In short, this page would serve to develop Weekend’s potential in these areas we so sorely lack in now.

Investigative writing could be done perhaps every two weeks on a regular basis. For this to be successful, one paid writer could take this position every quarter. Details for this are discussed elsewhere in this paper, as are photo problems.

PHOTOGRAPHY

In the past:

Photography in the past ranged from excellent photo spreads to poor photos. In the 1982 school year, photography was extremely poor, resulting in little or no ICPA-worthy photos. Photos were shot on the process camera in production, and ruby-lift was taped to the flat on the photo hole.

Weekend had one Chief Photographer.
Winter and spring 1982-83:

Because of poor reproduction in the past, PMTs were shot of all photos, and the actual photo-image with dot patterns was pasted to the flat in production. This resulted in lighter and clearer reproduction.

Relations with photographers are very important, since their product may make or break an issue. Doug and I tried to make photo assignments at least a week in advance and a month ahead for color. On the Tuesday before publication, negatives were checked, and on the Wednesday before, photos were printed. We then sized them on the camera.

Although this procedure was not always adhered to, when it was, we had better photography and a quicker production schedule on Thursday nights.

Weekend did not have any permanent photographers.

In the future:

I would suggest working in the same time schedule, although meeting with photographers more during the week.

Also, I think Weekend should have a Chief Photographer in addition to Daily News photographers, who would work on a pay basis.

Also, to help build up stronger photos, I would have at least one photo page bi-weekly. Offering cash bonuses for outstanding photos would also give photographers incentives to perform well. And, as in the case of writing, recruiting photographers from photojournalism classes could result in more staff members and better quality photos.
THE REPORTERS

☆☆ In the past:

Over the past two years, Weekend has had no permanent writers, only writers who took time from the Daily News to work on stories for the magazine. However, those who worked for Weekend on a regular basis were listed in a staff box, which ran on page 2 every week.

☆☆ Winter and spring 1982-83:

At the beginning of Winter Quarter, Doug and I decided to eliminate the "regular" writers from the staff box, since our "regular" writers changed from week to week. Because Weekend is so firmly entrenched in the Daily News, we were unable to have our own, permanent staff. Most of the writers who worked for us wished also to obtain the experience of working for a daily publication.

However, we decided to work around this. By assigning stories early, we had more choice of writers, which hopefully improved the writing. We tried to follow up on those who did a good job on their stories, assigning them new ones immediately after editing the stories they brought to us. In addition, we went to magazine and feature writing classes in an attempt to recruit students who were afraid to come to the Daily News.

Through Daily News funds, we were able to offer bonuses to about four people during the course of two quarters, consisting of about $18 apiece. We did not publicize this until after the writer completed the story, and the money was not received by the writer until two weeks later.

For these reasons, I think our bonus system was not effective.
In the future:

Recruiting through journalism classes can be a good way to gain quality writers for Weekend's staff. Every quarter, hundreds of writing assignments are turned in, and from these, many good profiles and features are graded, taken home and tossed in the nearest wastepaper basket. If these same writers were encouraged to bring their work to the Weekend editors, the magazine would gain new writers, and possibly, more quality writing. In addition, this would hopefully inspire more competition among regular writers, and thus, more and better stories.

The qualifications and rules for earning a bonus should be announced at the beginning of each quarter, and in each staff meeting. Winners of the bonuses would be well-publicized around the newsroom, possibly in a permanent spot on the awards bulletin board.

Any reporter who takes an assignment should be checked on during the week through either personal contact or a phone call. This ensures the story is turned in, and the reporter receives all necessary help.

After a story is turned in, the reporter should immediately be given the opportunity to take another assignment.

I think another aspect of Weekend staffing which needs to be explored is to assign several permanent beats each quarter. For example, in order to do any quality investigative articles, we would need a permanent investigative reporter, or a team of two investigative reporters. An editorial cartoonist, hopefully different than the Daily News cartoonist, would also be needed for the Viewpoint page. Also, at least two different columnists would be needed, preferably one serious and one humorous.

A copy editor would be an asset to Weekend, although the current system of having the editors check copy seems to work fairly well. If the magazine went to 16 pages on a regular basis, however, a copy editor would be essential to keep the publication copy clean.
DESIGN ELEMENTS

☆☆In the past:

Staff artwork was very impressive in some past issues, with Len Forbes and Paul Montgomery contributing some excellent graphics. Spot color was used mainly on flags, headlines, borders and artwork. Clip art was used well during almost all the past issues I looked at, although occasionally it was repeated. No spot color appeared on inside pages, and no color photography was used. Only one spot color per issue was used.

☆☆Winter and spring 1982-83:

Clip art was utilized in both quarters to an extent which it had not been before. Mike Newell, the Daily News staff cartoonist, also contributed graphical content to Weekend over the course of both quarters. These graphics were used with stories, as part of the cover and as small symbols at the top of pages to tie theme issues together (Pizza, Feb. 11, 1983; Fitness, Mar. 25, 1983; Play Ball, April 15, 1983).

Spot color was utilized in different ways during both quarters. Although always used on the cover, it was alternately screened (Weekend Enquirer, April 1, 1983), used as a background (Epcot Center, Jan. 7, 1983; Academy Awards, April 8, 1983; Play Ball, April 15, 1983), used in headlines and as a flag color (in most issues), used in artwork where appropriate (Ghosts, Feb. 4, 1983; Fitness, March 25, 1983; Meg, May 13, 1983) and in borders (Pizza, Feb. 11, 1983; White River, March 11, 1983; Interracial Dating, April 29, 1983; Jackie Means, May 6, 1983; Meg, May 13, 1983). In one edition, we used no spot color, which I think was effective since it was a deviation from the norm (Movie Trivia, Dec. 17, 1982). No spot color ever appeared on inside pages.
Reverse type was tried in our UFO edition, and failed miserably (Scanning the Skies, Dec. 10, 1982). It could have been effective if a larger type (over 10 points) was utilized.

Screens were used in a variety of ways in Weekend. On the cover of one issue, we used a 30 percent screen as a background (Tough Love, April 22, 1983), and in one edition, we used graphics shot with a gray screen over an unscreened sidebar (Interracial Dating, April 29, 1983).

Larger type letters were sometimes used in the copy (Meg, May 15, 1983), although not to often so as to appear ordinary.

One-point boxes were used for sidebars during both quarters. Boxing stories because of bumping heads was avoided where possible; instead, we endeavored to design the page in a different way.

Four-color photographs, due to financial limitations, appeared only once each quarter. However, I think both times (Huggy the Clown, Dec. 3, 1983; Play Ball, April 15, 1983) the use of color was effective, and served to heighten Weekend's image.

Weekend experimented with "fancy" borders only twice during my stint as co-editor: once with the finals' edition (Facing Finals, Feb. 18, 1983) and once with the pizza edition (Pizza, Feb. 11, 1983). The pizza edition border, which was flashy but simple, looked great; the finals' border, which was very busy, did not. I think the key to good borders is to make sure they do not detract from your center of interest on the cover, or in the publication.

☆☆In the future:

Spot color has many possibilities which Weekend has not utilized. I think spot color could be used in the centerspread headlines, border tape, art or in screens in the center when effective. This has been used with effectiveness in other publications; and could possibly give Weekend the design edge it needs over Verbatim and Scholastic.
Finances do not usually permit a 4-color photograph in Weekend. However, if they are budgeted, it is feasible that one may appear each quarter. Color photos must be sent to Marion at least a week in advance of publication, so they must be planned well. Also, a bad color photo looks worse than no color photo, so subject matter and processing would need to be chosen carefully.

Simple but effective borders may be found in many of the clip art books. Also, such simple things as rounding corners, or breaking the border with portions of the central elements (Prison centerspread, March 18, 1983) may be effective, if care is taken that they do not detract from the overall image you are trying to create.

Costs to be considered when planning design include spot color, which is $27.50 per page and an extra 25 cents per thousand copies, and full four-color, which is $70 for the separation charge and $1.25 extra per thousand copies (all figures are according to Jim Bell, production manager, for 1982-83). Weekend prints approximately 14,000 copies per week.

ADVERTISING

☆☆In the past:

Ads were laid out in the "well" fashion, described below. The ad staff finished in second place in the 1981 ICPA Convention.

☆☆Winter and spring, 1982-83:

"Don’t bite the hand that feeds you." So many would say when planning copy content and considering the advertisers. However, in the case of Weekend, Doug and I took the stance that copy content was a separate entity from the advertising. Unfortunately, this causes quite an uproar when we pub...
lished our pizza issue (Pizza, Feb. 11, 1983), which rated lo-
cal pizzarias in Muncie which delivered on campus. The
end result was the loss of an advertiser (who is now back),
the wrath of the advertising department and the dis-
agreement of the adviser.

Doug and I still maintain this issue was on a subject of
consumer interest and in the service of the readers. In the
"real" world, however, this issue would have probably
never been allowed to go to press.

In the above incident, relations between the advertising
staff and the Weekend editors were extremely poor. In most
ways, however, advertising staff/writing staff relations
were excellent. We were always given the freedom to move
ads from page to page, and the ad staff was always willing to
leave us open pages, give us 16 pages or block off ads.

Weekend ads are designed in a well fashion: stacked high
on the left on the left-hand pages, and high on the right on
the right-hand pages. No ads are higher in the middle of a
spread than on the outside.

The 1982 Weekend advertising staff finished first in
ICPA.

☆☆ In the future:

I think it is very important for their to be good commu-
nication between the ad staff and the Weekend staff; I think
it would be beneficial for the editors to plan to meet with
the ad staff every two weeks to plan issue size, ad lines and
discuss any content which may require moving ads (for ex-
ample, if a movie review criticizing a performance is run-
ing, the movie ad might be pulled off of that particular
page).

However, I think editors should remember that the ad-
vertising does not control the content. It is important to
make them aware if controversial copy is in an upcoming
edition so they can work with their ads accordingly. But,
content is the sole decision of the editors.

The well style of ad layout would be maintained.
BASIC TECHNICAL INFORMATION:

☆☆ In the past:

For the most part during the last two years, Weekend has used a four-column, 14-pica width format. Cheltenham Light, or font 49, and 10 point type has been used for the copy block. During Fall Quarter 1982, 49 point was used for cutlines. Cutlines and readouts were indented. Bylines were done in Cheltenham Light/Pseudo Bold, font 51, 12 point type.

Weekend was printed on Thursday night at Marion, Ind., and appeared as a supplement to the Daily News on Friday morning, except during the summer and finals week.

☆☆ Winter and spring, 1982-83:

In order to have a readable copy leg, with enough space for designing, Doug and I used a four-column format. Each column was 14 picas in width.

Cheltenham Light, or font 49, and 10 point type was used for our copy because of its readability. Cutlines were in Cheltenham Light/Condensed Italic, or font 54, to differentiate them from the copy. Cutlines and readouts were indented.

Bylines were done in Cheltenham Light/Pseudo Bold, font 51, 12 point type.

Headlines were taken from all the available Cheltenham fonts (fn49-70), and placed in 18, 24, 30, 36, or 48 point sizes. Exceptions to this were in the cover and centerspread headlines, which were sometimes taken from fonts in production which had to be processed through the headliner. Also, some different typestyles were chosen for appropriate ness to the copy content (Pizza, Feb. 11, 1983; Scanning the Skies, Dec. 10, 1982).

Weekend is printed on Thursday night at Marion, Ind., and appears as a supplement to the Daily News on Friday morning, except during the summer and finals week.
In the future:

I would continue to use four columns, font 49, and 10 point for the copy format. However, I think the current cutline style is too close to the copy style, and I would put it into a bolder font, such as Cheltenham Light/Pseudo Bold Italic, font 52, to make it stand apart from the copy. Cutlines and readouts should be indented. As a redesign possibility, I would experiment with pic lines, such as those used in the Daily News, as they serve to draw the reader into the photo cutline.

Bylines would be at the end of the story, with white space and a dash before the name. The name would be in Cheltenham Light/Pseudo Bold Condensed Italic, font 56 (Meg, May 13, 1983).

I think Weekend should have a certain number of headline styles to choose from and stick to them for regular stories, not just select fonts at random. In my redesign, I chose fonts 57, 58, 61, 62, 65, and 66. This gives the editor a variety to choose from, while still keeping the continuity of a set number of headline styles.

I would continue to use the headliner for special effects headlines. In addition, I would strongly lobby for the purchase of some new typstyles, since the ones available do not meet the design needs of the Daily News or Weekend Magazine. This would be a worthwhile purchase.

Weekend would still be printed on Thursday night at Marion, Ind., and appear as a supplement to the Daily News on Friday morning, except during the summer and finals week.