Telling Your Story

In 140 Characters (or fewer)

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Center for Media Innovation

Stimulates creative thinking about the present and future of storytelling among young people, professionals and the public, focusing on narrative, entrepreneurship and community engagement.
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MEET ME AT THE PENN-MCKEE!
America’s growing news deserts

As local newspapers have closed across the country, more and more communities are left with no daily local news outlet at all. Here are the number of audited daily papers per county, according to research from Ohio University and the Alliance for Audited Media.

There are about 65,000 local news workers in the US. That’s one for every 3,000 Americans.

Hollowing out

Rural America isn’t the only place local news is disappearing. It’s also drying up in urban areas around the country.

BOSTON, MASS.

Peter Kadis was a staffer at the Boston Phoenix for almost 25 years until the paper closed in 2015. Kadis says social justice, political, and investigative stories took a hit, as did coverage about the city’s minority communities. “What it did is it removed from the scene, effectively, a political voice for their interests.”

DENVER, COLO.

The Rocky Mountain News’s February 2009 closure, plus the Denver Post’s continued layoffs and dropping circulation, have “deprived [Denverites] of an understanding of and ability to make informed decisions about issues of local governments,” says former Rocky editor, president, and publisher John Temple. “The current world does not lend itself to supporting the economy of local news.”

CINCINNATI, OHIO

After the December 2007 closure of the blue-collar Cincinnati Post, news coverage went halcyon, though much of that coverage focused on affluent suburbs. For instance, the online-only Fort Thomas Matters extensively covers a Northern Kentucky suburb just outside Cincinnati.
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2015

The Daily News

INSIDE TODAY

SPORTS: Hot-shooting North Allegheny holds off Tigers to win host tournament

THANKS, MON VALLEY

Daily News publishes final edition after 131 years

on CAROL, WATERLOO FRAZIER

The Daily News rolls off the press for the final time today — about 40,000 editions and 131 years after it began.

The people of McKeesport always have defined The Daily News using the same slogan that appears below its nameplate: “More than a newspaper, a community institution,” McKeesport Mayor Michael Cherepko said. “From my time as a paper boy through my career in local politics, the Daily News has been a part of my life. I am saddened by our city’s loss with the closure of this institution, and I am sure the McKeesport community will continue to grieve as we are forced to search for new venues for local news.”

EIRNE HARKLESS

“IT’S DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THE NEWS IS CLOSING. I AM VERY SAD. TECHNOLOGY IS GREAT BUT I LIKE TO HOLD MY NEWSPAPER IN MY HAND.”

CIRCULATION for the afternoon paper peaked at 46,836 in 1971. The circulation today is 8,641. At its peak, about 120 people produced The Daily News. Today, there are 32.

One of those employees was Ernie Harkless, who retired in 2003 as production manager after 48 years. Working at the News, Harkless said, “was very sustaining. It provided me with a decent living. I was able to support my family.”

Last edition: December 31, 2016
The New McKeesport & Neighboring Community Group
Group · 1.8K members
This Group has been created to give McKeesport and Neighboring Community a

McKeesport Daily News
Group · 5.9K members
Welcome to our McKeesport Daily News Forum, where our

McKeesport News Piss an Moan
Group · 1.1K members
A place to come and unload all your negative comments an...
Everyone is a publisher now
Cacophony of Voices

“One of the biggest challenges we all face, in an era where everyone has a platform, is figuring out whom to listen to. Open platforms that once seemed radically democratizing now threaten, with the tsunami of false information we all face daily, to undermine democracy. When everyone has a megaphone, no one can be heard.”

~ Lydia Polgreen, *HuffPost*, January 2018

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/huffpost-opinion-huffpost-personal_n_5a5f6a29e4b096ecfca98ed](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/huffpost-opinion-huffpost-personal_n_5a5f6a29e4b096ecfca98ed)
THE BEST STORYTELLING WINS
Good Questions

• Do you like Washington, D.C.?

• *WHAT* do you like about Washington, D.C.?

• *WHAT* do you like *BEST* about Washington, D.C.?
What’s the BEST thing you’ve ever done?

DISCOVER SOMEONE’S STORY IN TWO QUESTIONS
What’s the WORST thing you’ve ever done?

DISCOVER SOMEONE’S STORY IN TWO QUESTIONS
TELL YOUR OWN STORY

In 140 characters (or fewer)
CREATIVE NONFICTION

#TINYSTORY

CreativeNonfiction.org

https://creativenonfiction.org/writing/the-square-root-of-true/
140 CHARACTERS

Yes, this includes spaces, periods and other punctuation!
A wake of turkey vultures visited my parents’ yard last night on my dad’s 78th. They circled all evening. This morning, having survived his birthday, dad greeted them victorious with a raised, shaking fist, “Haha!! Not yet, you damned buzzards! Not yet!”  #tinytruth
This is anticipatory grief. I can discuss hospice care on the phone and hang up with no tears shed. Then, after a dishwasher is delivered but not installed due to complications, the tears flow like the water that flooded out of the broken machine into the kitchen.

#cnftweet
My mother can’t mince parsley anymore. The ready-chopped herbs are more expensive, use more plastic, & cut by a stranger. She still puts it all together to make spicy chimichurri. To place on sausage, bread, & ribs. It takes a village of hands to be raised by a mother.

#cnftweet

3:47 PM · May 8, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone
@LeScribbler: Dawn pinks and I’m watching from the balcony, writing and listening to the birds quish and swish as they flirt with each other in the pine trees. The smell of freshly brewed coffee mixes with the scent of freshly dewed earth. Weekend moments I try to capture in words.
Snow, rain, cold, gray skies—five months of hibernation. But today, I can finally say, “Yes!” to my two-year olds all important question:

“Please, Mama, I go playground?”

A toddler’s smile—the best kind of sunshine. Joy resurrected, incarnated.

#tinytruth #resurrection
@NicoleLVMullis: Sipping out of a December mug in March, charmed by the snowmen couple it features. Their layers of whimsical winter wear should kill them by noon, but the bliss on their doomed faces - pure spring.

11:29 AM · Mar 23, 2022
WRITING EXERCISE

Tell Your Story
(in 140 characters or fewer)
SHARING YOUR STORIES
Conclusion & Questions

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