

SOUTHERN NEWSPAPER  
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION



**Carmage Walls**  
**Commentary Prize**

**2018 Entry Form**

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**What is the subject/title of the entry?**

**Date(s) of publication?** Sept. 9, 2017

**Is your newspaper under 50,000 circulation or above 50,000 circulation?** Under 50,000

**Please give a brief explanation of issues discussed and the results achieved. (This space will expand as you type in your comments.)**

**Sept. 9, 2017 – Introductory column when new publisher arrived. Coming from Hurricane Harvey devastated area near Houston, and localizing the importance of home grown journalism for readers in northeast Alabama.**

# OPINION

“I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.”

COMMENTARY | BRANDON COX

## Journalism's finest on display in the face of Harvey

As Hurricane Harvey began his excursion through Southeast Texas, I loaded my truck with my Labrador and my family's essential items and set course for north.

In the three years my family and I called the Houston region home, we were never forced to run from a storm. Until the day we left.

I've wrestled all week long about what topic to highlight in my introductory column. I began several drafts, some about the unique experiences my family and I have already enjoyed since settling in Scottsboro, others giving you a brief personal history of myself and discussing items not found on my resume—such as Rotary service or hobbies outside of work.



Brandon Cox

But as I continued to watch the events in Southeast Texas unfold, I was reminded why I chose the profession of journalism.

You see, journalists choose to work odd hours and to insert themselves into precarious situations because we believe it is our duty to bring our communities vital content that effects the everyday life of those we share our neighborhoods, parks and groceries with.

Every day, journalists in communities just like ours set out to hold government accountable and to share helpful information with the residents of the communities that they serve. Journalists work to ensure that the American ideal of democracy remains vibrant, especially at the local level.

I believe that newspapers are the “glue that binds” a community together. The strongest communities, constructed of geographies or similar interests, are built around strong newspapers and strong journalism. Rob Mitchell, editor of the Pulitzer-prize winning Rutland Herald (Rutland, Vermont, population 16,495) says, “The role of a community newspaper is to commit journalism and take stands that matter.”

I couldn't agree more.

In recent days, I've seen several of my dear friends and colleagues in Texas commit excellent journalism in a difficult time.

Some, in the midst of the storm, have lost everything themselves. Yet they continue to hammer out column inch after column inch, because it's their duty.

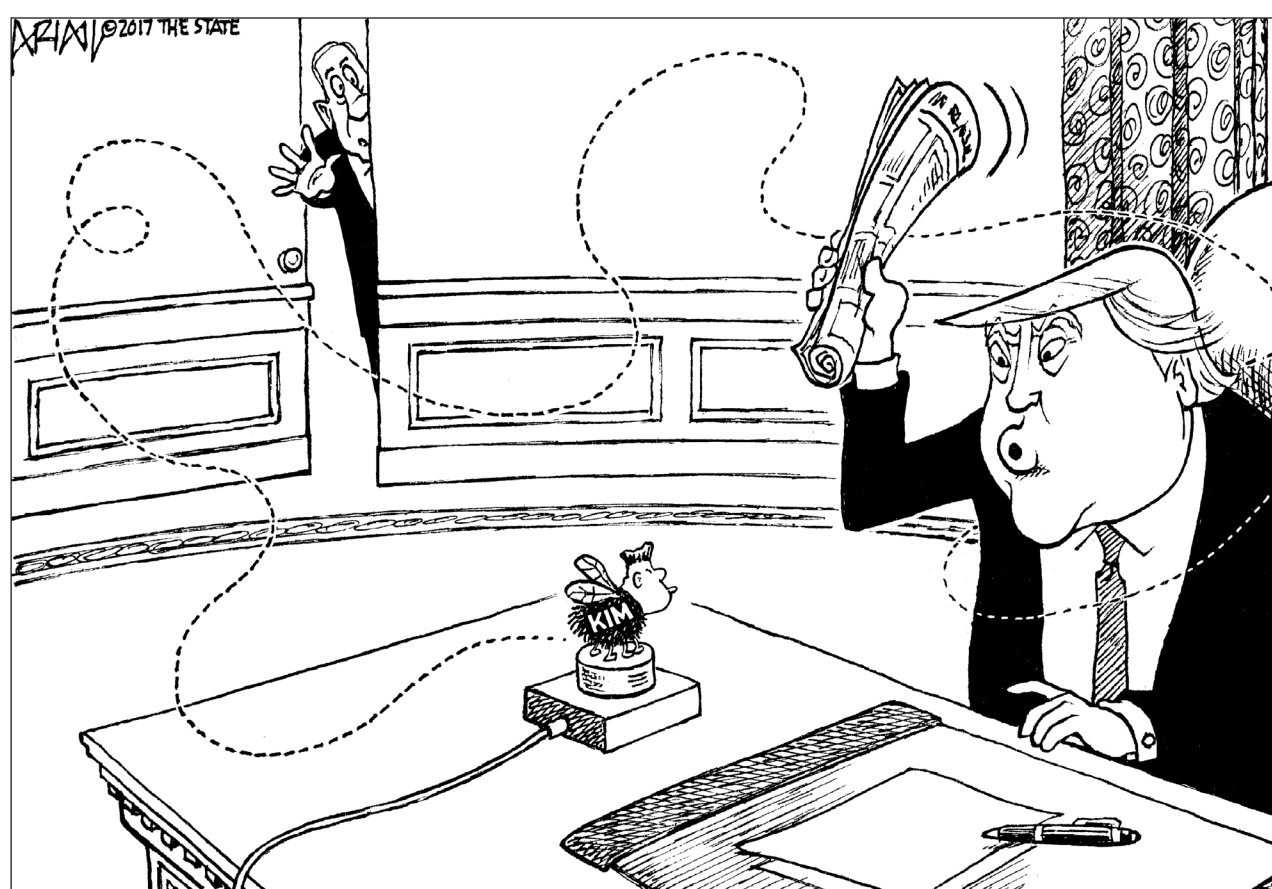
They did not take the time to play victim to their circumstance, instead they worked tirelessly to fulfill their mission as journalists. Every moment that they were awake was spent producing and distributing content that would help their friends and neighbors survive the storm, and flourish in the days, weeks, months and years ahead.

They often slept on the floor of the newsroom, either because their homes had taken on water or because they feared leaving and missing an opportunity to share a word that could bring hope to someone that was hurting, or even save a life.

I personally know journalists that waded in waist- and chest-high waters to check homes for those who might be trapped.

I know others who fed and clothed the cold and displaced, and others who comforted and prayed with the broken and the confused.

Our sister papers have produced some of the most riveting work I've ever seen in the face of uncertainty. In Brazoria County, Texas, the water continued to rise as two rivers converged, a result of the incessant rainfall north of the area compounded by the drainage difficulties of Houston's concrete jungle.



## YOUR VIEW

# Vote for Judge Roy Moore

Dear Editor:

The people of Alabama have spoken loud and clear. We have declared that the Washington elite will not choose our next U.S. Senator. The first round of voting sent a clear message to the D.C. lobbyists and power brokers who have bankrolled the efforts to buy Alabama's senate seat on the behalf of Luther Strange.

Let's make this absolutely clear, Mitch McConnell and his cronies do not want a conservative fighter in the senate who will stand on principle. The establishment prefers a former Washington lobbyist who will play puppet to the demands of the special interests. This is why the Washington cartel is flooding this race with malicious negative attack ads in an attempt to slander the name an honorable man in Judge Roy Moore.

If we truly wish to drain the swamp, we will begin right here at home by defeating a creature who has swam in the murkiest, mosquito infested, odor-filled waters throughout his political career.

Then Attorney General Luther Strange, the former Washington lobbyist, appeared to have made a shady deal in order to land an appointment to the senate from an embattled and corrupt Governor Bentley, whom he was supposed to be investigating. The swamp apparently cannot afford to lose Luther Strange.

The McConnell allied Senate Leadership Fund has spent millions in our great state to hold on to their beloved fellow D.C. insider. Why is so much money being spent by the elitists to defeat Judge Moore and not to help fund campaigns to defeat democrats in 2018? It is simply because they absolutely fear principled conservatives who honor their commitments to the voters.

From valiantly serving our nation in Vietnam to defending our constitution as a jurist on the Supreme Court of Alabama, Judge Moore has always stood for the truth.

This is a man who has been vilified for publicly acknowledging God and standing for the values of the people of Alabama. If we seek to restore our constitutional republic we must cleanse the temple in our nation's capital. The Gospel tells us of Jesus seeing corruption taking place in His Father's house, he then marched into the temple and turned over the tables of the money changers. We need someone who will courageously go to Washington and fight to end the corruption and return morality back to our nation's capital.

Washington was once a place of integrity where patriotic statesman would fight for the liberty of the people they represented. Sadly, it has become a den of thieves. We must cleanse

the temple in Washington of moral and ethical bankruptcy.

Judge Moore is a principled constitutional conservative who has stood tall in the face of political persecution.

His history of unwavering commitment to serving the people of Alabama make him uniquely qualified to serve us in the U.S. Senate. He has promised to work to end the federal income tax and abolish the IRS. He has promised to fight to repeal Obamacare, secure our southern border, and support our brave men and women of the military. Judge Moore will fight liberal activist judges tooth and nail to stand for the rule of law and honor our constitution.

We know Judge Moore will stand by his word. He has done so in the past, and he will do so again as our next United States Senator. My fellow Alabamians, it is time to turn over the tables of the money changers in our nation's capital and defeat the corrupt Washington establishment. Join me in restoring integrity in Washington by voting for Judge Roy Moore on Sept. 26. I ask for your prayers upon this campaign as we put on the full body armor of God as we work to cleanse the temple in D.C. Thank you all and God bless the great State of Alabama.

—Dylan Smith  
Jackson County Chairman,  
Judge Roy Moore for U.S. Senate

## TODAY IN HISTORY

**Today's Highlight:**

**On Sept. 9, 1957,** President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the first civil rights bill to pass Congress since Reconstruction, a measure primarily concerned with protecting voting rights and which also established a Civil Rights Division in the U.S. Department of Justice.

**On this date**

**In 1942,** during World War II, a Japanese plane launched from a submarine off the Oregon coast dropped a pair of incendiary bombs in a failed attempt at igniting a massive forest fire; it was the first aerial bombing of the U.S. mainland by a foreign power.

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Published Tuesday through Saturday by  
Scottsboro Newspapers, Inc.

701 Veterans Drive  
Scottsboro, AL 35768

Publication Number: 490680

Periodical postage paid at Scottsboro, AL  
POSTMASTER:

Send form 3579 to  
The Daily Sentinel  
P.O. Box 220  
Scottsboro, AL 35768

## YOUR OPINION MATTERS!

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