

How Loveland Magazine was Founded

David Miller remembers, at age 11, throwing the carefully folded and rubber-ban wrapped Cincinnati Post to front porches from a bicycle he pieced together. They were pitched off the back of a truck from Cincinnati, and Miller spent an hour each day inside the family garage door carefully folding the paper so it had just the right aerodynamic qualities to sail across front lawns. If the paper didn't land on the porch, he had to dismount and retrieve the news from the bushes. So it all began for him with the fold. He knew nothing at the time about "above the fold," but the fold was always important to him.

Miller delivered the afternoon daily for two-cents a throw. On Saturdays, he walked the neighborhood trying to collect the full subscription price for the distributor, a gruff man who came on Monday's demanding the money he sent small children to collect for him. To make his operation more efficient, Miller borrowed \$50 from his father and bought a new Schwinn bicycle with a metal rack on either side of the rear wheel.

"I never made a dime," Miller says, "Let alone pay my father for the bike. It was just too difficult to make the collections. People were either not home, or saw me coming and didn't answer the door, or just moved without paying."

"In the end, I owed my father, because the distributor always got his money first, and I was left with this clunker of a bike because the one I bought was sturdy heavy enough for the Wednesday paper, but it was really too heavy a bike for just riding around on," said Miller

Forty-four years later, Miller started folding again, folding technology into his desire to publish a hometown newspaper.

Loveland Magazine (LM) was first published in March 2004. Since that time, the on-line newspaper has published more than 12,000 stories and photographs, and 800 videos at www.lovelandmagazine.com. It all began one night the previous October when Miller could not find out when the Loveland High School homecoming parade would be held.

"I said to myself that night that whether you wanted to attend it or avoid it, there needed to be some place for local folks to find this kind of information," says Miller. "I wanted to attend the parade, but it was also important information for the whole community, that needed the information to be easily found."

Loveland has a population of 12,000, however, the on-line newspaper serves a larger population of about 30,000 in the southern Ohio school district.

"There hadn't been a locally owned newspaper here in three decades," says Miller. So one night when he had a spare moment, he researched what publishing tools were available on the internet. A print edition was never a consideration given that this was a period when so many traditional print publications were closing their doors, including the Cincinnati Post.

The first item published was a photo of a turkey vulture flying over the Little Miami, the state and nationally designated "Scenic River" that flows through the heart of the community. "Looking back many times over the years, I have contemplated what significance there is in why the vulture was first," says Miller with a smile.

Another story that was published the first week was about where to find the lowest priced gas in Loveland. Consumers could save 10 cents a gallon at Kroger where regular gas was selling for \$1.69. “So this tells you we have been around for a while now,” says Miller.

A story Loveland Magazine published in its second month was about a child enticement case in Cincinnati being solved by local police. The story cited sources of the Cincinnati Post, an icon print publication that soon closed.

“We believe our commitment to on-line publishing has been a smart strategy,” continues Miller. “More and more things just kept falling into place for us. Not that we are all that smart, but probably just lucky.” Miller cites as an example, the ease and affordability of now being able to publish video.

LM has done video interviews with local newsmakers and US congressional representatives both in the LM studio, and in the newsmakers’ homes.

Miller says they investigate everything that comes down the pike to see if a new application will help them do things more efficiently, or drive readers to their home page. He tells every potential advertiser that it is LM’s daily content that drives readers to the site. “It is that fresh, locally interesting, and useful news that gets local shoppers to see your ad,” he explains to them.

Loveland Magazine covered the 2012 Presidential race when candidates were in the Cincinnati area, providing exclusive reports and video of their campaign appearances. This was a unique opportunity for high school intern, Ricky Mulvey who reported from the campaign appearances of President Obama and Vice-President Joe Biden. Miller said, “We also covered the Civil Rights Game when it was at Great American Ball Park, published photos from inside the White House, and interviewed Congresswoman Jean Schmidt in the halls of Congress.”

“A recent story of the fire that nearly destroyed two historic buildings in downtown Loveland was seen by one-third of a million people,” says Miller.

LM has just launched doing Facebook live broadcasts of events and local council meetings. At times there are thousands of people watching and commenting on the council meetings from the comfort of their homes.

Miller says that the development of reasonably priced yet high quality high definition video cameras has helped tremendously. Free video editing applications like MPEG Streamclip and HitFilm Express are tools LM uses every day of the week.

“Given the advances in smart phones and tablets, and that LM has always been cloud-based, Loveland area residents carry around in their pocket or have sitting next to their couch or breakfast table every story, photo, or video we have ever published,” said Miller. “And, anything new we publish is delivered with the speed of light from our virtual Schwinn bike.”