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# NORTHWEST ARKANSAS Democrat Gazette

## NEWS RELEASE

### Northwest Arkansas Dailies Consolidated Into Single, Regional Newspaper

SPRINGDALE, AR (January 5, 2015) – Northwest Arkansas Newspapers, LLC announced Monday that it is consolidating its five northwest Arkansas daily newspapers into a single regional newspaper, the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

Northwest Arkansas Newspapers, LLC is jointly owned by WEHCO Media, Inc. and Stephens Media. Northwest Arkansas Newspapers owns and operates the *Benton County Daily Record*, *Rogers Morning News*, *Springdale Morning News* and *Northwest Arkansas Times* and the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Northwest Edition*. With the consolidation, the individual daily newspaper nameplates and content will continue to be published as the “B” section of the *Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. Production of the company's 10 weekly publications is not affected by the change.

“With a regional population of 500,000, northwest Arkansas is recognized as a major metropolitan area,” said Rusty Turner, editor of the *Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. “We have come to think, live, work and act as a region without borders and this decision reflects our region’s growth and development.”

Turner said the *Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* will continue to provide in-depth news coverage about local communities and provide a regional focus.

The front page will include a mix of the important local, regional, state and national news of the day. The ‘B’ section will include news from Washington and Benton counties and selective, statewide news of particular interest and relevance to northwest Arkansas.

“Readers will receive more news about and from northwest Arkansas,” said Turner. “News decisions will be made by editors who live and work here, and who understand our values.”

The Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette will continue to be a daily newspaper with early morning delivery and distribution. Daily print subscribers to the newspaper will continue to receive access to the digital version.

The streamlined business model will create cost savings by reducing certain operational redundancies, including printing and some administrative functions. As a result of the format change, the newspaper has eliminated 15 positions from its workforce of 373, or less than 4 percent. Nine of the positions eliminated were in the daily newspaper newsroom, while six positions came from other departments. No other reductions in workforce are planned.

In addition, the newspaper offices in Rogers and Bentonville will close. According to President Todd Nelson, news department employees will work from Springdale and Fayetteville.

“Many reporters already are and will be equipped to work from the field,” Nelson said.

Nelson said the move allows greater investment of resources into news-gathering and expanded

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opportunities for advertisers. “Like any business, we constantly assess our operations and make adjustments in response to market needs, the role of technology and making best use of our existing resources,” Nelson said. “We want to prepare for many years of serving northwest Arkansas with a robust newspaper and digital news source.

“This approach allows us to focus on growth and sustainability in our news-gathering operations, while responding to the focus of northwest Arkansas as one dynamic, vibrant region,” Nelson said.

The consolidation should improve readers' ability to find regular features and coverage in the paper, while maximizing visibility for advertisers.

“Rates are not increasing for retailers and our clients will still have the option to target their advertising messages to readers in Washington or Benton counties within the ‘B’ section,” said Crystal Costa, advertising director. “They can also target by Springdale, Fayetteville, Rogers or Bentonville in the ‘Our Town’ feature section that will publish each Thursday.”

Northwest Arkansas Newspapers' digital editions have been part of a consolidated brand, nwaonline.com, for several years. A new website, nwadg.com, will continue this approach. Online Director Matthew Costa said the website will have the comprehensive combination of local, state, national and world news seen in the paper, along with breaking and developing stories posted to the website and mobile apps throughout the day.

For more information about this announcement, please contact after 3 p.m. Monday, January 5:

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