

Hunter L. Andes

Hometown: Makoti, ND

School: Minot State University

Internship: McLean County Independent, Garrison



The McLean County Independent has changed a person's life during the last two summers – his name is Hunter Andes.

Okay, okay – enough with referring to myself in the third person. Of the many things I have learned from Mike and Jill Gackle during my time at BHG, one would have to be constructing a strong lede.

However, even though a strong lede, stellar photo and proper info boxes are crucial to “the package,” there is one other thing a good journalist must possess – and that is character. During my time at the Independent, one thing has stood out to me and that is how far a firm handshake, respect and trustworthiness can really take a person in this field of work.

Of these, respect is one of the most important. The editor is one of the most important positions in a community because in a way you become a gatekeeper. Whose story gets to be told? Whose is left out because you were unwilling to follow up or not creative enough to find them in the first place. I always strive to look deeper because you never know what may be at the end of a twisty-curvy township road – or even right in front of your face for that matter.

A good journalist doesn't just sit in the office and wait for the stories to come to him – he must go out and blaze his own trail. That is what I have tried to do, and I think it has been successful.

One other thing that has stood out to me is that a good editor needs to know his audience. When all the old ladies compliment you on your writing, you know at that point that they are reading your material, so that's when you step into action and think of something they'd like to read. Most people that age went to township school, so doing a front page feature on township schools is going to go over super well. And who wouldn't be interested in the underwater cities underneath Lake Sakakawea? The elders not only get to share their stories — their stories serve as documentation for future generations.

My time here has given me the itch – the longing to own my own newspapers some day. Mike and Jill have pushed me to be my best – little did they know that's the key to my success – I just need a little tug to get going, and then it's full speed ahead.