

Jean Alice Small, publisher, dies

Jean Alice Shaver Small, 88, editor and publisher of The Daily Journal (Kankakee, Ill.), died this morning Friday, Sept. 13, 2002, at her home.

She was, by turns, a successful wife and mother; a hands-on editor and publisher who helped guide this newspaper and this community; and a pioneer for women in journalism across the nation.

Her touch extended throughout every aspect of this community and newspaper, to countless charitable and civic organizations she helped found, fund or volunteer for. At The Daily Journal, she wrote stories, assigned articles, discussed special edition covers and shaped editorial policy.

She served as a member of the Nieman Foundation Advisory Committee at Harvard University for three years, and was invited to serve as a Pulitzer Prize Juror four times.

In 1993, the Inland Press Association presented her with its Distinguished Service award. Inland, one of the nation's largest trade associations for newspapers, has members throughout the U.S. and Canada.

She was a member of the Inland board from 1976 to 1981, becoming the first woman to serve on the board in its 91 years of existence. In 1976, she was also elected to membership in the American Society of Newspaper Editors, one of only 15 women at the time in an organization of 793. She was on the editorial advisory board of the society's Bulletin.

"When I started, it wasn't considered appropriate for a newspaper to have a woman photographer," she once said. It was unheard of to have a woman in sports. Now it would be an anachronism if a paper felt that way. There are no barriers today for a woman in journalism. But I was there, and I saw the change."

She was active in the American Newspaper Publishers Association.

Among her many industry-wide achievements was an effort to make newspapers more aware of the problems of terrorism. She attended many seminars on terrorism. When she asked a regional press association to organize a presentation, she was told it wouldn't be of any interest to readers.

Today that effort of 30 years ago seems tremendously ahead of its time.

"It wasn't long before every small town in the country had a yellow ribbon around the trees," she said to Presstime, a newspaper industry publication.

In 1971, United Press International honored her for suggesting and helping to direct the Pulitzer Prize winning series "Diana, the Making of a Terrorist." In 1982, her editorials against a controversial hazardous disposal plant earned her a community service award from United Press International.

Among her many awards were the Maggie Sloan Craw-



JEAN ALICE SMALL — 1914-2002.

COVERAGE:

- Local, state and national leaders react to the death of Jean Alice Small, Page A3.
- A photo retrospective of her life, Pages A6-7.
- Sunday's Journal will have an editorial assessing her impact in the community and newspaper industry; and Managing Editor Phil Angelo's recollections of 15 years of working with her.

ford Award in 1989 from Olivet Nazarene University, a distinction she held with Elizabeth Dole and Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. That award includes an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Olivet. Mrs. Small also earned a distinguished alumni citation from DePauw University, her alma mater, in 1983.

She rubbed elbows frequently with the most powerful people in the nation. In 1969, she attended the first Nixon inaugural ball and helped produce a feature page on the ball for The Daily Journal.

Her role at the newspaper went far beyond running it. A hands-on publisher, she reported and wrote, approved editorials and helped guide a newspaper and its community for years.

In 1976, she covered the Republican convention, offering insight on the Fords and the Reagans.

"I watched carefully," she wrote. "I didn't take my eyes off Nancy Reagan. She barely spoke to Betty Ford. She treated her exactly as someone would treat a lesser being. She smiled and received. Betty Ford hugged and kissed and gave. She even kissed Ronald Reagan. Nancy did not kiss President Ford."

"Such is the stuff on which history is made — sometimes," she wrote.

In 1975, she began an etiquette column for all Small newspapers, deriving her answers from common sense, her own experience and a number of source books.

"Good manners," she wrote, "are nothing more than the act we perform to make ourselves more attractive and pleasant in the company of others."

She also spoke out about the values of hope and high standards.

"All is not lost — if it were,

there would not be an outcry against Olympic stars who cheat with steroids and with baseball heroes who gamble illegally. Politicians' careers would not be ruined by unforgivable lapses of moral behavior. Investors in the stock market would not have to go to jail for criminal insider trading."

"But these things are happening. People are not accepting immoral behavior. Most professions have set up new ethics standards and are enforcing them. Schools once more are teaching ethics."

Mrs. Small also played a key role in the renovation of the DeSelm House at 691 S. Chicago Ave. in the Riverview District of Kankakee.

"I have often been asked why I bought this house," she said. "I don't know the whole answer myself, but the house represents an era to me when family life was strong, and moral values were solid and well-understood. The only examples of significant architecture Kankakee has ever had were these beautiful, high-Victorian mansions."

"One by one during my life here, I have seen them torn down to be replaced by homely, ordinary buildings. I just couldn't bear to see this one vanish."

The late Don des Lauriers, who died in 1997, supervised the renovation of the home. In 1989, Kankakee Neighborhood Housing Services recognized the restoration with one of its prestigious Golden Paintbrush awards.

She was involved in the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra and the Kankakee Valley Theater. She was secretary and vice president of The Guild of the Chicago Historical Society. She was on the board of the Antiquarian Society of the Chicago Art Institute and on the President's Council of the Museum

of Science and Industry from 1980 to 1983. In 1978, she was appointed as trustee of Lincoln Academy by Illinois Governor James Thompson.

She had three children, Len R. Small of Chicago, president and chief executive of Small Newspaper Group; Thomas P. Small of Los Angeles, senior vice president of the group; and Jennifer J. Small of New York City, a Washington writer; and six grandchildren, Len P. Small of New York, Ned Small of Chicago, Rebecca, Rachel, Calista and Jonathan Small, all of Los Angeles, Calif.

She was always proud of her family. Her citation as alumnus of the year at DePauw University noted that she raised a family before turning to journalism management.

Len H. Small, Jean Alice Small, and Len R. Small are the only husband, wife and son who have ever been board members of the Inland Press Association.

In 1969, she was named vice president and director of The Journal publishing corporation and in 1974, she was named associate editor. In 1976 she was named associate publisher.

She then became president after her husband's tragic death in a 1980 auto accident and was instrumental in acquiring two other newspapers, the Palisidian-Post of Pacific Palisades, Calif., and the Roseville (Calif.) Press-Tribune for Small Newspapers. Today, Small Newspapers includes daily and weekly papers in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota and California.

She played a key role in bringing the printing of USA Today to The Daily Journal plant.

She was a graduate of Tudor Hall in Indianapolis and DePauw University of Greencastle, Ind.

A 1935 graduate of DePauw University, she was a Kappa Kappa Gamma sister. She earned her undergraduate degree in three-and-a-half years. She had a lifelong love of learning. Years later, in the 1970s, she studied summers. She took courses at William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., and spent a summer at Warnborough College, Oxford, England, studying the influence of church and state on architecture.

A memorial service has been planned for 4 p.m., Friday, Sept. 20, at the Larsen Fine Arts Center on the campus of Olivet Nazarene University. A reception will follow the service.

Arrangements are being completed by the Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made to the National Arthritis Foundation, membership center, P.O. Box 4284, Pittsfield, Mass., 01202-9920; or to the River Trust Fund, Northern Illinois Anglers Assn., P.O. Box 188, Bourbonnais, Ill. 60914.