



**American Hometown  
PUBLISHING**

*Honoring Community Journalism*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AMERICAN HOMETOWN PUBLISHING LAUNCHES  
WITH ACQUISITION OF NORTON PRESS INC. NEWSPAPERS  
Company Preserves Integrity and Autonomy of Community Newspapers**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – Dec. 22, 2005 – American Hometown Publishing (AHP), a publishing network focused on preserving the integrity and autonomy of community journalism, launched this week with the acquisition of Norton Press Inc.'s three family-owned newspapers in Virginia.

American Hometown Publishing acquires and manages community newspapers of 25,000 circulation or less by forming partnerships with local publishers and growing their newspapers through proven revenue and market expansion efforts.

Norton Press Inc., based in Norton, Va., is the first newspaper group to join the network and has a combined circulation of 18,680 through three community newspapers including *The Coalfield Progress*, published twice a week with a circulation of 7,180; *The Dickenson Star*, a 7,000-circulation weekly; and *The Post*, a 4,500-circulation weekly. The Norton, Va.-based newspaper group is co-owned by the brother and sister team of Jenay and Michael Tate, who represent the third generation of family ownership that began with newspaperman Presley Thornton Atkins in 1924. Jenay Tate will continue as publisher.

"Norton Press exemplifies the kind of local publishing partners we're seeking for our network," said L. Daniel Hammond, publisher and CEO of American Hometown Publishing. "The Tates have been producing some of the best newspapers in the state and our goal is to continue that tradition of local news focus while enhancing operations to build even stronger papers for the readers and communities."

"We believe in the importance of community newspapers, their local editorial focus and keeping our publishing partners involved in the local leadership, while offering them financial interest in a growing company," said Hammond. "We focus on strengthening our partner newspapers by helping them improve their business operations, increase their revenues and profits and build their readership through additional resources and expertise."

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According to Jenay Tate, American Hometown Publishing's commitment to the newspaper communities and to preserving the local editorial and management made the partnership attractive.

"American Hometown Publishing's approach to keeping local newspaper publishers and executives involved gives us great confidence in the future of our newspapers and the communities they serve," said Tate.

American Hometown Publishing's founders have more than 60 years' experience in all levels of the media industry – publishing, advertising, marketing and management of community newspaper operations.

Hammond created Publishing Group of America and *American Profile*, a weekly magazine dedicated to covering the good news about life in America's hometowns. The magazine, considered the second largest publishing launch in U.S. history, and now the fourth largest weekly publication in North America, was created to answer community newspaper publishers' need for more editorial celebrating hometown life. *American Profile's* primary distribution is as an insert in community newspapers.

Steve Young, also a former founder of Publishing Group of America, serves as a founding partner and director of American Hometown Publishing. Other principals in the company include Ron Fryar, vice president of operations, with a 30-year background of managing community newspapers most recently with Morris Newspapers; Michael Hull, vice president of finance, formerly the CFO for Community Education Partners; and Stephanie Jameson, director of human resources, formerly the director of human resources for Hammond and Young at Publishing Group of America/*American Profile* magazine.

"We have assembled an experienced corporate team with a passion for community journalism, the commitment to uphold and grow local newspapers for their communities, and each member possesses a strong ethical and moral focus," said Hammond.

American Hometown Publishing is based in Nashville, Tenn., and was funded by a group of investors led by The Solidus Company (Townes Duncan, president); including Petra Capital Partners (Michael W. Blackburn, partner); the Burch Investment group and others.

### **About American Hometown Publishing**

American Hometown Publishing, Inc. ([www.americanhometownpublishing.com](http://www.americanhometownpublishing.com)) is a growing network of weekly and small daily community newspapers of 25,000 circulation or less. Publishing partners continue local leadership and involvement while receiving financial interest in a growing company. American Hometown Publishing preserves local editorial independence, growing the newspaper through revenue increases, regional cooperation and market expansion.

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