

## **THOMAS G. DAVIDSON**

**State College, PA**

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**Strategic planning for entrepreneurial and established organizations**

**Product research and development**

**Course and curriculum development**

**General management for commercial and non-profit media**

**Team building, journalism and strategic communication**

**Revenue, audience and donor development**

### **Academic assignments**

Donald P. Bellisario Professor of Practice, Bellisario School of Communication, Penn State University (2024 – date)

Adjunct lecturer, Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland (2017 – 2024); named journalism adjunct professor of the year, 2022; consistently high student evaluations

Adjunct professor, School of Communication, American University, Washington, D.C. (2011 – 2018)

### **Professional assignments**

**Digital media principal, Davidson and Associates (2009-2011; 2016 – date)**

*Consultant on digital media strategies, business models and audience development for clients such as Detroit Public Television; WAMU/Washington; Press Forward D.C. (pro bono); the Institute for Nonprofit News; Gannett Inc./USA TODAY NETWORK; Localist.com; the [John S. Knight Fellowships at Stanford University](#); the Knight Center for Specialized Reporting at the University of Maryland; the National Press Foundation (pro bono); and the Open Market Institute's [Center for Journalism and Liberty](#)*

Developing project-specific fundraising strategies for Detroit Public Television, including [GreatLakesNow.org](#), a digital/broadcast news organization covering environmental and water issues throughout the Great Lakes basin; and Future of Work, a series on DPTV's Michigan Learning Channel

Talent development and editorial strategy consultations for UpNext, a news startup launching Summer 2025. The startup will use short-form vertical video formats to provide rising business and policy leaders and their bosses with news, analysis and professional training – or, as its founders phrase it, “Axios Meets Reels.” I helped recruit editorial and production team members; provided feedback on specific content packages and helped shape initial beta tests.

Conducted strategic content, audience and product research as part of a strategic planning process at [WAMU](#), Washington's NPR station. Deliverables included a collaboration strategy to

identify and partner with mission-aligned organizations to provide more content to WAMU; better integrate the digital newsroom DCist.com with WAMU's market-leading public-radio broadcasts; and tie all to improved audience engagement and fundraising

Serve on an ad-hoc organizational committee for Press Forward D.C., an in-progress local affiliate of the \$500 million national [Press Forward](#) initiative to provide more funding for local news organizations

Designed and taught a 12-week distance-learning course in audience development for eight selected members of the Institute for Nonprofit News; translated the curriculum into an [interactive learning module](#) for all users

Researched and wrote a 4,500-word [white paper](#) outlining potential corporate structures and revenue models for local-news organizations for the [Center for Journalism and Liberty](#), a project of the Open Markets Institute

Served on search committees to replace retiring [National Press Foundation](#) presidents in 2013, 2019 and 2023

Refined go-to-market strategy and product tweaks for the media industry on behalf of calendar/event startup [Localist.com](#); closed a sales contract with its first media client, TBD.com

### **Director, research and product design, USA TODAY NETWORK/Gannett (2016 – 2023)**

*Utilized design-thinking processes to launch new products and address Gannett's critical revenue and local-sustainability initiatives. Other projects include validating new subscription and audience-revenue tools and offerings; developing new content verticals; and overhauling existing revenue products*

Led a team of designers, software engineers and product specialists to launch [a new platform](#) to manage and display public and legal notices – an \$88 million revenue category – by focusing on unmet consumer and advertiser needs. In under eight months, my team researched, designed, built and deployed the platform to meet the stringent requirements of a new Florida public-notice law. The tool now powers all publications across Gannett's network of 300+ local sites

In six months, researched and built Featherstitch.com, a prototype for a funeral-planning tool providing service journalism for users and a marketplace for advertisers. It was designed to revitalize a \$120 million revenue category by better serving consumers' and advertisers' unmet needs in managing the myriad tasks after a loved one's passing. (COVID-19 and the *de facto* banning of funerals and other public gatherings shelved a planned beta test.)

Tested a new reader-commenting tool and led other research to better integrate audience-development tools on news publications' article pages, shifting from an approach of "shouting at" users in hopes they would subscribe to instead engaging them with interactive features worth paying for. Initial tests showed a 4x improvement in registration and 2x in paying subscriptions. The tool was later widely deployed across the USA TODAY Network and contributed to a 30% year-over-year increase in digital subscriptions

Rationalized the USA TODAY NETWORK's editorial email newsletters, from multiple unsupported templates to a flexible suite of interchangeable tools. Reduced support costs by

more than 50%; cut the time to launch a new newsletter from weeks to a matter of hours; closed security holes

Tested approaches to convert Gannett's 50,000+ small-business clients from legacy print ads (a business in sharp decline) to digital tools like call tracking, AI-enabled website graders, listing- and review-management tools and other digital marketing services

**Senior director and chief of content, UNC-TV, the statewide public television network for North Carolina (2015-16)**

*Refocused a 50-person division to produce content that aligned with the organization's changing strategic needs, and to better utilize digital distribution to reach new audiences in support of the network's membership and revenue goals*

Won a \$210,000 federal grant for a documentary film series showcasing independent producers, *Reel South* — the first six-figure discretionary federal grant UNC-TV had received in more than a decade

Recast *NC Now*, a studio-bound nightly public affairs show, as a field-produced weekly newsmagazine. Nielsen ratings doubled; digital engagement improved; and more than a dozen segments streamed 100,000 times or more because of a revamped social-media strategy

Launched the [North Carolina Channel](#), a public-service / public-affairs digital sub-channel supplementing PBS North Carolina's primary programming. In less than six months, it built a measurable audience of public-affairs enthusiasts and generated more than \$100,000 in production partnerships

Supported fundraising by serving as chair of a search committee to hire a digital-fundraising manager, and by conducting a strategic analysis of the hidden costs of producing more than 400 hours of *live* over-the-air fundraising broadcasts each year

**Senior director, PBS Digital (2010 – 2015)**

*Led the team that developed the most-successful new fundraising tool in decades; served as project director and senior journalism leader for a variety of collaborations with public-media producers (such as FRONTLINE and PBS NewsHour) and PBS member stations; and consulted with station CEOs on strategic projects*

Built and launched [Passport](#), an on-demand streaming service for public-television station donors. The service generated more than \$4 million in donations in its first year from new donors ([median age 42 vs. typical on-air donors in their 60s](#)) and has generated more than \$100 million in revenue to date. Passport has surpassed the venerable pledge-drive DVD as the No. 1 source of new members for public television

Oversaw creation and launch of a new web-video series, [PBS Math Club](#), to adapt the PBS Digital Studios/YouTube content model for educational use; raised \$50,000 in grant funding from the Newman's Own Foundation for a second season

Served as publisher and general manager for an experimental public-media aggregation site; later served as liaison between PBS Digital and the independent producers of *PBS NewsHour* and *FRONTLINE*

Led the PBS Digital team that consulted with PBS' 160 member stations. My team focused on tying PBS Digital tools to stations' digital strategies, particularly at the 40 largest stations. Led presentations at public-media events including the PBS Annual Meeting; the Public Media Marketing & Development Conference; and the National Educational Telecommunications Association conference. Consulted with stations as diverse as KRWG, Las Cruces, N.M. (with eight total employees) and Twin Cities PBS (\$60 million in annual revenue)

**Vice president, partner and business development, GrowthSpur LLC (2009-2010)**

*Senior executive for training, partner recruitment and business affairs for an ad-network startup designed to foster healthy local-news ecosystems*

Recruited more than 100 independent news and information sites and assembled the needed technology for prototype local ad networks

Co-developed and led business and sales training for site operators

**Vice president of interactive content, Tribune Interactive (2007-2009)**

*Journalism, market-operations and product-development roles on the corporate staff of Tribune Interactive, the digital arm of the newspaper and broadcasting company*

Co-led the multi-market cross-functional team that launched Metromix.com, a local/national entertainment network targeting young audiences on behalf of national advertisers. The site eventually expanded to more than 60 markets

Directed digital content operations and new-product development for Tribune's four newspapers and three television stations in the northeast, spawning collaborations with commercial broadcasters and public media, and launching breaking-news sites

Built company-wide training about online video; streams tripled. When combined with other audience-development training, audience reach increased by 50 percent

**Interactive general manager, Sun-Sentinel, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (2005-06)**

Worked across divisions of the [traditional organization](#) to integrate the 40-person interactive and digital-video team into legacy print operations

Increased revenue by 25 percent, to \$17 million; managed expenses to generate profit margins in excess of 50 percent

Sharpened online video programming (killing a broadcast-style online newscast, adding more individual segments), applying audience analytics data to shift away from "gut-based" decisions. Monthly video streams doubled while freeing up resources

**Interactive general manager and vice president, strategic planning, the Daily Press, Hampton Roads, Va. (2000-05)**

Led the interactive content and sales unit and related P&L; later added strategic-planning responsibilities for the [newspaper](#)

Achieved a \$3.3 million swing in operating cash flow at the digital unit, from a \$1 million loss to a \$2.3 million profit; grew revenue from \$1 million to \$4 million

Managed content and revenue partnerships with regional broadcasters, including commercial outlets WAVY-TV (news) and WGNT (entertainment) and the NPR station WHRV-FM (news)

### **Reporter and editor, *Sun-Sentinel*, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (1988-1999)**

As city editor, focused the 50-person Broward Metro desk on enterprise reporting; mentored staff who later moved on to roles at *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *The Dallas Morning News*, CNN and public radio's *Marketplace*

As the paper's first chief of correspondents, combined the separate state, national and international desks into a single team, and increased the flow of 1A stories

As a reporter, covered politics, county government, suburban development, the statehouse and other general assignments

### **Reporter, then state capitol bureau chief, for Lee Newspapers, Iowa (1982-88)**

Covered classic public-affairs beats (police, courts, local government and politics) for Lee's flagship paper, *The Quad-City Times*, in Davenport, Iowa; promoted to launch a shared statehouse bureau for three Lee newspapers in Iowa

## **Education**

### **Certificate, Foundations in Design Thinking, IDEO U, Palo Alto, Calif., 2019**

A six-month distance-learning course of study in [qualitative research and applied product development](#) from IDEO U, the educational arm of the design firm IDEO

### **John S. Knight Fellowship, Stanford University, Palo Alto, Calif., 1998-99**

Awarded this competitive [year-long fellowship](#) for a customized course of study on the economics of the Internet and digital media. Work included seven courses at Stanford's Graduate School of Business; other classes in computer science and technology; seminars and colloquia on campus; tours and discussions at such Silicon Valley companies as Yahoo!, Excite and Knight-Ridder Digital; and served as research assistant for author Nancy Hicks Maynard, detailed below

### **Bachelor of Arts in Journalism, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, 1982**

Coursework in news-editorial journalism, with a minor in political science. Graduated with honors. My work included internships at *The Des Moines Register*, *The Des Moines Tribune* and *The Courier* in Waterloo, Iowa

## **Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities**

### **Case studies and white papers**

Author and researcher, [Ensuring Community News Coverage: Nonprofits and Other Models of Success ... and Failure](#), Open Markets Institute, January 2021

Lead researcher and author of media-focused business case studies published as part of the [Entrepreneurial Journalism Teaching and Learning Toolkit](#), curated by Jeremy Caplan, director of education at the Tow-Knight Center for Entrepreneurial Journalism, Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism, City University of New York:

*Homicide Watch D.C.: Do Audiences and Accolades Equal Sustainability?*  
Case study, teaching notes and discussion guide and visuals

*Bill Hirschman, Larry Johnson and Arts Journalism in South Florida*  
Case study, teaching notes and discussion guide

### **Selected media appearances:**

Monthly essays about current issues facing public-media organizations (including audience decline and sustainability challenges), *Editor & Publisher* magazine, viewable at: <https://www.editorandpublisher.com/publicmedia/>

Occasional essays about changing audience needs and the impact of those changes on media businesses for the trade association Digital Content Next

*A frank discussion about public media*, video/podcast interview, *Editor and Publisher*, Feb. 24, 2024, viewable at: <https://www.editorandpublisher.com/stories/a-frank-discussion-about-public-media-with-industry-expert-tom-davidson,248368>

*Press Forward is talking about public media – and you won't like what they're saying*, opinion essay, *Current: News for People in Public Media*, Nov. 3, 2023, viewable at: <https://current.org/2023/11/press-forward-is-talking-about-public-media-and-you-wont-like-what-theyre-saying/>

*Why public media should plan for an upcoming boost to local news funding*, opinion essay, *Current: News for People in Public Media*, June 22, 2023, viewable at: <https://current.org/2023/06/why-pubmedia-should-plan-for-an-upcoming-boost-to-local-news-funding/>

### **Books**

Research assistant, [Mega Media: How Market Forces are Transforming News](#), Nancy Hicks Maynard, 2000, Trafford Publishing

Draft reader/commenter, [Principles of Internet Marketing](#), Ward Hanson, 1999, South-Western College Publishing

### **Selected Talks, Lectures and Other Professional Presentations**

*Intrapreneurship vs. Entrepreneurship: Yin and Yang*, guest lecture, University of Maryland Merrill College of Journalism (multiple presentations, 2017 – date)

*Fake News: The Economics Behind Your Facebook Feed*, guest lecture, Emory and Henry College, Emory, Va., January 2017

*Adventures in Product, Revenue and Journalism*, News Entrepreneur Boot Camp, Knight Center for Digital Media, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, May 2010

*Digital Transformations: The Decline of Scarcity*, NPES: The Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing and Converting Technologies, San Diego, November 2007

*The Internet: Friend or Foe?*, World Offset Association, Toronto, April 2007

*Online Trends*, Florida Newspaper Advertising and Marketing Executives, June 2006

*Why Multimedia*, National Writers Workshop, Fort Lauderdale, April 2006

### **Conference proceedings**

Member, planning committee, America East publishing conference, 2016-2019

*Now Hear This: Smart Speakers, Podcasts and the News*, moderator and panel producer, America East publishing conference, Hershey, Pa., April 2019

*Artificial Intelligence, Bots and Automation*, moderator, America East publishing conference, Hershey, Pa., March 2018

*Classifieds Redux*, moderator, America East publishing conference, Hershey, Pa., March 2018

*Bringing News and Information to Life: Best Practices in Video*, moderator, America East publishing conference, Hershey, Pa., April 2017

*Member Video on Demand (MVOD): Progress & Updates on the Newest Station Member Benefit*, co-presenter, Public Media Development and Marketing Conference, July 2015, Washington, D.C. Repackaged and presented at nine different PBS regional sessions as part of the Passport product rollout

*Keynote Interview: Marc Roberge, songwriter / musician from the band O.A.R.*, MCON: The Millennial Impact Conference, July 2015, Chicago

*Main Stage Interview: Vicky Escarra, CEO of Opportunity International*, MCON: The Millennial Impact Conference, July 2015, Chicago

*Art and Influence*, moderator, MCON: The Millennial Impact Conference, July 2015, Chicago

*Member Video on Demand – and What it Means for Your Station*, lead presenter, National Educational Telecommunications Association Professional Development Conference, October 2014, Dallas

*Main Stage Interview: Justin Rockefeller, Rockefeller Brothers Fund*, MCON: The Millennial Impact Conference, July 2014, Chicago

*Member Video on Demand and Your Membership Program*, lead presenter, PBS Annual Meeting, May 2014, San Francisco

*The GM Digital Media Series: Lessons in Real Time*, lead panelist, National Educational Telecommunications Association Professional Development Conference, October 2013, Atlanta

*Relevancy, Trust and Profitability*, Teaching Panel Session, panelist, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Washington, D.C., August 2013

*How PBS and NPR Can Support Local Journalism*, moderator, Integrated Media Association sub-conference at South by Southwest Interactive, Austin, Tex., March 2011

*Frames of Reference – Online Video Advertising, Content and Consumer Behavior*, panelist, Online Publishers Association, Los Angeles, June 2007

## Grants

**Corporation for Public Broadcasting, \$210,000** for 2016-17 production and expansion of [Reel South](#), a collaborative public television series of independent documentaries co-produced by South Carolina Educational Television and the University of North Carolina Center for Public Telecommunications, for which I served as senior director and chief of content

**Newman's Own Foundation, \$50,000** for 2013-14 production of Season 2 of [PBS Math Club](#), a series of digital shorts and related curricula designed to teach math concepts to middle-school girls. The grant was awarded to the PBS Foundation; my role was executive in charge of the production for PBS Digital Studios, including reporting to Newman's Own on the results of their initial seed-funding grant for the project

**Knight Foundation via the Center for Media Engagement, University of Texas at Austin, \$50,000** for a [controlled, randomized test](#) of open-source commenting tools across 24 Gannett local news sites. Test showed dramatic (4x) increases in user registrations and 2x increases in resulting subscriptions by newly registered users. (I assisted CME on gaining internal approval at Gannett for the project; CME facilitated the Knight grant and conducted the study.)

## Selected Fellowships, Prizes and Awards

John S. Knight Fellowship at Stanford University, 1998-99

Rob Hiaasen Adjunct Faculty Award, Merrill College, University of Maryland-College Park, 2022

Outstanding Young Journalist Award, inaugural class, Iowa Daily Press Association, Des Moines, Iowa, 1987

Lead editor on packages that won the Brecher Freedom of Information Award, University of Florida; and the Livingston Award for Young Journalists

## Teaching, Mentoring and Advising

### Courses taught

*Advanced Telecommunications Management*, a 400-level capstone course for students in the Telecommunications (Broadcast) and Media Industries major at the Donald P. Bellisario College

of Communications, Penn State University. Fall 2024, Spring 2025. Enrollment: 20 to 27 undergraduates, generally seniors fulfilling their last major requirement before graduation. The course involves student groups analyzing and presenting business case studies illuminating key business and strategic trends facing various segments of the media industry, including the shift from cable to streaming broadcast services; the financial importance of sports rights for broadcasters; the rising economic and cultural impact of video gaming; and direct-to-consumer subscription management.

*Information Entrepreneurship*, a 400-level elective at the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, Penn State. Spring 2025. Enrollment: 19. Students self organize into teams to identify and analyze a consumer need in the information, communications or entertainment sectors of the media industry; ideate and test potential solutions to the problems; then structure a proposed start-up organization and minimum viable product offering to test and validate the proposed business model for the new venture. Students' pitches are judged by a panel of outside experts in entrepreneurship, including senior-level media executives.

*Media Entrepreneurship*, a 400-level elective for the University of Maryland's graduate certificate of professional studies in multimedia journalism, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019, Spring 2020, Spring 2021, Spring 2022, Spring 2024. Enrollment: five to nine graduate students. Course relies heavily on case studies, including student interviews of successful and unsuccessful journalistic entrepreneurs, and a capstone student project proposing a sustainable journalism or media venture, supported by customer interviews showing demand and desirability. Course sections were initially in person; shifted to fully remote during Covid-19; and now are a hybrid of in-person, synchronous online and asynchronous online sessions

*Product Development for News*, a 300- and 600-level elective for the University of Maryland's Merrill College of Journalism, Spring 2021. Enrollment: 10 undergraduate and three graduate students. Course utilized business and academic research about new-product development and optimization of existing projects, with a particular focus on news publications. Students applied their learnings through team-based consulting projects with three publishers. The course was offered during Covid-19 as a mix of synchronous and asynchronous online sessions

*Managing Nonprofit Newsrooms*, a 400-level elective for Merrill College, Maryland, Fall 2021, Fall 2022 and Fall 2023. Enrollment: seven to 15 students (generally with a 75/25 mix of undergraduate to graduate students). The course surveys business models and growth trends in the emerging nonprofit news space, using academic research, industry reports and analysis of real-time developments. It explores the scope and scale of the sector – and the challenges facing journalists who wish to start or lead a nonprofit news organization. The course culminates in student projects that analyze the strategic challenges facing a particular nonprofit news organization and recommend strategies and tactics to meet those challenges. Course sections have been in person

*Seminar in Journalism: Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, a 700-level required course in American University School of Communication master's program in interactive journalism, Spring 2011 (co-taught with Bill Day, senior vice president of Frank N. Magid Associates); Spring 2013, Spring 2014 and Spring 2015. Enrollments ranged from 13 to 25. Courses relied heavily on case studies, and a capstone student project proposing a sustainable journalism or media venture supported by customer interviews showing demand and desirability

*Media Entrepreneurship*, a 400-level elective for undergraduates in American University's School of Communication, Fall 2018, co-taught with Rebecca Haller, principal at Haller

Strategies and former managing director of consumer insights at POLITICO (and a student in my first graduate-level course at American in 2011). Enrollment: 14. Course relied heavily on case studies, including student interviews of successful and unsuccessful journalistic entrepreneurs, and a capstone student project proposing a sustainable journalism or media venture, supported by customer interviews showing demand and desirability

### **Mentoring and advising**

Supervisor for four undergraduate research assistants, Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, Penn State, Fall 2025. These student researchers are pursuing projects that include business case studies about emerging news organizations (intended for use in the Bellisario College curriculum); white papers about emerging communication topics for potential publication in academic journals and trade publications; and audience research and analysis to achieve audience-growth and revenue objectives for the college's student-managed media outlets and select Pennsylvania public-media organizations

Assigned mentor for Online News Association M.J. Baer Fellowship recipient Laura Norton Amico (2010-11)

Edited projects that went on to win major awards for the authors, including the Livingston Award for Young Journalists (one winner, two additional finalists) and the Joseph L. Brechner Freedom of Information Award

Informal mentor for dozens of reporters, editors and producers with whom I have worked or taught; the most successful went on to roles such as executive editor at the public-radio program *Marketplace*; a Pulitzer-winning investigative reporter now at CNN; digital director of Voice of America; dean at Merrill College, University of Maryland; executive vice president of audience engagement at a major independent marketing agency; the executive directors of the nonprofit news sites *Montana Free Press* and *Birmingham Watch*; and the (now-former) executive director of Injustice Watch, a non-profit news organization covering the Chicago justice system

### **Course or Curriculum Development**

*Advanced Telecommunications Management* – Overhauled and updated a 15-year-old syllabus for Penn State's capstone course for telecommunication and media industries majors. Revisions included updating core topics of the course to reflect current trends and strategic challenges facing broadcast, streaming, broadband and entertainment industries; identifying an array of relevant business case studies for use in the course; and changing the writing-intensive requirements of the course to focus on students' business-communication skills (including written white papers, one-page briefing documents; and slide presentations, all designed to inform executive leaders inside a business organization).

*Audience Growth and Development for Nonprofit News* – a 12-week distance-learning course for selected members of the Institute for Nonprofit News, comprised of local and national member-supported non-profit digital news organizations

*Media Entrepreneurship, Nonprofit News Management and Product Development* – a continually updated series of courses for graduate and undergraduate students at the University of Maryland and American University. These cover the fundamentals of media economics, revenue models for news and product development – especially Clay Christensen's "Jobs to be Done" theory – through the lens of design thinking and lean startup methodologies

*Digital Media Series for General Managers*, PBS Digital – an in-person and distance-learning curriculum on digital media’s impact on public television for station CEOs, general managers and other senior leaders, June 2013

*Newsroom Now: Transforming Our Newsrooms for the Changing Media Landscape*, co-author, Tribune Co. internal training document, January 2007

## **Service**

*Member, board of directors*, National Press Foundation, Washington, D.C., 2013- date  
Included service on search committee for the foundation’s president, 2014, 2019 and 2023.  
Member, governance committee, 2025- date.

*Member*, ad-hoc working group to form a Press Forward local chapter for the Washington, D.C., region: 2023 - date

*Member, finance committee*, Local Independent Online News publishers association, 2023 - date

*Judge*, Pitch Dingman Competition, Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship, Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland-College Park, 2024

*Judge*, National Press Foundation journalism awards, 2012-date

*Judge*, Local Independent Online News financial sustainability awards, 2021-date

*Judge*, Shaufler Prize in Journalism, Arizona State University, 2022 -date

*Grant application screener*, Press Forward pooled fund open call for local-news organization grants, 2024

*Fellowship applicant screener*, John S. Knight Fellowships, 2007 – 2017  
Graded initial applications (ranging from 10 to 50 per year) for the highly competitive John S. Knight Journalism Fellowships at Stanford University

*Member, board of directors*, Peninsula READS, the Peninsula Literacy Coalition, 2003-2005  
Included one-year term as board treasurer

*Volunteer saxophonist and multi-instrument reed player*, multiple community-theatre shows in southern Virginia, 2012 – 2018. (We’ll leave it to the audiences to decide whether this was community service or punishment.)