Issue 26-11

ACDC NEWS

November 2026

ACDC Marks 45 Years

We celebrated 45 years of service and contributions to agricultural communications with a special anniversary open house in October and welcomed guests to join us in marking this exciting milestone! Instructors, faculty, students, alumni, partners, and community members enjoyed displays featuring items from our archival collections, including The Volume One Number One Collection and the Oscars in Agriculture Collection, along with refreshments and tours of the Center.

The celebration also provided an opportunity to reflect on the Center's lasting contributions and the importance of preserving agricultural communications resources for future generations. We extend our gratitude to past and present contributors whose dedication and important work have helped sustain and advance the ACDC's mission over the years.

As we look ahead, we will continue our commitment to preserving the rich history of agricultural communications through our collections and to serving the evolving needs of researchers, students, teachers, and the broader community.

You can read more about the celebration and view event details on our ACDC 45th Anniversary webpage.

Update on America's shrinking local newsrooms

A 2026 article in *Nieman Reports* updates the challenges facing local newspapers and features the responses of four community papers across the nation:

- *The Appeal-Democrat*, covering Yuba and Sutter Counties in California
- *The Marion County Record* in central Kansas
- *The Sacramento Valley Mirror* in Glenn County, California
- *The Boston Post-Gazette*, serving the Italian American community in Boston, Massachusetts

Author Ann Hermes observed that the need for local news outlets remains. "Without robust local watchdogs, government waste goes up, damaging rumors on social media go largely unchecked, and city council and school board meetings take place without witness or scrutiny."

You can read "America's shrinking local newsrooms: through a photographer's lenshttps://niemanreports.org/americas-shrinking-local-newsrooms-photographer-ann-hermes-local-news-news-deserts-rural-america/" by open access.

"What food justice is and why it matters"

We are adding to the ACDC collection a 2023 article in *Sentient* about the concept of food justice and the emergence of a food justice movement. Food historians say the Greenwood Food Blockade marked the origin of the food justice movement, according to author Hazra Khatoon.

"In the Mississippi Delta in the early 1960s, access to food was cut off by white people in power as a strategy of disempowering Black residents who were fighting for civil rights." The blockade "ended up acting as a catalyst for a new Food for Freedom program."

You can read "What food justice is and why it matters, explained" by open access.

Using digital music to empower rural development in China

A 2022 issue of *Open Access Library Journal* features a musical approach to communicating for rural and community development. It comes from School of Music faculty members at Zhejiang Normal University in China. They call attention to a report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party emphasizing use of digital music to:

- Carry cultural information
- Realize civilization dissemination and cultural inheritance
- Play the driving role of informatization on rural revitalization
- Promote economy and cultural development
- Draw a new picture of digital villages

You can read "Digital music: a 'hyperlink' on the road to rural revitalizationhttps://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1109622/" by open access.

USDA using AI to help restore trust

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is beginning to use an artificial intelligence (AI) tool to check data in the monthly U.S. crop production report, according to recent news from Reuters.

This action occurs because "a series of data missteps eroded farmers' and traders' trust in its forecasts."

You can read the brief update in *AgriMarketing* by open access.

"Most new data centers in the U.S. are coming to rural areas"

Analysis by the Pew Research Center indicates that the U.S. now has more than 3,000 operational data centers and "that number is expected to grow substantially in the years ahead." More than 1,500 new data centers are in various stages of development, mostly in the South and Midwest.

Of those, 67% are in rural areas. "Currently, 38% of Americans live within 5 miles of at least one operational data center. … Living near a data center doesn't have much of an effect on public opinion about the facilities, however."

You can read this report, with further details, by open access.

Communicator events approaching

Here are upcoming events you may find helpful, including contact information you can use for details. We welcome suggestions or revisions for this calendar.

April 27-29, 2027
Annual meeting of the Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association (TOCA) in Nebraska City, Nebraska. Information: https://toca.org/toca-annual-meeting/

May 20-22, 2027
Equine Media Conference of American Horse Publications (AHP) in Bend, Oregon. Information: https://americanhorsepubs.org/ahp-annual-meeting/

June 6-8, 2027
Annual Institute of the Cooperative Communicators Association (CCA) in New Orleans, Louisiana. Information: https://communicators.coop/events/

"Expert advice is the very devil"

We close this issue of *ACDC News* with an explanation from Sir Robert Menzies of Australia:

"You want at least 100 experts – then conduct a Gallup Poll among them – then think out the answer for yourself."

ACDC is a deep and open resource for you, so please feel free to invite our help as you search for information, local to global. You are welcomed to follow us on Bluesky @illinoisacdc.bsky.social. And please suggest (or send) agricultural communications documents we might add to this unique and valued international collection. We welcome them in hard copy (sent to Agricultural Communications Documentation Center, 510 ACES Library, 1101 S. Goodwin Avenue, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801) – or in electronic format sent to acdc@library.illinois.edu