



THE ILLINOIS NEWSPAPER PROJECT

An initiative of the History, Philosophy, and Newspaper Library and the Preservation Services Unit at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

IDENTIFY

newspapers published throughout Illinois history

PRESERVE

newspaper content by microfilming brittle collections

DIGITIZE

Illinois newspapers for greater searchability and accessibility

PROVIDE ACCESS

to Illinois newspapers to remote and onsite researchers

The Digital Era

Illinois Digital Newspaper Project (IDNP) and National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP)

The National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) launched in 2004 as a partnership between the NEH and the Library of Congress. NDNP preserves historically significant American newspapers by awarding digitization grants and creating guidelines for digitization best practices. Content digitized by NDNP awardees is freely accessible through Chronicling America, a database hosted by the Library of Congress. All fifty US states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands have been awarded funding to contribute to the preservation and access of newspaper heritage.

Newspapers on Chronicling America are freely accessible and searchable through optimal character recognition (OCR).

The digital iteration of the Illinois Newspaper Project, the Illinois Digital Newspaper Project, provides digital access to historic Illinois newspapers. With support from the NDNP starting in 2009, the IDNP has contributed...

- Over 80 newspaper titles
- Over 77,000 issues
- Over 500,000 pages

...of freely available historical Illinois newspapers to Chronicling America!

NDNP and IDNP

Long-term, free, and searchable digital access through...

Chronicling America—the national digital newspaper database sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress

Illinois Digital Newspaper

Collections—a local database of Illinois newspapers and other collections launched by the History, Philosophy, and Newspaper Library in 2007

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INP seeks nominations of newspaper titles to be digitized and made freely available through Chronicling America and the Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections.

Illinois Newspaper Project (INP) and the US Newspaper Program (USNP)

The Illinois Newspaper Project (INP) began as part of the US Newspaper Program (USNP), an initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) established in 1982 to survey, catalog, and preserve on microfilm the country's historical newspapers.

INP Hosts

- Illinois State Historical Library (now the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library): 1987–1995
- Chicago Historical Society (now the Chicago History Museum): 1989–2009
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC): 1995–Present

In 1987, the INP received a planning grant to assess the state's newspaper collections by surveying Illinois libraries, historical societies, and genealogical societies in order to identify historical newspapers in collections throughout the state. This phase was completed in 1989.

After newspapers were identified, bibliographic control was required for organization, retrieval, and access purposes. INP hosts divided the state into seven regions and work was split to create catalog records for each title. After nearly two decades of field work, over 20,500 newspapers were cataloged from cultural heritage institutions and newspaper publishers across Illinois.

Get Involved!

In past grant cycles, newspapers were selected by INP staff based on criteria established by NDNP. This round, the INP seeks nominations of newspaper titles to be digitized and made freely available through Chronicling America and the Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections. Illinois cultural heritage institutions can participate in title selection by nominating microfilmed newspapers held in their collections.

Newspapers nominated should contribute to the wealth of Illinois cultural, economic, and political history, and possess research value in areas such as, but not limited to, genealogy, regional or statewide Illinois history or world history from an Illinois perspective, or the history of printing in Illinois.

With your participation, we hope to make even more digitized Illinois newspapers available for genealogists, local and public historians, educators, and everyone interested in the history of Illinois.

Nominations will be accepted through September 30, 2023. Questions? Email us at inp@library.illinois.edu!

Nomination Eligibility

Newspapers nominated for digitization:

- Must be available on microfilm*
- Must have been published prior to 1964
- Must be free of copyright restriction (note: issues published before 1928 are in the public domain)
- Must not already be freely available online**

**Because the cost of the digitization process from print is significantly higher than from microfilm, and because the goal of this grant is to digitize as much Illinois newspaper content as possible, only newspapers on microfilm will be considered during this grant cycle.*

Although we cannot select print newspapers this grant cycle, the Illinois Newspaper Project is committed to the preservation of Illinois newspapers regardless of format. If you have (or know of) historic newspapers that have not been microfilmed, we strongly encourage you to contact us for more information on preservation reformatting of print newspapers.

***Exceptions will be considered if prior digitization of the nominated title does not meet NDNP technical standards*

Technical Considerations

While we understand that not all titles may meet all the technical criteria below, preference will be given to film that allows us to best meet NDNP standards for digitization:

- Second-generation “print master” microfilm (as opposed to a service copy)
- Film with negative polarity (polarity will be inverted during digitization)
- Film with limited wear, including little to none scratching, tearing, warping