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Facebook emergency grant aids local journalists during COVID-19 crisis

Parent company of the Almanac receives funding to stabilize staffing

In order for all area residents to have important local information on the coronavirus health emergency, AlmanacNews.com has lifted its pay meter and is providing unlimited access to its website. We need your support to continue our important work. Please join your neighbors and [become a subscribing member today](#).

by Embarcadero Media staff / Almanac

Embarcadero Media has received a \$100,000 emergency grant to sustain its work during the coronavirus pandemic, thanks to the Facebook Journalism Project's COVID-19 Local News Relief Fund. Embarcadero is one of 26 newsrooms in California selected to share \$2.2 million in support from the Menlo Park social-networking giant.

[Embarcadero Media](#) — a local, independently owned news organization — publishes the Almanac, Palo Alto Weekly/PaloAltoOnline.com, the Mountain View Voice, the Pleasanton Weekly, DanvilleSanRamon.com and TheSixFifty.com.

Other California newsrooms receiving Facebook grants range from BerkeleySide to San Jose Spotlight to [CalMatters](#).

The Facebook program received 2,000 applications from newsrooms across the U.S. and its territories; in total, 144 recipients are being funded between \$25,000 and \$100,000, the company stated in a May 7 press release. The grants are supporting many publishers who are hardest hit by this crisis: Nearly 80% of recipients are family- or independently owned and more than half are published by or for communities of color.

"We're proud to support this diverse group of publishers — many of which are family- or independently owned. Not only are these journalists working tirelessly to serve people right now — they're focused on transformation, building innovative local news businesses that can continue to serve communities beyond the current pandemic," said Campbell Brown, vice president of global news partnerships at Facebook.

The [COVID-19 Local News Relief Grant Program](#) was designed to provide funding so newsrooms could both respond to immediate community needs and/or offset some revenue shortfalls to help publishers maintain long-term sustainability during this crisis, Facebook stated.

Embarcadero Media plans to use the grant to help reinstate some furloughed employees and restore other workers' hours, fund technology and IT upgrades that have been needed during this period of remote work and pay for marketing expenses to support [membership initiatives](#), according to Bill Johnson, president and CEO of Embarcadero Media.

The grant will also help the company in its long-term plans, including accelerating expansion of its digital publishing and creating deeper synergies between its millennials-focused weekly newsletter [TheSixFifty.com](#) and dining-oriented newsletter [Peninsula Foodist](#), Johnson said.



The Facebook "Like" icon is located at the intersection of Bayfront Expressway and Willow Road in Menlo Park. Embarcadero Media is one of 144 recipients of Facebook Journalism Project's COVID-19 Local News Relief Fund announced May 7. File photo/The Almanac.

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Don't give money to journals and fake news. If they fail, they fail. It's result of mismanagement and poor journalism. This is why almanac has been failing for years!

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The better way to have handled this would've been for Facebook to have funneled the funds through know press finders such as the. Knight Foundation, SNA Foundation, American Press Institute, etc. That way hopefully avoiding chances of impropriety by grantees of the funds.

Once an entity knows who has given them funds there always lurks the chance of having your reporting and editorial influenced.


This is especially true when that direct donor is the largest company and employer in your local.

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Terrific! Embarcadero Publishing deserves this Grant and more. Our local governments need a watchdog so residents will understand why things are the way they are. Without the Almanac, the administration could continue to present to the public only the happy news. How do residents know what the overall plans are for the future of Menlo Park?

A local newspaper informs the public as to the development projects before our council and how our council votes. This information guides us when we vote for new council members. Every city needs journalists to keep residents informed.

Three cheers for the Facebook Grant. Now, the rest of you, pony up and support your town newspaper.

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edit to my above comment


"funneled the funds through known press funders"

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a resident of Menlo Park: Central Menlo Park

6 hours ago

As an aside the SFChron reported today that MarkZ and wife gave \$100k to each of eight of their favorite restaurants to basically use as needed. Most of them around here on the Peninsula. Guess to make sure the can get their favorites after this virus ends.

I bet organizations like Ecumenical Hunger Program and local churches that feed the needy could have put that \$800k to good use helping hundreds. Apologies if the Zs' foundation is giving already substantial funds to those orgs during this crucial time of need.

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> It's result of mismanagement and poor journalism. This is why almanac has been failing for years!

Yet...

They haven't failed. Despite your silly claim "has been failing for years".

And...

You see fit to use their many services (news, opinion, calendar, etc..)

Well, at least with you as a fine, honorable, upstanding citizen, we know you are paying the Almanac for the many services of which you avail yourself.

Right?

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