

## New publisher named for Globe

### Ainsley a veteran of N.Y. Times Co.

By Robert Weisman, Globe Staff | September 8, 2006

The New York Times Co. yesterday named one of its longtime newspaper executives, P. Steven Ainsley, to be publisher of *The Boston Globe* and head of the New England Media Group at a time of pressing business challenges for the newspaper industry.

Ainsley, 53, has been president of the company's Regional Media Group, running a cluster of smaller daily and weekly newspapers mostly in the southeastern United States, for the past three-and-a-half years. A 24-year Times Co. veteran, he will take over the Boston post on Tuesday. He succeeds Richard H. Gilman, 55, whose arrival at the Globe in 1999 marked the end of 126 years of leadership by the Taylor family, which sold the paper to Times Co. six years earlier. In a memo to the staff disclosing the change, Gilman said he was proud of his seven-year tenure, during which the paper won three Pulitzer Prizes, but that he has long wanted to retire at a young enough age to pursue writing projects. He said he would remain at the paper for a period of time as an adviser to Ainsley.

The change comes as the *Globe*, like many metropolitan dailies, is struggling with the consolidation of department store advertisers as well as the migration of readers and classified advertising to the Internet.

The *Globe* has sought to capitalize on the shift through its [Boston.com](#) website, and under Gilman has launched a number of sections and products and refurbished others to broaden the business.

But the newspaper advertising revenue of the New England Media Group, which includes the *Globe*, the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, and other properties, has recently performed worse than the industry, tumbling 8.9 percent in the first half of 2006. Last year, the group eliminated about 160 jobs, mostly through buyouts.

Ainsley, in a telephone interview, said he hopes to push even further into multimedia but he said it was too soon to discuss specific moves.

"Every executive necessarily puts their own stamp on an operation," he said. "It probably goes without saying that every metro daily in the country is working to remake itself." As part of the transition, Mary Jacobus, recruited from Knight Ridder Inc. last year to be president and general manager of the *Globe*, will succeed Ainsley as head of the Regional Media Group.

Ainsley said he had no immediate plans for executive changes. "Across the board right now, from the little I know of the entire *Globe* management team, they're all top-drawer people," he said.

In Boston, the new publisher faces a slower-growing, more competitive big-city newspaper environment than he did at his papers' smaller and faster-growing markets in Florida and California, which relied more heavily on local advertisers, said Bryce Nelson, professor at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication. "Being publisher of a group of small dailies is different from being publisher of a metropolitan daily."

Janet L. Robinson, president and chief operating officer of Times Co., praised Gilman's leadership and said, "You're going to see a lot of continuity" at the *Globe* under new publisher Ainsley. "He's got a great appreciation for quality journalism, and he's an extremely creative leader in terms of product development," she said.

At the regional group, Ainsley started 14 special-interest magazines and 13 free weekly newspapers over the past three years in markets where he ran newspapers.

Revenue at the group climbed 4.7 percent in the first half of 2006 from the same period a year earlier, while revenue at the New England Media Group fell 6.9 percent in the same period. Times Co. doesn't break out profits for either operating group.

Shares of Times Co. slipped 13 cents, or 0.58 percent, to \$22.26 on the New York Stock Exchange yesterday.

Under Gilman, the New England Media Group's portfolio expanded as Times Co. acquired the Worcester paper and took ownership stakes in *Boston Metro*, a free newspaper, and New England Sports Ventures, which owns the Boston Red Sox and a majority interest in New England Sports Network.

The *Globe* also launched a number of new sections, from Ideas to Sidekick, invested in a refashioned Sunday magazine, and expanded zoned regional sections. The newspaper's Pulitzers included the Gold Medal for Public Service for uncovering widespread sexual abuse by Catholic priests.

The *Globe* also launched BostonWorks, a job recruitment website co-branded with a section in the newspaper, and signed an agreement with direct mail company Advo Inc. to deliver advertising inserts to *Globe* subscribers and non-subscribers.

"Gilman faced a difficult challenge," said Lou Ureneck, chairman of the journalism department at Boston University. "He had to move *The Boston Globe* from the Taylor stewardship and culture to The New York Times [Co.] stewardship and culture. And he happened to find himself in the job when advertising is softening and readers and advertisers are moving to the Internet. The news staff of the *Globe* has done a remarkable job at a time of declining resources."

Ainsley expressed admiration for the news operations at the *Globe* and Boston.com. He said he had no specific plans for cutbacks but that the New England Newspaper Group would continue "to look for ways to be more efficient."

Ainsley stressed that the industry remains profitable despite the weaker advertising environment. "These are challenging times," Ainsley said. "There's no secret about that. But we can't let our search for efficiency hurt our ability to provide customers and readers with high-quality service and high-quality journalism. That's at the core of what we do."

Ainsley, who said he plans to drive to Boston over the weekend from his current base in Tampa, Fla., said he and his wife, Ann, a graphic artist who has been involved in volunteer work in Florida, would be looking for housing in the Boston area.

The couple has a daughter attending Emory University in Atlanta and another daughter who has just graduated from Emory.

A native of New York, Ainsley earned a bachelor of arts degree from New York University in 1976 and graduated from Emory's advanced management program in 1986. He joined Times Co. in 1982 when it acquired a Kennebunk, Maine, weekly where he was publisher. Later he served as publisher at Times Co. papers in Florida, Alabama, and California before taking over the regional media group.

**NOTE:** Excerpted article courtesy of the Globe Newspaper Company. Article by Robert Weisman, *The Boston Globe*