



## Lee Enterprises Appoints Publisher of Wisconsin State Journal

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MADISON, Wis.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--April 18, 2006--William K. Johnston, who began his newspaper career with Lee Enterprises, Incorporated (NYSE:LEE), 33 years ago in Madison, is returning as publisher of the Wisconsin State Journal.

Johnston, currently publisher of the Lincoln Journal Star and regional executive for Lee publishing operations in Nebraska, will begin his new duties May 22.

He will succeed James W. Hopson, who announced in March that he plans to retire at the end of the year. Until retirement, Hopson will continue to serve as a Lee vice president for publishing, overseeing other Lee newspapers in Wisconsin and Minnesota and handling special projects.

Mary Junck, Lee chairman and chief executive officer, described Johnston as one of the company's most accomplished leaders.

"Bill is a builder," she said. "On top of his own terrific track record as an advertising manager, general manager, publisher and regional executive throughout his long career in Lee, Bill has had an influential hand in the professional growth of eight of our current publishers, three of our top editors and many more key managers. He's continually improved our products and services, and he's also earned respect and admiration in the communities he's served."

As publisher of the Wisconsin State Journal, Johnston also will become a principal officer of Capital Newspapers of Madison Newspapers, Inc., which is jointly owned by Lee and The Capital Times Co.

"I'm extremely excited about this opportunity to return to my home state as publisher of a newspaper as terrific as the Wisconsin State Journal," he said. "We love Lincoln and will miss all the people here, but we're looking forward to rejoining our friends in Madison and meeting new ones. As now-former Husker fans, we're also looking forward to seeing the Badgers again."

Johnston, who grew up in Janesville, Wisconsin, joined Lee in Madison in 1973. He worked in a variety of advertising positions at the Globe-Gazette in Mason City, Iowa; the Corvallis Gazette-Times in Oregon and the Quad-City Times in Davenport, Iowa. He served as general manager of the Quad-City Times as well as publisher of the Globe-Gazette and the Herald & Review in Decatur, Illinois, before moving to Lincoln as publisher in 1996. As regional executive for Nebraska operations, he also oversees daily newspapers in Beatrice, Fremont and Columbus, Neb., and more than a dozen weekly newspapers, shoppers and specialty publications.

In 2000, the Lincoln Journal Star received the company's highest award, Enterprise of the Year.

In Lincoln, Johnston is involved with many community organizations. He is past president of the Lincoln Public School Foundation and chair of the leadership group for Community Learning Centers. He is past campaign chair and former president of United Way of Lancaster County. He is on the board of directors of the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and the Lincoln Partners for Economic Development.

He has a bachelor's degree in economics and a master's degree in social work from the University of Wisconsin.

He and his wife, Shannon, have two daughters, Alison and Megan, in college.

Greg R. Veon, Lee vice president for publishing, said Kathleen Rutledge, editor of the Lincoln Journal Star, will serve as interim publisher in Lincoln until a successor to Johnston is appointed. She joined the newspaper in 1977 and worked as a political reporter, opinion page editor, city editor and managing editor before becoming editor in 2001. She earned an English degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1970 and later did graduate work in journalism. She served two years on the nominating jury for the Pulitzer Prize in beat reporting. She is married to Ted Kooser, U.S. poet laureate.

Lee is a premier publisher of newspapers in midsize markets, with 52 dailies and a joint interest in six others through Madison Newspapers, Inc., along with a rapidly growing online business and more than 300 weekly newspapers and specialty publications in 23 states. Lee's newspapers have circulation of 1.7 million daily and 1.9 million Sunday, reaching more than four million readers daily. Lee's newspaper online sites reach more than two million users, and Lee's weekly publications have distribution of more than 4.5 million households. In addition to Madison and Lincoln, Lee's newspapers include such diverse markets as Napa, Calif.; Bloomington, Ill.; Billings, Mont.; Escondido, Calif.; and St. Louis, Mo.

Lee is based in Davenport, Iowa, and its stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol LEE. For more information about Lee Enterprises, please visit [www.lee.net](http://www.lee.net).

Photo: [www.lee.net/newsphoto/bill\\_johnston.jpg](http://www.lee.net/newsphoto/bill_johnston.jpg)

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### SOURCE:

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