

# Opinion: Local publications prove their relevance

By David Carr, New York Times

A lot of important journalism begins with a simple, seemingly obvious question, like why traffic is snarled in New Jersey on the way into New York.

Traffic coverage may be the lowest species in the dog-bites-man pantheon of news, except when it is not.



David Carr

John Cichowski writes the “Road Warrior” commuter column for the *Record*, a daily newspaper in northern New Jersey that covers Bergen County. In September, the editor of the newspaper, Martin Gottlieb, received a tip from the publisher that navigating onto the George Washington Bridge from Fort Lee was taking hours. Gottlieb told Cichowski, who called the police in Fort Lee and was informed that the problem went far beyond a routine traffic tie-up.

Shawn Boburg, who reports on the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for the *Record*, was in the middle of a big investigative story at the time, but in December, he dug in and tried to find out what was behind the lane closings. After a number of articles, on Dec. 28, he wrote that emails showed that officials at the Port Authority, in spite of their earlier claims, knew about the closing and the resulting

mayhem, some of it potentially life-threatening. On Jan. 8, he was first with an article linking the closings directly to the staff of Gov. Chris Christie.

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