Prairie Valley Media

PUBLISHER'S BRIEF

SEPTEMBER 2026

COMPARED THROUGHOUT TO AUGUST 2026

1 THE HEADLINE

September's readership grew by a fifth, but Athlete of the Week voting was more than all of it — and new money fell by a third.

Pages read rose to 165,759 from 138,005. The Athlete of the Week pages alone gained 47,376 reads (58,139, up from 10,763), so everything else on the site fell: 107,620 pages read, down from 127,242. New subscribers slipped to 32 from 35, and new money to $246 from $384.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS	NEW MONEY	STOPPED	PAGES READ
32	**$246**	**28**	**165,759**
▼ 3 vs. 35 in August	▼ $138 vs. $384 in August	▼ 13 vs. 41 in August	▲ 27,754 vs. 138,005 in August

2 THE SURPRISE

A high school in only its second year sold five subscriptions. State-ranked Oak Hollow, with two of the month's most-read game stories, sold none.

Five people subscribed right after reading about Westfield Ridgeview, which opened last year. The Westfield sports page was read 1,033 times and led to 3 subscriptions, up from none on 1,239 reads in August. Oak Hollow's sports page was read 1,774 times and led to none — and none in August either, on 2,510 reads.

> "*Ridgeview shakes off slow start, rolls to road win over Stonebridge in district opener*" — **Dan Hollis** · early September, volleyball · 1 subscription
>
> "*Experienced group leads Ridgeview into sophomore season*" — **Dan Hollis** · published mid-August, still selling in September · 1

Add "No sophomore slump," a Ridgeview photo gallery and Jada Ellis' Athlete of the Week write-up, and that's five — none of them among the month's 25 most-read stories. The other side: Ray Kimball's "Oak Hollow roars back from early deficit, piles up 701 yards in win over Eastgate" (594 reads) and "Oak Hollow shakes off early Westfield surge" (426) were two of the month's dozen most-read stories. They sold nothing.

3 THE MONEY

32 started, 28 stopped (35 and 41 in August). You gained four, after losing six in August. 29 different stories were the last thing a new subscriber read; none led to more than 2.

One desk carries the month. Stories filed under Dan Hollis — his own and his correspondents' — preceded 20 of the 32, up from 5 in August, on 124 stories (107 in August). Every other byline combined: 12.

The ballot doesn't sell; the winner does. The four "Vote for Prairie Valley's Athlete of the Week" ballots drew 56,169 reads and no subscriptions. The weekly winner write-ups, none in the top 25, led to 5: Millbrook's Kayla Dunn (2, by Dan Hollis), Lakeport's Harper Sloane, Westfield Ridgeview's Jada Ellis and Westfield Pine Creek's Cole Mercer.

Why the money fell. Yearly sign-ups halved: 3 at $49.99, down from 6. That's $150 — more than the whole $138 drop. 23 of 32 came in on the $1.99 monthly promotion (26 of 35 in August). New money per subscriber: $7.69, down from $10.97.

Why people left. Of 26 stops with a logged reason, 10 were declined or expired cards (14 of 39 in August) and 5 left after one article or a trial (7 of 39). Complaints about the journalism fell to 1 from 4.

The recoverable loss. Those 10 cards were dropped by the billing system after ten failed tries; none chose to leave. Three were $25-a-year readers in three different towns you cover. Together they're worth about $585 a year — more than twice September's new money — and the list is still growing as late-September renewals finish retrying.

4 MONDAY

1 Put last week's winner at the top of every ballot.
Above the vote buttons, one linked line: "Last week's winner: Millbrook's Kayla Dunn." The ballot has your biggest audience; the write-up is what sells. Send voters there first.

TIED TO: 56,169 BALLOT READS, 0 SUBSCRIPTIONS; 5 FROM WINNER WRITE-UPS · WHOEVER FILES THE BALLOT, FIVE MINUTES A WEEK

2 Run a Ridgeview story on the Westfield page every week through district.
Football has three district games left in October, including homecoming in mid-October — plus volleyball. A short game story or a photo gallery counts; both sold in September.

TIED TO: 5 SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM RIDGEVIEW STORIES VS. 0 FROM 1,774 OAK HOLLOW SPORTS READS · EXISTING SPORTS STAFF, AN HOUR A WEEK

3 Call the ten dropped cards.
One list from the billing report, one afternoon. These readers never chose to leave. Ask for a new card and thank them; start with the three yearly readers.

TIED TO: 10 OF 26 LOGGED STOPS · ABOUT $585 A YEAR · NO BUDGET, HALF A DAY

A story's "subscriptions" = readers who subscribed right after reading it.