By JASON PATTERSON
Managing Editor

Gary Andrews started writing devotionals out of necessity, but it quickly developed into a labor of love.

Andrews, editor and publisher of The Yazoo Herald, started writing devotionals for the newspaper after longtime columnist Tom Luby retired from writing his popular “Layman’s Talk.”

Although he is a veteran newspaper man with over 35 years in the business and almost nine at The Herald, writing a weekly devotional was a new experience for Andrews.

It seemed to come naturally for him, however.

In fact, it wasn’t long before other newspapers around the state began publishing his devotionals. Today Andrews’ work appears in newspapers across Mississippi and also in Louisiana and Texas, often under the pen name “Andy Grant.”

“The response has been terrific,” Andrews said. “I have been very blessed.”

Since he began writing devotionals, many people have told Andrews he should consider writing a book. He recently decided to take that advice, and published Encouraging Words, a collection of 30 devotionals and suggested verses for additional study.

“This is something I have wanted to do for several years,” Andrews said. “The Lord has blessed me abundantly in the print media business and has allowed me to meet many people. He has always been my light and shining example to go forth and be a witness for Him.”

Andrews has been an ordained Baptist deacon for 37 years. He has taught Sunday school for youth and adults for many years. He frequently gives talks for churches, prayer groups and civic clubs.

Andrews said this book is intended to be easy for anyone to understand.

“I feel this book is written in layman’s terms, and I feel that anyone reading it can obtain the message that Jesus Christ is the truth, the light and the way,” he said. “It is my sincere desire that this is the only message given.”

Encouraging Words is available in Yazoo at Essco, Gilbert’s Gourmet and Gifts, Cindi’s, Howell’s, First Baptist Church, The Yazoo Herald and Online retailers .