

The SCJ Reporter

The Nation's Oldest National Honorary Collegiate Journalism Organization



Founded as ΠΔΕ (1909) and ΑΦΓ (1919)

December 2003 / January 2004, Volume 8, Issue 4

“Greetings, SCJers!”

By William Ruehlmann
SCJ President

We had a hurricane down here in Norfolk/Virginia Beach last November. **The Marlin Chronicle**, our college paper, covered it like shrink wrap. But Isabel is history.

Now we're ready for our next big story. Here comes the SCJ 2004 Biennial Convention at Virginia Wesleyan College March 4 to 6. That will be a hurricane of another kind, and you're all invited!

Keynote speaker Bill O'Donovan, crusading editor and publisher of the **Virginia Gazette**,

will talk on why journalism is his life and how it can be yours. Top **Star-Democrat** reporter Chris Williams, who acquired his M.A. at the Columbia School of Journalism covering the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks, will talk about how to get and keep a job in journalism.

Society of News Design national award-winners Julie Elman and Sam Hundley of **The**



William Ruehlmann, is the SCJ President and a professor of journalism/communications at Virginia Wesleyan College and a working columnist for two newspapers.

Virginian-Pilot will talk about the transformed visual side of journalism today. And crack **Virginia Gazette** reporter Amy Johnson will address the SCJ National Meeting and announce our 2004 award-winners.

There will be committee work, peer and professional fellowship and, for those of the sunshine persuasion, the beach. How like a hurricane! Y'all come!

SCJ set to honor the best and brightest

By Arthur H. Barlow
SCJ Executive Director

This is that special time of year when Nominations are taken for SCJ's major awards, The Barker Award; The Ingelhart Award and, of course, The Student

Journalist of the Year Award (SJYA).

Included with the newsletter are descriptive fliers. Act now if you believe your chapter or an SCJ member deserves this special recognition—and remember the SJYA award comes fully equipped with a

five hundred dollar scholarship made possible by the National Dean's List. Prepare your presentation packet and mail it, by deadline, to our National Office.

Do it now because we want to have all the materials ready for

Continued on Page Two



December 5, 2003

Society for Collegiate Journalists
Arthur H. Barlow, Executive Director
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Communication Department
Clarion, PA 16214

Dear Art,

Last year over 2,000 high school and college journalism students found themselves facing First Amendment free press issues. Thanks to your generous contribution of \$500 to the Student Press Law Center First Amendment Fund, each and every one of those students had a place to turn to for information, legal assistance and support. Whether it was a concern about censorship, libel or access to records or meetings, the SPLC was there to help. Support from friends like the Society for Collegiate Journalists makes this possible.

For over 28 years the Student Press Law Center has been there for students and journalism educators alike, providing free legal assistance, advice, support and much needed resources at little or no-cost to the students and their advisers. Your generosity will help to ensure that the SPLC can continue to provide these and other valuable services to assist students and advisers in understand and fighting for press freedoms across the nation.

Please accept our sincere gratitude for your support. Together we are working toward a nation where the valuables embodied in the First Amendment become a reality for young Americans.

Sincerely,

Mark Goodman
Executive Director

The Student Press Law Center has been designated as a 501 (c) (3) organization by the Internal Revenue Service. Any contribution is tax deductible in the year of payment for federal income tax purposes. No goods or services were supplied in exchange for your contribution.

1815 N. Fort Meyer Drive, Suite 900 ■ Arlington, VA 22209-1817 ■ (703) 807-1904 ■ splc@splc.org ■ <http://www.splc.org>

Awards

Continued from page one

special surprise announcements at the National Convention.

#####

A word about delegate stipends: After consultation with our President and Convention host we have decided to adhere to the traditional chapter travel allocation, (see the enclosed mileage chart), a \$25 delegate stipend and a waiver of their registration fees.

Barker and Shedd reach 20-year milestone with CMA

By William Ruehlmann
SCJ President

Sheridan Barker and Shirley Shedd, SCJ National Board Members, have reached the remarkable milestone of 20 years as active members of College Media Advisers, Inc. They have given of their gifts and of themselves enormously to promote the First Amendment in student publications and excellence in journalism instruction in general. That, of course, is no news to us, who have long known how very fortunate we are to have them as leaders in SCJ. Congratulations, Sheridan and Shirley!

Valdosta State uses election as learning experience

By Frank Barnas

Chapter Adviser, Valdosta State SCJ

Elections are prime opportunities to train journalists - candidates are eager to talk, voters want to know the tallies, and it's a rare instance when breaking news happens at predetermined locations at a specified time.

At Valdosta State University, our Mass Media Area administers VSU-TV11, the educational access channel. We had provided live election night coverage before (9.5 straight hours during the last presidential election due to the ongoing Florida recount) and were eager to give students another training opportunity.

One month before election night, engineer Walter Røllenhagen pre-built full-page graphics on all of the races. The official list came straight from the county election headquarters, so we had correct spellings, districts, etc. Around this time, I contacted the Lowndes County High School Journalism Class, which agreed to send a half-dozen students to help the crew. This left the task of recruiting our VSU Broadcast Journalism students to fill out the crew positions of producers, field reporters, etc. The only jobs reserved for non-students were the actual studio hosts - I served as moderator while two Political Science professors joined me as in-studio commentators.

The VSU crew called the candidates, learning where they would be during election night so we could get interviews on-camera. We obtained a space at election headquarters where the votes would come in. All was ready, until the incumbent Mayor, James Rainwater, died of a heart attack ten days before the election. He had been running for re-election in a close race and his death prompted a flurry of legal questions and proceedings. Would the election still be held? Would he still be on the ballot?

A brutal week of legal wrangling resulted in Rainwater's name being pulled off the ballot and the election was set to proceed. We quickly revamped the mayoral race graphics, grabbed some b-roll from the legal proceedings to use during election night if needed, and finished prep before November 4th.

The polls were open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and we

went live at 8:30 p.m. Only some of the precincts had reported their numbers, so we had time to discuss the votes before the final numbers. The student crews scattered throughout Valdosta, talking to candidates and voters during the evening. As we don't have live microwave capabilities, the crews would send someone back with the DVC-Pro field tape to load into the show. The producers then typed quick intros onto the teleprompter, so we could say something like "News 11's Thuy Le just caught up with John Fretti - he's a candidate for mayor and the latest numbers show him leading the vote. Here's Thuy Le." We rolled tape and, even though Thuy wasn't live, we had feedback from the field, often within 10 minutes of the interview being shot.

Tallying the votes took less than two hours, so we wrapped up fairly early. The high school students and college students worked together, calling in numbers, shuttling tapes, and basically running the entire show. Over the following days, we received a great deal of positive feedback for the program. And with a larger election set for next November, we already have students who will return to provide election night coverage.

The Student Press Law Center is an advocate for student free-press rights and provides information, advice and legal assistance at no charge to students and the educators who work with them.

SPLC College Membership

For college student publications or student media departments. Members get:

- A subscription to the *SPLC Report* (1 year/ 3 issues)
- An e-mail subscription to *SPLC LegalAlert* (1 year/ 9 issues)
- A 10% Discount on *Law of the Student Press*
- Five free SPLC packets and 50% discount on additional packets

Check out SPLC on the web at www.splc.org.

National Council

President

Dr. William Ruehlmann
1584 Wesleyan Drive
Virginia Wesleyan College
Norfolk/Va Beach, VA 23502-5599
(757)455-3419 FAX (757)461-5025
E-mail: wjruehlmann@vwc.edu

Past President

Dr. William Lawbaugh
915 West Main Street
Waynesboro, PA 17260

First Vice President National Contest Director

Mary Jennings
University of North Alabama
Box 5027
Florence, AL 35632
(256)765-4426 FAX (256)765-4275
E-mail: mjennin@unanov.una.edu

Second Vice President

Shirley Shedd
Communication Department
1111 N. Glenstone
Evangel College
Springfield, MO 65802
(417)865-2811
E-mail: sashedd@aol.com

Third Vice President

Brian Steffen
701 North C
Simpson College
Indianola, IA 50125

Executive Director

Arthur H. Barlow
Becker Hall
Clarion University
Clarion, PA 16214
(814)393-2515 FAX (814)393-2186
E-mail: Barlow@clarion.edu

Chapter Representatives

Dr. Joe Mirano
SLU 10428
Hammond, LA 70402
(504)549-3374
E-mail: rhi@thunder-rain.com

Dr. Bill Withers
Department of Communication Arts
Wartburg College
Waverly, IA 50677
(319)352-8289

Terry Dalton
McDaniels College
2 College Hill
Westminster, MD 21157
(410)848-7000 FAX (410)386-4601
E-mail: tdalton@wmde.edu

Dr. Sheridan Barker
Carson-Newman College
Box 1869
Jefferson City, TN 37760
(423)581-7731



Notes from the Executive Director



Welcome back from your Holidays - so now begins a new season, be it quarter or semester.

The first order of business is to mark your calendars March 4-5-6 for a trip to lovely Virginia Beach where SCJ President Bill Ruehlmann and his SCJ Chapter at Virginia Wesleyan will return our society to its roots by hosting our Biennial National Convention.

For the past two conventions we have held our convention within the structure of the Spring CMA convention in New York City. We have accomplished our assigned tasks and our members and delegates have enjoyed the allures of the "Big Apple," but for many of us something was lacking—the collegiality of being hosted by an SCJ Chapter on a college campus. I, personally, look forward to the gathering at VWC: Join us.

Remember, SCJ is, perhaps, the only honorary organization which provides a stipend for attendance at its convention. Each active chapter is entitled to take two official delegates to the convention; and, of course, all active members are welcome.

The core of our Biennial National Convention is performing the business of the Society. There will be committee assignments; advisers will be assigned to work with the groups to facilitate the business at hand; Saturday morning the entire convention will convene to complete the work of the Society.

But—a Regional host also provides a rich array of academic sessions and speakers for our members so we can learn and enjoy our society during our stay.

And—there are always social opportunities.

Virginia Beach has much to offer—see you when the snow melts and the flowers bloom.

Chapter Notes

Congratulations to our new members at:

*Ocean County College, NJ—4 new members;
Anderson University, IN—9 new members;
Valdosta State University, GA—5 new members;
Susquehanna University, PA—10 new members;
Muskingum College, OH—1 new member;
Evangel University, MO—10 new members;
Clarion University, PA—13 new members.*



*Thank you for all your hard work
and have a great Spring Semester.*

The SCJ Reporter
The SCJ newsletter is published once a month during the fall and spring semesters in accordance with the Clarion University of Pennsylvania academic calendar. It is created on an Optiquest computer using Microsoft Publisher 2000.

Editor...Mary Beth Earnheardt

Please send submissions to:

Art Barlow
Becker Hall
Clarion University
Clarion, PA 16214

E-mail:
barlow@clarion.edu

