

The Reporter



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The Nation's Oldest National Honorary Collegiate Journalism Organization

Convention '06

Theme is "The Value of Journalism"

By Frank Barnas
Valdosta State University

For journalists, March is the doldrums – no election excitement, only one minor holiday, and it isn't a sweeps month for the television newsrooms. Major film studios use March as a dumping ground for movies that are neither Oscar-worthy nor potential summer blockbusters. Much of the country is mushy from melting snow. Too many reporters search for interesting leads and wind up with the clichéd "Ides of March" from Julius Caesar. Christmas is long-gone, Spring is debating whether to show up at all, and if it weren't for the overhyped March Madness Basketball Tournament, the whole nation would spiral into a collective funk.

Mushy. Melting. Ides. Yawn.

But if March isn't a power month for journalists, it's the perfect time to hone your craft! The SCJ National Convention takes place at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia, during the first weekend of March, 2006. The theme for this convention is "*The Value of Journalism*", and there will be a special area set up so you can display your college's best work.

The convention will be from Thursday, March 2nd through Saturday, March 4th. A full slate of activities are set, ranging from conducting SCJ business to presenting awards at the conclusion of the sessions. In



Valdosta State University is the site of the 2006 Biennial National Convention. (Photo Courtesy of Valdosta State University)

addition, we will have speakers discussing issues that concern reporters, journalism students, and those who teach the craft. A schedule of events is forthcoming, but with all of the exciting activities planned, you won't want to miss this convention!

One prime advantage of meeting in Valdosta in March is that, while it won't exactly be balmy weather, you'll leave all the snow and ice behind you. Temperatures hover around 70 degrees, and unlike our current fall weather, you won't have any pesky hurricanes looming

in the Gulf of Mexico.

Valdosta is located just 20 miles north of the Florida border in central Georgia, so getting to Valdosta can be a bit of a trick, as it is logistically equidistant from anywhere else. There are daily flights to Atlanta, or you can make an easy two hour drive from either Tallahassee or Jacksonville, Florida. All driving to Valdosta is on interstate highways, and unlike major metro areas with interchanges like the Mixmaster, the Blender, or the Spaghetti Bowl (yes, these all do exist), we don't have that problem here. If you can find Exit 16 or Exit 18, you've mastered the navigation.

The VSU campus is not located near any hotels or restaurants. Campus is surrounded by historic neighborhoods, with most hotels (Days Inn, Best Western, Jameson Inn, etc) located about two or three miles away. If you don't have a car here, we'll have shuttle vans to move you around town as needed. Dining ranges from the usual national chain restaurants to BBQ and southern fare, and the hotels are located within walking distance of the restaurants.

Again, this is a convention you won't want to miss. See the best SCJ productions, work with your colleagues, meet dynamic professionals in the field, and do it all in a setting of mild weather, Southern hospitality, and the charm of a city that doesn't believe in rush hour traffic.

See you here in 2006!

Students petition U.S. Supreme Court to hear *Hosty v. Carter* case

WASHINGTON D.C. — The U.S. Supreme Court was asked Friday to hear a case that could substantially affect the ability of the nation's college journalists to report free of administrative censorship.

Student journalists at Governors State University in Illinois asked the Court to reconsider the June decision of the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in *Hosty v. Carter*.

In *Hosty*, the 7th Circuit held that college administrators have the same ability to censor school-sponsored publications as high school administrators were given under a 1988 Supreme Court decision in *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*.

Applying the *Hazelwood* decision to colleges would give college administrators greater control over some school-sponsored student publications. The *Hosty* decision marked the first time *Hazelwood* has been applied to a college student newspaper.

The case began at Governors State University when student journalists Margaret Hosty, Jeni Porche and Steven Barba sued Dean Patricia Carter in January 2001 for requiring prior approval of their student newspaper.

Attorneys Lee Levine, Jeanette Melendez Bead and Thomas Curley filed a petition for a writ of certiorari, asking the Supreme Court to hear the case. The three lawyers, who are representing the students, are from the Washington, D.C. law firm Levine Sullivan Koch & Schulz, LLP.

The students' petition makes the argument that several past court cases have upheld strong First Amendment protection at the university level. Among them is the 1972 *Healy v. James* case, in which the Supreme Court decided unanimously that universities could not refuse to recognize controversial campus groups or speakers. A year later, in



the decision of *Papish v.*

Board of Curators of University of Missouri, the Court extended the strong First Amendment protections recognized in *Healy* to a student newspaper.

"In more than three decades following *Healy* and *Papish*, this Court has never deviated from this view of the First Amendment's proper application in the college and university setting," the petition stated.

The students argue in the petition that because the cases mentioned above are not mentioned in the 7th Circuit ruling and because the federal appellate courts have conflicting decisions on the relevance of the *Hazelwood* decision to colleges, the Supreme Court should hear this case.

Furthermore, they point out that the *Hazelwood* ruling on which the

court based much of its decision addressed only the rights of high school students. The students' petition argues that university students are rarely minors and university publications seldom part of a curriculum-based class. Therefore, because these circumstances differ from the circumstances of *Hazelwood*, the Supreme Court should make a separate ruling that applies directly to college students.

For the next month, interested parties can file briefs with the Supreme Court, either in support of or in opposition to the Court hearing the case.

According to the public information office of the Supreme Court, roughly 8,000 writs of certiorari are filed each year, while the justices agree to hear only about 90 cases.

This story is reprinted with permission of the Student Press Law Center. For more information about the issues of the student press check online at www.splc.org. This story was written by Kim Peterson.

University of Southern Indiana president signs public forum statement

INDIANA — They say they have always had it, but now they have it in writing — student editors at the University of Southern Indiana can make all content decisions without censorship or advanced approval.

University of Southern Indiana President Ray Hoops signed a statement to that effect Oct. 4, making his school the second to formally designate its student newspaper as a public forum in response to the Student Press Law Center's call for schools in Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin to explicitly state their position on freedom of the collegiate press.

"The university administration have always been very supportive and hands off, but it just shows great support that they put it in writing," said Shyloh Karshner, editor of *The Shield*, the univer-

sity's student newspaper.

"I tell you what, I am proud of our administration," said Dal Herring, chair of the university's student publications committee, which voted unanimously to ask the administration to sign the public forum statement last month. "I think it's going to be a great benefit to the campus and our students and to the department."

Herring, who also chairs the communications department and teaches journalism at the school, said the statement will benefit faculty advisers and professors as well as students.

"It is extremely difficult for a teacher to get in front of a classroom and talk about free press and freedom of expression but say, 'well that's the way it is out in the real world, but you can't do that at school,'" he said.

Barlow writes Handbook

National Executive Director highlights resources for student journalists

By Mary Beth Earnhardt
Editor

SCJ National Executive Director, Dr. Arthur H. Barlow, recently completed research for the SCJ publication, *A Student Journalist's Handbook of Collegiate Organizations*.

The *SJHCO* (a copy of which is included with this mailing) is a compilation of organizations that are dedicated to assisting collegiate journalists.

The *SJHCO* features sections on: American Copy Editors Society, Associated Collegiate Press, Collegiate Broadcasters, Inc., College Newspaper Business and Advertising Managers, Inc., Columbia Scholastic Press Association, Community College Journalism Association, First Amendment Handbook, Investigative Reporters and Editors, Journalism Educators Association, JournalismTraining.org, National Association of Broadcasters, National Newspaper Association, National Association of America, Next Generation Radio,

Poynter Institute, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, Security on Campus, Society for Collegiate Journalists, Society for Newspaper Design, Society of Environmental Journalists, Society of Professional Journalists, and Student Press Law Center.

In addition to these organizations, the publication also features a special section on College Media Advisers.

In the Introduction, Barlow writes, "As Executive Director of the Society for Collegiate Journalists for 11 years, I have had the opportunity to work at the national level with a variety of individuals and organizations serving the needs of student journalists. I have also worked individually with many students and advisers who were being subjected to external pressures anathema to their concept of appropriate news gathering and presentation. My advice always started with, 'you are not alone.' Now I have had the opportunity to assemble a handbook identifying cognate organizations and detail-

ing the support and service available in times of stress and need."

The publication is the second in a series of monographs published by the SCJ National Council. The first monograph was the text, *The Feature Story Strikes Back*, by President Bill Ruehlmann of Virginia Wesleyan College.

Public forum statement

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And as for faculty advisers, a lot of them are not tenured and are constantly worried that their students' decisions might cost them their jobs, said Herring, who was a student newspaper adviser for 11 years.

"There's a sense of security there when the university has officially endorsed the concept of your medium as being a public forum," he said. "To me, it's profound."

By designating *The Shield* as a public forum, Hoops indicated his intent to guarantee that *Shield* editors have the highest level of freedom of the press possible under the June decision in *Hosty v. Carter*. In that decision, the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals held that a student newspaper must be designated as a public forum for editors to have strong First Amendment protection. Hoops also included Access USI, a campus television show, in the public forum statement he signed.

"This is a really great place to be a journalist," said *Shield* adviser Patricia Ferrier. "Students have to have free speech if they are going to learn how to function in this society as citizens."

This story is reprinted with permission of the Student Press Law Center. For more information about the issues of the student press check online at www.splc.org. This story was written by Evan Mayor.

REMEMBER

SCJ NATIONAL CONTEST
DEADLINE IS
DECEMBER 31, 2005

Categories for print and broadcast journalism.

Only national contest judged exclusively by professional journalists.

Rules included with the mailing, be careful, some items have changed.

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Notes from the Executive Director



So we're half-way through the semester, and I have several major items to share with the membership.

Item One – The 2006 National SCJ Contest. As you know the deadline is 31 December 2005. NOW is the time to set *your* chapter deadline for your entries. Enclosed with this newsletter are the amended contest rules. These amended rules are based on suggestions made by our National Contest Director, Mary Jennings.

Item Two – SCJ has been asked by the Student Press Law Center to be an *'amicus curia'* (friend of the court) in their effort to reverse the ruling of the Seventh U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals that was made last

summer and that threatens the freedom of the press for student journalists in this nation. As you know SPLC is our National Philanthropy. I intend to ask your National Council at the Kansas City meeting to make a substantial donation to the Student Press Law Center. Each chapter is free to donate directly to SPLC. This donation will make it clear that we support them morally, ethically, and financially. Enclosed with this newsletter is your chapter's copy of the Autumn SPLC Report. Please share it and read it because it details the Hosty v. Carter case in depth. And, if you want extra copies, contact us or go directly to SPLC.

Item Three – While on sabbatical last Autumn I developed A Student Journalist's Handbook of Collegiate Organizations. It is written with the purpose of alerting student journalists to the vast network of cognate organizations that support and enhance their work. Enclosed with this newsletter is your chapter's copy of the first edition of the SJHCO. Ron Spielburger at CMA Headquarter's has been a great help in developing this handbook, and we will facilitate distribution of the second edition to CMA members. I am relying on the SCJ membership to help edit and enhance this text. Please feel free to point out errors and to suggest the addition of other cognate organizations. After all, this text is based on the principle that student journalists may work in isolation at times, but they are not alone.

Item Four – Members of the SJC National Council will gather at the Kansas City convention for their annual National Council Meeting. We have a very full agenda, and I look forward to some positive results which I will report to the membership in the November newsletter. Both our National Council meeting and our traditional SCJ session are listed in the KC program. Please join us.

Other than that, enjoy the Autumn.

SCJ Chapter Notes and News

**Congratulations to our new members at:
Valdosta State University, GA—5 new members.**

SCJ National Council and all visiting members have a meeting at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29, at the Royale Room in the Hyatt Crown Center during the 2005 ACP/CMA College Media Convention in Kansas City, Mo. SCJ president Bill Ruehlmann is registered at the connected Westin Crown Center should anyone care to get in touch by house phone on site.



The SCJ Reporter

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