



Ohio Professional Writers, Inc.

an affiliate of the National Federation of Press Women, Inc.

Membership Profiles



Jo-Ann Huff Albers, professor in the optional retirement program of Western Kentucky University, was founder of the WKU School of Journalism and Broadcasting.

Jo-Ann went to WKU in August 1987 as head of the Department of Journalism after 27 years in daily newspapers.

A graduate of Miami University and Xavier University (both in Ohio), she began her career at The Cincinnati Enquirer where she spent 20 years in a variety of editorial positions.

She was editor and publisher of Sturgis Journal in Michigan in 1981 and 1982 and of Public Opinion in Chambersburg, Pa., from 1982 to 1986. She worked briefly as a general news executive in Gannett company at its headquarters in Rosslyn, Va.

Jo-Ann has represented the Association for Women in Communications on the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication since 1980 and has served as president of Women in Communications Inc. and the Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Her awards include:

- 2003 Women's Alliance Award for Outstanding Contribution to Women
- 2002 Inductee of Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame
- 2000 Gerald Sass Journalism Administrator of the Year, Freedom Forum/ ASJMC
- 1995 University Service Award from Kelly Thompson Chapter of Public Relations Student Society of America.
- 1992 Communicator of Achievement, Kentucky Press Women; finalist for National Federation of Press Women title, June 18-19, Lansing, Mich.
- 1991 Women in Communications Inc. Service Award for 10 years as representative to the Accrediting Council, October 13.
- 1989 Bingham Freedom of Information Award, Kentucky Press Association, January 20
- 1988 Noel Ross Strader Memorial Award for defense of student press freedom, College Media Advisers, October 29, Atlanta, Ga.
- 1988 Poynter Teaching Fellowship
- 1987 Gannett Leadership Institute Fellowship
- 1986 Matrix Award of Boston Women in Communications
- 1985 Greater Chambersburg Chamber of Commerce Award for community development work
- 1985 Communications honoree of Leadership Cincinnati

1985 Community service award of Wilson College for Women, Chambersburg, Pa.
1984 Central Pennsylvania WICI Outstanding Achievement Award
1980 Carnegie-Mellon Fellowship for Program for Executives
1980 Cincinnati YWCA Career Woman of Achievement
1979 National Headliner of Women in Communications Inc.
1975 International Women's Year honoree in Cincinnati
1974 Myrtle Wreath Award of Cincinnati Chapter of Hadassah
1973 Outstanding Communicator of Cincinnati WICI
1973 National Arbor Day Foundation newspaper award
1964-1986 22 writing and editing awards from press associations in Ohio.



Beth Deisher is in her 24th year as editor of Coin World, the largest and most widely circulated news weekly with specialized coverage of coins, paper money and any objects once used as money.

Beth joined the Coin World staff in 1981 as news editor and served as executive editor before being tapped to lead the editorial team in 1985.

A native of North Carolina and a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, she began her career as a feature writer with the Ledger-Star in Norfolk, Va. In 1972 she joined the staff of the Virginia Education Association as a communications specialist, editing a monthly tabloid newspaper and serving as features editor of the Virginia Journal of Education. During her years with VEA she developed specialized daily broadcast coverage of the Virginia General Assembly focusing on educational legislation and also produced education-related films. In 1977 she joined the Sidney (Ohio) Daily News as news editor where she served until moving to Coin World.

Beth is the founding editor of three magazines -- Coin Values, Paper Money Values and WorldWide Coins -- and author of the book Making the Grade-A Grading Guide to the Top 50 Most Widely Collected U.S. Coins. She has supervised updates of four editions of the Coin World Almanac, an award-winning one-volume reference. She was founding editor of Coin World's Guide to U.S. Coins, Prices & Value Trends, a price guidebook published annually since 1989. She is a fellow of the American Numismatic Society and holds memberships in many numismatic organizations, including the American Numismatic Association. In 1995 the Numismatic Literary Guild awarded Beth its highest honor, the Clemy, and in 2006 she received the Burnett Anderson Memorial Award for journalistic excellence.

Beth first joined NFPW through Virginia Press Women and served as treasurer of that state affiliate before moving to Ohio. She has served OPW in a number of leadership positions including: contest chair, newsletter editor, vice president and president. She has twice (1988 and 2003) been recognized as OPW's Member of Achievement.

She is also a member of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Beth has won more than 100 state and national awards for writing and editing print publications.

Beth and her husband, Art, like to travel – an interest nurtured by their early experiences as cultural exchange students through the International 4-H Youth Exchange program. Immediately after college graduation, Beth spent six months in Iran living and working with families in the villages and traveling within Iran as an IFYE ambassador. Art was an IFYE to the United Kingdom, living in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. They are the parents of son, Ed, who with his wife Kelly are the parents of 2-year-old Eric.



Vivian Goodman, president of Ohio Professional Writers, is a reporter/producer and local host of Fresh Air and All Things Considered at WKSU, Kent State University's award-winning NPR News and Classical Music public radio station.

Vivian is a native Clevelander who grew up mostly in Beachwood but spent part of her adolescence in Glasgow, Scotland, where she attended Hutcheson's Girl's Grammar School. She graduated from Beachwood High School in 1966.

She later became one of the first inductees to its Gallery of Success. Vivian studied French at L'Alliance Francaise in Paris and German at the Goethe Institute in Munich and graduated with a BA in philosophy from the University of Chicago in 1970. That's where she first went on the air at the campus station, WHPK, as host of a weekly satirical news program. She moved from there into reporting including covering the Chicago Seven conspiracy trial. After college she traveled in Europe and for a while worked in a dress shop in Amsterdam, and for the U.S. Army in Munich. She also briefly operated her own cafe in Brussels, Belgium.

Vivian started working in commercial radio in Akron at WHLO. She has worked mostly in radio news since then, in Cleveland and in Washington, D.C. for nine years. She also had two stints as a congressional press secretary for Rep. Louis Stokes in 1974 and for Eric Fingerhut in 1994 and three and a half years as director of communications for North Coast Cable in Cleveland in the early 1990's. Vivian and her husband, Ed, have raised two sons: Zach, 27, and Zane, 22. Zane is a student and Zach is a PC support analyst at Cleveland's Benesch-Friedlander law firm.

Vivian's main passion, after her family and radio journalism, is music. She plays flute in the Workmen's Circle Klezmer Orchestra and the Lakeland Civic Jazz Band. She also sits in occasionally with Cleveland's classic rock band, Revolving Door.

Vivian has contributed news features to the NPR network, including the story of Clara Wolcott of Tallmadge, the designer of Tiffany Lamps; interviews with composers Pierre Boulez and Marc Andre Dalbavie; the story of the Stow Symphony Orchestra's premiere of a work by composer Joan Tower; and a remembrance of Cleveland rock radio history.

Recent awards include:

- 2007 AP Ohio Award for best radio anchor/large market
- 2007 Regional Edward R. Murrow Award of Radio Television News Directors Association for documentary "African American first Family of Golf,
- 2007 Press Club of Cleveland Award for her coverage while touring Europe with the Cleveland Orchestra.



Sandi Latimer, a former OPW president, chairs OPW's High School Journalism contest.

A member since 1979, she has also served as chair of the contest "for the big kids" as she tells the young people she works with, as well as two terms as president and was OPW's Communicator of Achievement in 2004.

Sandi began her journalism career in the fall of 1956 when she became area correspondent for the Bucyrus Telegraph Forum. She held that position for five years, until she graduated from high school and went to Kent State University to learn more about what she had been doing.

She put her broadcast journalism degree to work at radio stations in Bucyrus and Delaware, Ohio, before joining the staff of United Press International in Columbus in 1968 where she worked full time for 22 ½ years and part-time for another three years while she was working at The Ohio State University Medical Center in communications and marketing.

In the fall of 1998 she returned to the field of news, covering state government for Hannah News Service. Not long after joining Hannah, she felt she had been away from high school sports too long and found a part-time position as sports clerk at the Columbus Dispatch satisfied that longing.

She left Hannah after two years for a part-time position with the community weekly newspapers published by the Columbus Messenger where she could also write feature stories. Working part-time left her with a lot of time, and she turned to volunteering. She answers phones on a food line and assigns people to go to food pantries. While strolling through Green Lawn Cemetery to lay out a walking route for a volkswalk, she learned the cemetery needed a newsletter editor. A few months later she was asked to be the cemetery's volunteer coordinator, having to recruit volunteers and create jobs for them.

Sandi has won many awards from both OPW and NFPW. She attends NFPW's national convention and helps out behind the scenes on the contest displays.

Besides juggling three part-time jobs, she finds time to do creative writing, particularly about local history and about the poodles she and her husband Red raised in the first 27 years of their marriage. She tries to do a volkswalk or two a week.



Erik Martin, managing editor of Coin World's Coin Values, joined the staff in 2005. Erik also writes Coin World's weekly "Readers Ask" column. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from Huntington University in Indiana.



Andrew Perala, managing editor of Coin World's WorldWide Coins, shares the stories behind coins from ancient to modern times.

Andy is particularly interested in Alaskan numismatics and has performed important research on the use of Alaska trade tokens before and after statehood. Prior to joining Coin World, Andy worked at the Anchorage (AK) Daily News and was a co-winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service in 1989. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Swarthmore College.



Jeff Starck, senior staff writer, was Coin World's 2003 Margo Russell intern and joined the Coin World staff in 2004.

Jeff has been a collector since childhood and fondly remembers the challenges of completing Whitman folders by pulling coins from circulation and searching rolls from the bank. His current collecting interest focuses on Missouri-related numismatics and exonumia. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Webster University in St. Louis where he was editor-in-chief of its weekly student newspaper.



Marjorie Thomas, vice president of Ohio Professional Writers, is a Senior Marketing Specialist at Cleveland Metroparks where she writes brochures, videos, press releases and feature articles. She is also Cleveland Metroparks webmaster.

Marjorie spent most of her childhood in Athens, Greece and Essex, England, then graduated from Northville High School in Michigan. She studied journalism at the University of Michigan where she was a reporter for the Michigan Daily.

She started her writing career as an account executive/copywriter for several advertising agencies in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She then worked as a copywriter for Scripps Hospital in San Diego where she earned an MBA in Marketing from San Diego State University. From there she headed back to Michigan and worked as an account executive/copywriter for FTD in Southfield, Michigan before heading to Cleveland.

Dappling in creative writing as a member of the Westside Writers Group, an affiliate of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, she is writing a mid-grade mystery.

Marjorie and her family travel extensively, learning and writing about different cultures. Marjorie is also a member of the Cleveland Edges, a synchronized ice skating team. Volunteer activities include Girl Scout leader for two troops and ice skating coach for Special Olympics.

Marjorie has received numerous writing awards from IABC, NFPW, APEX, OPW, Women in Communications and Ohio Parks & Recreation Association.



Irene Wright-Abraham has reached out to more than a million people through writing newspaper articles and medical stories, authoring books and narrating Ohio history, yet she still charges ahead with vigor and enthusiasm.

As a retired Bureau Chief and reporter for The Cincinnati Enquirer, with a circulation of 200,000, she wrote daily stories for 25 years, once tallying seven news-breaking stories during one highly-stressful day. She was the Enquirer's first female Bureau Chief.

Stories during her career ranged from spending a weekend at the leprosy colony in Carville, Louisiana; flying in a fighter jet airplane at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio; to accompanying police on midnight drug raids; and riding in an Abrams tank at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

In addition to her regular reporting duties, covering cities as well as Butler and Warren Counties in Ohio, she took on the additional task for eight years of medical reporting for the Cincinnati Medical Center. That included several research centers and hospitals. The Enquirer sent her coast to coast to cover annual research findings announced by the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association. She received numerous writing awards from these organizations.

While still an Enquirer staff member, she wrote two plays, "Season's End" and "Pack My Life and Ship It." They were read publicly at the Middletown Fine Arts Center, in Middletown, Ohio, with a grant from the Ohio Arts Council.

Following her retirement from the Enquirer, she began writing and publishing books. They include: Edgar Streifthau, His Story, the history of the first amusement park in the United States and its owner; The Tempering Seasons, incorporating some of the Irene's favorite stories during her reporting years and weaving them into a fiction novel; and Barry Levey, a biography of the late Ohio senator, including his revising of all the Ohio codes.

She has been a member of Ohio Professional Writers, an affiliate of National Federation of Press Women, for 35 years, dating back to when it was still known as Ohio Press Women. She is past president of both OPW and of the Ohio Newspaper Women's Association. Her duties included being vice presidents of both organizations, as well as treasurer of the Newspaper Women's Association. In 2007 she was recognized as OPW's Member of Achievement.

Her recent activities have included being a volunteer usher for live performances at the five theaters in Columbus, Ohio, and as a volunteer tour guide at the Ohio Capitol building in Columbus. She has conducted more than 100 tours of the Capitol Building for school students from throughout the state, informing them of the state's history dating back to 1803.

Past volunteer duties include serving as a hospital Grey Lady, as a Girl Scout Troup leader, Sunday school teacher and assisting at the Gahanna Library. She is a past member of the Beaux Arts Club in Zanesville, Ohio; Soroptimist Club member; co-founder of Middletown Actors Playhouse; board member of Sorg Opera House; and conducted more than 100 radio

interviews during her show, Mainstream, on Radio Station WPFB. She also conducted a Learn To Read seminar with Ohio Professional Writers funds for underprivileged citizens in Lebanon, Ohio.

She is a member of the Columbus Area Military Officers Wives Club, which she has served as vice president.

Honored as an Ohio Buckeye Colonel, she also was listed in Who's Who of American Women in 1979-1982, and in World's Who's Who of Women in 1980.