

AGENDA

Quarterly Newsletter of NFPW



NFPW applauds COA winner

By Cathy Koon, AGENDA editor

Everyone in the audience seemed to hold their breath just before Karen Stensrud announced this year's winner of the coveted Communicator of Achievement award.

Then came the name — Gwen White of North Carolina — and everyone burst into applause and gave her a standing ovation.

The 46-year member of NFPW walked to the podium to accept the award and give an emotional and typically Gwen speech, off the cuff and filled with emotion and good ole Southern humor.

As part of the nomination bio, Stensrud said, "Gwen' is a verb," a reference to the many accomplishments credited to White during her career as a journalist and in service to Lions International. White has never been known to sit on the sidelines and watch the world go by.

White, a member of North Carolina Press Club, is a former journalist and now a nonprofit executive director, public relations professional, humorist and motivational speaker. She is a former NFPW president and a charter member of the North Carolina Press Club, where she served four terms as president and currently serves as treasurer.

She worked for a daily newspaper for 17 years and spent 10 years working for weekly and twice-weekly newspapers. She began her speaking career when she first took the stage as a teenage 4-Her and has never stopped addressing audiences in all 50 states and seven countries.

White is executive director of the nonprofit

North Carolina Lions Visually Impaired Person's Fishing Tournament. Each year she organizes a three-day independent living and recreational event on the Outer Banks of North Carolina for 550 blind and visually impaired people and their guests.



2024 COA Gwen White

Runner-up for the COA award was Sharon Almirall of Colorado Press Women. From being publisher and co-founder of a community newspaper in Colorado to serving as publisher of a Murphy McGinnis Media newspaper in Minnesota, Almirall had a five-decade career in journalism and communications, marked by courage, perseverance and community service.

In addition to her work as a publisher, Almirall was a reporter and editor for newspapers and magazines, and served as a newspaper marketing executive. She has also been the director of communications for a large cathedral, an advertising sales associate, a freelance writer and the owner of a desktop publishing company.

As a graduate student in communications at the University of Colorado, Almirall was invited to participate in a Poynter Institute seminar with journalists from around the country. She served as president of CPW in the 1980s and is vice president of membership.

The other three nominees:

- * Michael Clay Carey of Alabama Media Professionals
- * Joshua Friedberg of Illinois Woman's Press Association
- * Heather Syverson of North Dakota Professional Communicators



2024 COA Runner-up
Sharon Almirall



President's Message: Thanks for a terrific conference

By Julie Campbell
NFPW President

When Janice Denham, a co-chair of the 2024 conference, gave me a handwritten note from Leah Glasser, I knew I had to kick off the June 20 membership meeting by reading it aloud. Glasser, the engagement and outreach coordinator of the Missouri School of Journalism, donated nifty reporter's notebooks for our attendees.

"On behalf of the Missouri School of Journalism, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to you for your unwavering commitment to the profession of journalism. In our modern world, dedication to journalism ethics is crucial. As a leading institution in journalism education, we really appreciate the standards you set and opportunities you provide for your members. Please consider these reporter's notebooks as a token of our gratitude for the work you do."

Reading that message was a great way to start our time in St. Louis. It was a fine gathering, packed with thoughtful and informative speakers, fun tours and a delightful welcoming reception. (I, for one, am still thinking about the local favorite known as T-Ravs: toasted ravioli.)

For all of that, we owe an enormous thank-you to our friends at Missouri Professional Communicators. Co-chairs Janice Denham, Deborah Reinhardt and Ruth E. Thaler-Carter had the creative vision and put in the hard work. We felt a warm welcome from all MPC members, as well as St. Louis itself.

MPC set a high standard for next year's hosts, Colorado Press Women, who are up to the task. Karen Petersen and Gay Porter DeNileon donned handsome cowboy hats to invite us to

Golden, Colorado, on Sept. 11–13, 2025. (Note the later date.)

The board and the members conducted business as well. The membership chose an Elections Committee, which will assemble the slate of officers for 2025–2027. Thanks to Gwen Larson, Cathy Petrini, Richard Plotkin, Karen Rowley (chair) and Marilyn Saltzman for agreeing to serve.

Members approved refinements to the bylaws, guided by the expertise of Allison Stein, our parliamentarian. (see p. 8 for details). During this discussion, Gwen White, past president, contributed helpful pointers on Robert's Rules of Order (another reason why she is this year's COA). The membership elected Kristin Netterstrom Higgins as secretary for 2024–25.

The board established a History Committee to advise affiliates on ways to preserve their history. Thanks to Wendy Plotkin for proposing this group. With the 250th anniversary of the founding of the U.S. coming up in 2026, the timing is propitious.

And let's welcome the new Communications Committee, which will conduct an audit of all our vehicles — AGENDA, the E-letter, social media, LinkedIn and so on. I send my gratitude to Alisha Prather and Melinda Deslatte for their willingness to co-chair this important project. You will be hearing from them in the coming months and can learn more on p. 11.

Throughout the three days, we also lit candles for those members that we've lost since last year; noted membership milestones ranging from 60 years to five; supported the Education Fund through the Silent Auction, and applauded the stellar nominees for Communicator of Achievement and the deserving winners of our Communications Contest, including the high school students.

Overall, we had a lot to celebrate. Enjoy reading more about the conference in this issue of AGENDA.

NFPW Code of Ethics

As a professional communicator, I recognize my responsibility to the public which has placed its trust and confidence in my work, and will endeavor to do nothing to abuse this obligation.

With truth as my ultimate goal, I will adhere to the highest standards of professional communication, never consciously misleading reader, viewer or listener; and will avoid any compromise of my objectivity or fairness.

Because I believe that professional communicators must be obligated only to the people's right to know, I affirm that freedom of the press is to be guarded as an inalienable right of the citizens of a free society.

I pledge to use this freedom wisely and to uphold the right of communicators to express unpopular opinions as well as the right to agree with the majority.

— Adopted in 1975 at the NFPW Conference in Sun Valley, Idaho

Texas senator, Delaware win sweepstakes, again

By Helen Plotkin
NFPW Contest Chair

A Texas senator and communications business owner won the sweepstakes award in NFPW's Professional Communications Contest for the third time in four years.

Judith Zaffirini of Laredo was not present at the banquet in St. Louis to claim her prize — \$250 cash and a plaque. She also won in '21 and '23.

Delaware Press Association won the affiliate sweepstakes award for the 13th time since 2001. Arkansas Press Women finished in second place and Connecticut Press Club in third.

Lori Potter of Nebraska, a freelance writer-photographer since she retired in 2021 after a 43-year career at daily newspapers in Nebraska, placed second in the sweepstakes competition. She received a check for \$100. Potter is a frequent contender for the top sweepstakes award, winning first place in 2008, 2012, 2014 and 2018.

Dwain Hebda of Arkansas placed third and won \$50 in his first appearance on the sweepstakes list. Hebda is the founder and president of Ya!Mule Wordsmiths, editor-in-chief of AY Media Group, and lead writer for Wheelhouse Publishing.

Sweepstakes winners are chosen based on points for winning entries in the communications contest.

Zaffirini was the first Hispanic woman elected to the Texas Senate. An award-winning communication specialist, she holds B.S., M.A. and PhD degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. Press Women of Texas has twice selected her as their Communicator of Achievement. She has won many awards from PWT and NFPW for her publications, speeches and public relations campaigns.

Through Zaffirini Communications, she also provides pro-



Judith Zaffirini

fessional communication services, including consulting, workshops and seminars, keynote addresses, and writing.

"On behalf of the National Federation of Press Women, I send congratulations to Judith for winning our 2024 National Sweepstakes Award," NFPW President Julie Campbell said. "I am in awe of her ability to craft such an impressive body of work, and of such high quality. She's a role model for all of us, and especially for our members who are in the early stages of their communications careers."

Recipients from across the country were honored for excellence in communications during the awards ceremony in St. Louis. A distinguished group of professional journalists, communications specialists and educators judged nearly 2,000 entries in a wide variety of categories. Only first-place entries at the state level are eligible to enter the national contest. Entries were published or broadcast between Jan. 1, 2023, and Dec. 31, 2023.

Here is a link to the complete list of contest winners on the NFPW website:

[2024 Sweepstakes & Contest Winners \(nfpw.org\)](https://nfpw.org/2024-Sweepstakes-&-Contest-Winners)

Letter to the Editor . . .

Dear NFPW Board of Directors and NFPW Professional Communications Contest Judges,

Please accept my sincere appreciation for this wonderful national award recognition from the National Federation of Press Women. Receiving an award for my "Matzo Chronicles" column and writing is flat-out thrilling. I so regret I could not have been with you all in St. Louis to receive the news firsthand. Although scheduled to attend the conference, I was unable to travel because of longer-than-anticipated surgical recovery woes. (I now know that "minor" surgery means something inflicted on a layman, not upon an MD!)

As one who also serves on volunteer boards and from time to time has judged competitions, I know how much time it takes! So, I extend my appreciation for your dedication, caring and expertise especially as you waded through almost 2,000 contest entries.

Again, it's a tremendous honor to be recognized for one's work and equally it serves as a great incentive to "carry on" when the writing challenges seem great.

Thank you, thank you, thank you,

Karen Galatz

"The Matzo Chronicles"
At-Large, Nevada

**News and briefs about
NFPW affiliates and members
should be emailed to
AGENDA Editor Cathy Koon
cathykoon1952@gmail.com.
Photos are always welcome.**



Food, art, fun found at opening reception

The 2024 NFPW Communications Conference, themed Gateway to Success, kicked off in St. Louis at the opening reception, hosted by Missouri Professional Communicators (MPC).

Working hand-in-hand with the St. Louis Artists' Guild and a slew of sponsors and volunteers, the Missouri affiliate offered hors d'oeuvres, a buffet dinner, art, wine -tasting, beer garden and a treasure

hunt, with the clues found in displays around the reception room.

MPC has partnered with the Artists' Guild in renovating the building and sharing office space.

The dinner buffet featured some of the cuisine that makes St. Louis famous, including toasted ravioli, barbecue, ooey gooey butter cake and frozen custard.



Deadline for next issue of AGENDA
Submit stories and/or photos by Sept. 10, 2024
 (For publication October 2024)

Send submissions to cathykoon1952@gmail.com

One man's account of conference '24

Bob Delaney At Large

Personal accounts of recent events in my life.



(Editor's Note: The following article about the 2024 NFPW conference in St. Louis is taken, with permission, from the blog of Missouri native Robert Delaney. The above headline is a link to the blog and accompanying photos. Added comments by this editor are italicized and in parentheses.)

The conference got well underway at the Hilton St. Louis Frontenac with a welcome breakfast. First-time conference attendees who received grants from the Education Fund (including myself) stood up and introduced themselves. We each received a small gift (in my case, a pair of socks from Rome).

Attendees each received a printed list with instructions to seek fellow attendees who qualified to sign items on that list, such as a current NFPW officer, someone who is retired from work or a past Communicator of Achievement. The exercise was to help us get to know each other. I completed my sheet the next morning and turned it in for entry in a raffle.

This was followed by the keynote session: "History in the Headlines." Speakers were Lynne Jackson, great-great granddaughter of Dred and Harriet Scott and president and founder of the Dred Scott Heritage Foundation, and Dr. Jody Sowell, president of the Missouri Historical Society and a former assistant professor of journalism at the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Journalism. Jackson talked of how she helped preserve the memory of her famous ancestors. Sowell presented a talk about St. Louis historical items not generally well known to most people

The lunch program, "AI: Partner or Pestilence," was a thought-provoking panel discussion on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it affects the news business.

Panelists were Mary Ann L. Wymore, partner at UB Greensfelder law firm, adjunct professor of media law at Saint Louis University, and former journalism professor at the University of California-Los Angeles; Aisha Sultan, family and social change columnist for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch; and John Stamm, CEO and founder of Hello Citizen, a St. Louis-based firm that enables users to harness AI in covering local government.

I attended two workshops in the afternoon. First, freelance photographer Rosalind Guy presented "Effective Storytelling through Photography." She talked about how she got into photography 45 years ago and her love of covering positive items in the community.

Then, I took in Anne Shaw Heinrich's presentation "Thriving in Nonprofit PR, Professionally and Personally." She

spoke on her long experience working for both organizations and freelance along with balancing work with her family life. I chatted with Heinrich afterward. She said she would put me in touch with an educational public relations group in Metro St. Louis to help me in my job search.

(Networking is an important benefit of attending conference.)

The late afternoon saw me going through Author's Alley, where several attendees had their books for sale. I bought two books, "Delivering Greatness: How I Found Success...and You Can, Too!" by Tom V. Quinn from Connecticut, a personal motivational work; and "Touch," a young adult novel by MPC member Eileen P. Duggan. Both authors autographed their works for me.

I went to the hotel bar for a drink and conversation with MPC's co-presidents, Janice Denham and Deborah Reinhardt, who were major driving forces behind staging the conference. Then, we headed back to the meeting area for the Communicator of Achievement banquet.

I was back at the hotel Saturday morning. The day started with a buffet breakfast and a presentation from Colorado Press Women (CPW), the host affiliate for the next year's conference in Golden. CPW's Karen Petersen and Gay Porter DeNileon presented a slide show about Golden and the nearby area, and talked about plans for the conference in the fall. Each table in the room had a Colorado flag, Golden tourism information and some Colorado rocks as centerpieces.

This was followed by a roundtable hosted by NFPW President Julie Campbell, titled "The Challenges of Local Journalism." Three panelists involved in local media talked about the challenges they face in providing quality news coverage for their audiences. On the panel were Jacqueline Duty, publisher of the Collinsville (Illinois) Daily News; Nancy Krier, former attorney and open government ombudsperson, now a freelance reporter for ThurstonTalk in Thurston County, Washington; and Peggy Scott, publisher of Leader Publications in Festus, Missouri. It was good hearing how each panelist has dealt with their particular circumstances. *(The newest buzzword in commu-*

I am a native of St. Louis who has extensive experience in public relations, publishing and marketing communications. Seeking opportunities in those fields. Currently working in rental vehicle service. Never been married, with no children.

(Continued on page 6)

One account

(Continued from page 5)

nity journalism is "hyperlocal," focusing attention on a limited geographic area, such as a neighborhood or village.)

Psychologist and author Rita Ernst then took the dais to present "Liar, Liar: Jailbreak Your Life." The presentation was intended to enhance attendees' personal development by getting rid of that inner critic or imposter syndrome that might hold one back from professional success. It was quite an eye-opening program in feeling confident in yourself and the possibilities for greatness in career and life.

During lunch, the NFPW High School Contest awards were announced. One must feel confident that news media's future will be in such good hands after seeing those who do such great work being recognized.

Next was a panel discussion, "Trends in Journalism Education," moderated by Eric Rothenbuhler, dean of the Western University School of Journalism. Panelists were Mitch Eden, 2015 national high school journalism teacher of the year; Gary Ford, professor at the Webster University School of Journalism; Amelia Hurley, graduate candidate at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, reporter for Mizzou football, and editor of the city/county government beat on the Columbia Missourian, and Debbie Miller, a junior college journalism teacher and NFPW vice president. They discussed how best to teach journalism students at the high school and college levels and to prepare them for the evolving media scene.

The first of two workshops I attended that afternoon was one by MPC's Ruth E. Thaler-Carter on "Launching a Freelance Communications Business." Thaler-Carter, a freelance writer and editor, spoke on her experiences in the business and offered advice for anyone wanting to work as a freelancer. Her program was full of much information for me to ponder if I decide to go this route.

The second workshop was "Adventures and Options in Book Publishing," given by two authors, Elizabeth Donald, a freelance journalist and educator who writes dark fiction; and Nicole Evelina (aka Niki Burgdorf), corporate communicator for a healthcare system who writes historical fiction and nonfiction and as a ghostwriter. Their discussion was given in a conversa-



The panel on "Trends in Journalism Education" was a highlight of Saturday's program.

tional manner, as they alternated in telling the good and bad points of their work. They also told of the challenges each faces in balancing their book work with day jobs and family life.

After putting on my tie, I joined other attendees for the communications contest awards banquet. After a gorgeous feast, the report on the Silent Auction was given. Bids and donations raised \$5,050 for the NFPW Education Fund.

Then it was time for the contest awards. There were 1,841 entries in the contest from across the county, with 541 first-place entries going on to the national contest. They called out the names of those who were present, in alphabetical order, with the awards they won for their entries.

I was so happy when my name was called to say I earned an honorable mention in Information for Media, News or Feature Release, Single Release. The entry was the press release announcing IPMS Gateway's 2023 Invitational model contest. I received the award certificate from Julie Campbell.

Four other MPC members were honored for their work that night — Joan Berkman, Suzanne Corbett, Rebecca Now and Allison Stein.

After the parliamentarian read a proclamation on the successful conference, Julie Campbell led a final salute with battery-operated, light-up roses from centerpieces at each table. We toasted each other to end the conference. I went to congratulate some of the other winners and was happy to get congratulations in return. I also thanked Campbell for her work and and posed for a photo with several other Missouri winners.

After that, I walked to my car and drove home. The conference was so great, and I really felt accepted. It felt so good to be among such great professionals and people.

I hope this leads to bigger and better things for my professional life in the coming months.

Las Vegas students win national award with environmental entry

By Teri Ehresman, Idaho
High School Contest Director

Seven students from Southwest Career and Technical Academy in Las Vegas have won the Julie Hoffman Memorial Best of the Best Award in the 2024 NFPW High School Communications contest. The award was announced during the NFPW conference in St. Louis.

The award is for the top entry in the national high school contest and is sponsored by the NFPW Education Fund. The student winners worked together on a series of stories on "Thirst for Urgency," focusing on water issues in Nevada. The entry also placed first in the environmental writing category.

The students and their positions on the school newspaper include Travis McGinnis, Shadow Files Broadcast Journalism editor; Ethan Bull, opinion editor; Katie Peterson, social media editor; Yaritzza Montenegro, copy editor; Ayma Malik, editor-in-chief; Jianna Aganon, news and features editor; and Kalista Palarca, multimedia editor.

"I am more than thrilled that this group of students could tell the story about the current state of water in Nevada. This is an important topic that needs to continue being at the forefront of news coverage, and it's amazing that they are being recognized for doing great journalism," said advisor Matthew LaPorte, Southwest Shadow newspaper advisor.

LaPorte said his students brainstormed a host of stories pertinent to the local community and decided the topic of water would be the best for a feature longform.

He said all seven students will be headed to college, either in Nevada, or out of state.

The entry first competed at the state level, where one of the judges commented, "An impressive multi-media presentation with a great headline. A local issue? Yes. A focused issue? Yes. Local sources? Yes — community members, school faculty, students."

Only first-place entries at the state level advance to the national contest.

The Nevada entry placed first in the national environmen-



tal writing category, where the judge commented, "Wow! So impressive! Interesting topic. Wonderful background well-explained. Crisp, clean photos. Beautiful graphics. Good use of interviews and quotations." The entry then entered a third round of judging of the 23 first-place entries to determine the Best of the Best winner.

Each first-place winner receives \$100.

. Winning the Best of the Best award earns \$250 for the students to split and a \$250 check for the school's communications program.

This is the first time an environmental entry has won top honors and the first time a school from Nevada has won the top award.

The environmental category was added to the contest in 2004 after a significant donation to the NFPW Education Fund from the San Francisco Press Club in honor of their recently deceased president who was the environment editor for the San Francisco Chronicle. Their request was that part of the donation be used to encourage environmental journalism.

Nearly 2,000 students participated in this year's contest sponsored by the NFPW Education Fund.

A complete list of the winners will be posted to the NFPW website. Click [here](#).

Bylaws amendments approved at 2024 conference

By Allison Stein, Parliamentarian
and Cathy Koon, AGENDA Editor

Delegates to the NFPW Annual Conference in St. Louis, Mo., voted on and approved several amendments to the NFPW Bylaws at the business meeting Thursday, June 20, 2024. The revised bylaws are published in full on [NFPW.org](https://nfpw.org).

Some of the changes were stylistic and proofreading updates made to correct errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation and style, as needed.

One of those was to capitalize "Business Meeting" on all references and remove the "annual" modifier. The meeting occurs at the Annual Conference; therefore "Annual Business Meeting" is redundant.

The changed wording is underlined. The italicized passages are directly from the official bylaws.

The second item was Article II, Section 2, to change "youth" to "students" to align with description in Article III, Section 6: Student Members.

"The organization's objectives shall be to advance professional development of women communicators, to provide for an exchange of ideas, knowledge and experiences, to be a protector of First Amendment freedoms, and to assist the communications professions in outreach to youth students interested in communications fields."

Item 3 involved a change to Article IV: Meetings, Section 2: Annual Business Meeting to "break into subsections and simplify description of the means by which meetings of the Board of Directors shall be called and conducted."

The changes officially authorized the board to issue a call for board meetings at least twice annually "by whatever means of notification agreed to by first-class mail or, if a majority of the Board agrees to alternative notification, by such other means as the majority establishes during each term of office."

Section 2: Annual Business Meeting.

C. Meetings of the Board of Directors may take place by whatever

means of meeting is agreed to by telephonically or by other electronic means if a majority of the Board during each term of office so elects. Attendance of a director shall constitute a waiver of notice except where a director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the absence of notice.

The fourth item allows minutes of the board to be transmitted by mail or electronically.

How the Elections Committee is formed and operates is covered in Item 5. Article VII, Section 2, now specifies the five-member election committee will elect its own chair.

C. Before the Business Meeting, the current Board of Directors will ask if there are interested NFPW members who would consider serving on the Elections Committee.

Item 6 simplifies Article VII: Elections, Section 3: Nominations and eliminates the "he or she" phrasing, which is not used elsewhere in the bylaws.

Article VIII: Representation and Governing Body, Section 1: The Governing Body was amended to clarify whether delegates and other NFPW members can attend or participate in the Business Meeting or Memorial Service without registering to attend the Annual Conference. The amendments now read:

E. Each delegate must be a registered attendee of the Annual Conference at which the Business Meeting takes place in order to present, support, or oppose a business item from the floor.

F. Members of the organization who are not delegates and/or who have not registered to attend the Annual Conference may attend but not participate in the Business Meeting. They may also attend and participate in the Memorial Service.

The final item approved by the membership lists official NFPW publications.

Article XI: Official Print/Electronic Publications. Clarify list of official NFPW publications.

Article XI: Official Print/Electronic Publications

Section 2: Official publications of NFPW include, but are not limited to, items sent as print or electronic publications by NFPW, such as NFPW AGENDA, the NFPW E-letter, and email announcements.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

— **The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution**

‘Gateway’ tours a hit with goers

By Deborah Reinhardt
Missouri Professional Communicators

Thirty people participated in pre- and post-conference tours exploring St. Louis and St. Charles, Missouri. The tours focused on area history and cultural attractions. Participants were members of the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) plus a few family members.

The first tour focused on St. Louis history and included a visit to Gateway Arch National Park, where most sightseers enjoyed a documentary about building the monument and toured museum galleries. A few people braved the tram ride to the top of the Arch.

Because most of the country knows St. Louis as a “beer and baseball town,” the tour also stopped at the St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame Museum inside Ballpark Village. Following lunch in historic Lafayette Square—one of the city’s oldest neighborhoods—the day concluded with an inspirational tour of the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis, a structure completed in 1914 that is famous for its mosaic art.

The second tour visited some of the city’s cultural gems in Forest Park. The morning began with a stop at the Missouri History Museum. Public historian Amanda Clark led the group on a tour of the new permanent gallery that interprets the Louisiana Purchase Expedition that was held during the 1904 World’s Fair in St. Louis. A quick visit to the Saint Louis Zoo preceded lunch, then the group headed to the Missouri Botanical Garden, braving temperatures in the mid-90s to enjoy businessman Henry Shaw’s creation. Garden docent Claudio Humphrey pointed out the garden’s shady spots for those seeking brief respite.

Following the Gateway to Success conference, a tour to St. Charles, about 30 minutes west of St. Louis, started with a look at First Missouri State Capitol State Historic Site. Before Missouri was granted statehood in 1821, territorial business was conducted in St. Louis. St. Charles was the state’s capital 1820-1826.

The group heard more stories about westward expansion at the Lewis and Clark Boat House and Museum and had a peek at a replica expedition keelboat. A scenic drive along Highway 94, known as Missouri’s Weinstrasse (wine road), took the group to Augusta, the country’s first AVA (American Viticultural Area), and Mount Pleasant Winery, where the day ended with a wine tasting.

NFPW President Julie Campbell, who attended all three tours, said, “Our visit to historic St. Charles and the Lewis and Clark Boathouse and Museum inspired me to dig out the three-volume set of ‘The History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition,’ which my brother gave me when I graduated from college.”

Diane Walters of Alaska said her favorite stops on the tours were the Missouri History Museum and the cathedral.

“I had no idea the 1904 World’s Fair was to celebrate the centennial of the Louisiana Purchase, and the tile work in the (cathedral) basilica was truly spectacular. I learned so much. I had an amazing time,” she said.



Katherine Keniston from Oregon visiting the Gateway Arch in St. Louis. Photo courtesy of Deborah Reinhardt.



Glennis McNeal of Oregon, right, and Marlene Cook of Illinois enjoying some of Mount Pleasant’s award-winning wine in Augusta, Missouri. Photo courtesy of Deborah Reinhardt.



Diane Walters of Alaska, center, and Marsha Shuler of Louisiana, right, took part in a tour of the St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame Museum, which includes a look at the St. Louis Browns and the St. Louis Stars of the Negro Leagues. *Photo courtesy of Deborah Reinhardt.*



The post-tour gang prepares to head for St. Charles to see attractions pertaining to the Lewis and Clark expedition, as well as Missouri's first capital. *Photo courtesy of Deborah Reinhardt.*



Above: The Missouri History Museum contains a gallery interpreting the Louisiana Purchase Expedition, and at right, Meg Hunt, standing, and Betty Packard, seated, manned the pick-up-and-pay table after the Silent Auction. The sales plus generous donations from some members brought in \$5,050.



Committee appointed to audit NFPW publications

A committee appointed by the NFPW board during the 2024 conference will be taking a look at the organization's publications with a eye at improving coverage and coordination.

Communications Committee members are Co-Chairs Melinda Deslatte and Alisha Prather of Louisiana, Cathy Koon of Idaho, Jane Newton Falany of Alabama and Julie Campbell of Virginia.

Appointment of the committee came after repeated requests from Koon, who is the NFPW publications director and AGENDA editor. Koon has expressed concerns about the roles of the newsletter, website and E-letter, and what she considers a lack of cooperation and coordination among the three.

The NFPW bylaws were amended during the 2024 business meeting to state, "Official publications of NFPW include, but are not limited to, items sent as print or electronic publications by NFPW, such as NFPW AGENDA, the NFPW E-letter and email announcements" The website also is an official publication.

Koon also has asked for coordination that would include branding to present a unified message about NFPW.

In her 2023 report to the board, Koon said, "Again last year, I raised concerns about the duplication of efforts between the president's monthly E-letter and AGENDA and asked for a review of NFPW publications, including better coordination with the NFPW website. I suggested a rebranding for all publications to present a unified look and feel. These issues have been addressed through the new strategic plan. I understand a communications audit will be done and should address my concerns."

Campbell announced formation of the Communications Committee during the 2024 board meeting. Campbell is retired from 40-plus years that include stints as a magazine editor

and in university communications. The author of two books, she now does freelance editing.

Deslatte is research director at Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana. She was a newspaper reporter for 22 years and does freelance writing. She has degrees in journalism and mass communications.

Prather works for a full-service communications firm specializing in issues management. A communications professional with 30 years of experience in strategic public affairs, communications, media relations, issues management and policy analysis, she has been successful in analyzing and translating complex ideas into simple, direct and persuasive messages for diverse audiences.

Koon is a 30-year veteran of community journalism in eastern Idaho with additional experience in public information with the Idaho Transportation Department and the nonprofit Henry's Fork Foundation and in economic development for Fremont County, Idaho. She was been AGENDA editor for more than a decade, has been a member of NFPW for 44 years and is president of the Idaho affiliate, Media Network Idaho.

Falany is Koon's assistant publications director. She is an award-winning writer and editor with more than 30 years of experience, including 12 years as a freelancer. She has worked in corporate public relations, written news releases and news and feature articles, edited publications, and taught journalism and public relations courses at the college level.

She has served as historian and treasurer of NFPW, as co-chair for NFPW's conference in 2017 in Birmingham and was twice named Alabama Media Professionals' Communicator of Achievement.

NFPW commits to LinkedIn to expand, build community

The "N" in NFPW stands for national, but it could easily stand for networking — a key component of our conferences.

Once the national conference ends, though, how do you stay in touch? NFPW has a LinkedIn group, but activity has waned in recent years. During the St. Louis conference, several past presidents agreed LinkedIn would be a good way to share information about members, contest, conferences and communications news.

"We want to leverage the platform's professional network to increase NFPW's outreach," said Cynthia Price, 2009-2011 NFPW president. "We want to attract more members to NFPW, share the successes of our members, and provide information about the communications contest and conferences."

Increasing NFPW's digital presence on LinkedIn also provides a means for members to connect with others throughout the year.

The LinkedIn profile will feature regular updates on NFPW's activities, and highlight success stories of members.

"NFPW members are talented and experienced in many areas of communications," said Meg Hunt, past president, 2005-2007. "Being able to easily find our members and connect through LinkedIn will benefit all of us."

"We're seeing strong growth on LinkedIn," said Gwen Larson, past president, 2019-2021, "and we hope our members will see the benefit of joining the NFPW group."

NFPW members can to connect to LinkedIn [here](#).



Journalists at risk everywhere

From Oregon Press Women

Oregon Press Women and NFPW have an abiding interest in freedom of the press. OPW member Jean Kempe-Ware shared this information from her brother Fred Kempe, president and CEO of The Atlantic Council, whose mission is to galvanize U.S. leadership and engagement in the world, in partnership with allies and partners, to shape solutions to global challenges.

Kempe's recent column, "Inflection Points," drove home this point about journalists at risk after he attended the PEN* America gala. Kempe wrote:

It's a bad time for press freedom — which underscores that it unfortunately also is a very good time for the type of autocracies that are most determined to douse free speech.

So, it was a poignant moment at the PEN America Literary Gala, which I attended (recently) in New York, when Almar Latour, Dow Jones CEO and Wall Street Journal publisher, spoke about how the long-sought release of his reporter Evan Gershkovich from Russia's dreaded Lefortovo Prison matters "on a macro level."

"The grim reality is that there are Evans everywhere," said Latour, also an Atlantic Council board member. "Journalists around the world face increasing resistance and hostility for just trying to do their jobs."

More than a hundred journalists and photojournalists were killed in the past year, mostly in Gaza and Ukraine, and more than 300 others were imprisoned for their work by one autocratic regime or another. Through our "Reporters at Risk" events, the Atlantic Council has worked to raise these issues for policymakers and the public.

So, too, has Latour, who listed the names of many of the

journalists behind bars, and he included Jimmy Lai, the Hong Kong media tycoon and pro-democracy advocate charged with endangering Chinese national security with his weapon of truth. One of the evening's awardees sits in a Vietnamese prison for her critiques of state repression, the writer Pham Doan Trang.

It would have been easy in an evening that honored the music legend Paul Simon — who played his "American Tune" on acoustic guitar just a few feet away from me — to lose the singular and symbolic importance of one reporter's imprisonment.

With talk show host Seth Meyers as MC, with Malcolm Gladwell and other authors as presenters and speakers, and with PEN America at the center of controversies over whether Israeli and Palestinian free speech are created equal, one might, for a moment, forget Evan.

Amid the noise and glitter and controversy, however, there was a bigger story to be told. I scribbled down on my napkin Latour's closing quote: "Russia may be an ocean and a continent away, but the distance between authoritarianism and a free society is measured by the strength of a free press."

*(*PEN is a nonprofit organization whose goal is to raise awareness for the protection of free expression in the United States and worldwide through the advancement of literature and human rights.)*



AGENDA Publication Schedule

- October 2024
- January 2025
- April 2025
- July 2025

The deadline for submitting content is the
10th of the month prior to publication.
Submit content to cathykoon1952@gmail.com



Top left, Angela Smith celebrates a win at the Silent Auction in true Angela style (photo by Lori Potter); top right, Betty Packard, Angela Smith and Cindy Cruz framed by a poster of the St. Louis Arch (photo courtesy of Betty Packard); bottom left, Marsha Shuler at bat at the St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame Museum during a pre-tour (photo by Kay Stephens); and bottom left, Betty Packard snapped this shot at the Botanical Gardens.





Top, the annual Memorial Service honors members who died during the prior year. Photo by Allison Stein. Bottom, Rosalind Guy of Missouri presents a workshop on photography. She was a common sight throughout the conference, taking photos at the many events. Photo by Bob Delaney.



Membership milestones honored

Each year at the national conference, NFPW honors members for continuous years of membership, starting at five years and continuing at five-year increments. The complete list of 2024 honorees can be found on [here](#).

Because of limited space in this newsletter, only the 60-, 50- and 45-year milestone honorees are listed.

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

Colorado Press Women

Glennys McPhilimy graduated from Kansas State University, accepted a job at the Boulder Daily Camera in Colorado and joined CPW — all within a year. She was a writer and columnist, and was editor of the Camera's editorial pages for six years before retiring in 1996. A past president of CPW, Glennys remains involved in CPW activities.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Nebraska Press Women

Mary Jane Skala covers health, religion and lifestyles and writes a personal column for the daily Kearney Hub in Nebraska. In her native Cleveland, she spent 20 years as senior editor at Sun News, the suburban arm of The Plain Dealer. She was the editor for the Chessie Systems Railroad's employee magazine and did public relations for a Cleveland hospital and a community college. She has held offices in NFPW and its affiliates in Nebraska and Ohio.

Oregon Press Women

High school journalism in Thermopoli, Wyoming, led **Glennis McNeal** to her career. Skills gained through OPW and NFPW primed her for medical writing, freelance journalism and 10 years in public relations. After retirement, she was special projects writer for a newspaper and graduated from Oregon's Linfield College with a bachelor's degree in arts

and humanities. She's currently helping other members revitalize Oregon Press Women.

Press Women of Texas

Carol Hargrave Dobbs at 16 years old wanted to be in a play. She thought she'd improve her chances with the drama teacher, who also taught journalism, by signing up for the school newspaper. She got the part — and a career in journalism. While serving as editor of two neighborhood newspapers, Dobbs was recruited by the Houston Chronicle in 1990 for its community news section. She retired in 2007.

Judith Zaffirini, the first Mexican American woman elected to the Texas Senate, became the first woman to hold the role of that chamber's longest-serving member in December 2023. She is the namesake of several entities in Texas, including a courthouse, a college library and an elementary school. She has received more than 1,200 awards and honors for her public service and more than 600 state and national awards in communications. She owns Zaffirini Communications.

Virginia Professional Communicators

Mary Jane King was hired as a reporter by her hometown daily newspaper in 1970. She left newspapers a decade later to work in educational and corporate public relations before retiring in 2013. She joined NFPW and the Virginia affiliate early in her career and held positions in both, including president of VPW and secretary of NFPW. She taught university-level journalism classes and was adviser for a college newspaper. Her community service has focused on literacy and music.

At-large (New Jersey)

Daryl Rand was named one of the

Top 50 Women in Business in the state and is a member of the Advertising Hall of Fame of New Jersey. President and CEO of HarrisonRand, New Jersey's oldest advertising and marketing agency, Rand was the first woman in the 136-year history of the Hudson County Chamber of Commerce to serve as its board chair. Earlier this year, Daryl was recognized as being a Power List 2024 Influencer in Marketing & Communications member and as a Power List Woman in Business.

At-large (Wyoming)

After a 40-year career teaching journalism and advising student media at Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne, Wyoming, **Rosalind Routt Schliske** was named faculty emeritus in 2015. A retired major from the Wyoming Army National Guard, she is editing the guard's first comprehensive history. She commanded the guard's 197th Public Affairs Detachment. Schliske, runner-up in the 2000 NFPW COA competition, serves on the boards of Wyoming Public Radio and her local library foundation. In 2013, the College Media Association named her its outstanding two-year newspaper adviser.

CELEBRATING 45 YEARS

Colorado Press Women

Lori Rapp

Media Network Idaho

Peggy Parks

Nebraska Press Women

Sue Fitzgerald

Lori Potter

New Mexico Press Women

Susan Walton

Virginia Professional Communicators

Martha Steger

At-large (Georgia)

Jamie Denty

At-large (Ohio)

And the winning photo is . . .



. . . this photo taken by Lori Potter inside the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis, a structure completed in 1914 and famed for its mosaic tile work. Look at the wonder and the appreciation on the faces of those on the tour. That is a tour guide shining a light on the beauty. This is the spirit of NFPW, seeking splendor and knowledge in the world around us, trying to answer the age-old question, "How did they do that?" I received a couple dozen entries in my AGENDA photo contest, making it hard to pick a winner, but the quality and clarity of this photo was unsurpassed. It's not easy to take a photo of such depth and have everything in focus. I've used a number of contest entries in coverage of the conference. My thanks to everyone who participated. And thank you, Lori Potter. She will receive a \$50 cash prize, donated by me, Cathy Koon.



National Federation of Press Women

**NFPW Communications Conference
Closing Resolution
Accepted by Acclamation, June 22, 2024
Allison Stein, Parliamentarian**

Whereas NFPW members and guests convened in St. Louis to:

- ◆ Seek the Gateway to Success
- ◆ Welcome first timers, make new friends and reconnect with old friends
- ◆ Savor a taste of St. Louis' history, hospitality, culture and tasty treats
- ◆ Discuss the vital importance of media literacy and the challenges of keeping hyperlocal community journalism alive
- ◆ Learn how to recognize the potential -- and danger -- of artificial intelligence on our profession
- ◆ Learn how to capture a moment and explore new ways to gather and tell stories
- ◆ Honor our newest Communicator of Achievement, the Best of the Best of the next generation, and the award-winning work of our peers
- ◆ Bid high and bid often to support our Education Fund and
- ◆ Discover how to jailbreak our brains.

Be it resolved by acclamation that

- ◆ Missouri Professional Communicators have done an outstanding job in the planning and execution of the 2024 NFPW Communications Conference
- ◆ We look forward to exploring The Next Frontier in Colorado next September, and
- ◆ We will always proudly declare: "I'm a member of NFPW. Who the heck are you?"

Thank you to Missouri sponsors

Planning and paying for a quality conference can be daunting, and expensive. For the Missouri Professional Communicators, it involved partnerships, matching grants, donations of products and corporate sponsors.

Co-Chair Janice Denham said the conference committee recognized sponsors by listing them in the conference handbook and including their logos in the program "as they were important to our success, with most (being) in-

kind." Missouri Humanities gave funding in the form of a matching grant.

Ella & Ollie Popcorn, in addition to providing bags of popcorn and popcorn seasoning for gift bags to give to all registrants, offered a bonus of 20 percent off online orders for NFPW members through June 2025.

As an added thank you, AGENDA is providing this list of sponsors who made the 2024 conference in St. Louis possible.



Veteran reporter touts newspaper's 150th

By Kay Stephens
Pennsylvania Press Club

(Reprinted with permission of the Altoona Mirror.)

I was 21 years old when I arrived in Altoona in 1977.

Through Penn State, I was signed up for an internship at the Altoona Mirror that would be worth six credits to finish my bachelor's degree in journalism and put me in a position to start looking for a job.

At that time, colleges were generating more applicants than jobs.

So when one of the Mirror editors heard that I would have my degree when I finished my internship, he said, "Why don't you stay and work here?" So I did.

I didn't expect to remain in Altoona for 47 more years, but now that the Mirror is celebrating its 150th anniversary, I'm proud to be part of that milestone and of my contributions toward it.

Over the decades, many of my colleagues have left the newspaper business for job opportunities that would put their writing skills to use.

And now that I'm edging toward retirement, I'd say the primary reason I stayed is because I like newspaper work, and I know why it's important.

Newspapers are one part of today's news media — one that has gone through many changes during the four-plus decades of my career. And because of those changes, there are more ways than ever to access information.

But something that hasn't changed is how news develops.

Newspaper reporters like me, we're part of a boots-on-the-ground effort that makes it our job to learn things about our local communities and to tell others.

And why is that important? Because without that education, people lack an understanding of how their community and their local governments operate.

One of the nicest compliments I ever received on the job — maybe one that influenced me most as to how I would continue to do my job — came from a parent sitting in an Altoona school board meeting, probably in the early 1980s. This par-

ent, who had started to regularly attend the meeting, complained to the school board members that despite her presence at the meetings, she couldn't understand their actions — until the next day when she read what Kay Stephens wrote in the Altoona Mirror.

I've always maintained that when it comes to doing the public's business, every local leader should be vocal and transparent. And I've tried to work with those whose definition of transparency differs from mine while remembering that I have to answer to the readers.

So as I think about some of the stories I've written over the years — while mindful that there are many that I have forgotten — there are ones that come to mind for various reasons.

I'd have to say that the stories I wrote about the K-4 1361 steam locomotive restoration — leading up to its historic run on April 12, 1987 — would be among my favorites. I made so many trips between the downtown Altoona Mirror building and Conrail restoration shop that I didn't have to stop at the entrance gate.

And I still remember that while under repair, the K4's big driver wheels activated so quickly at one point that I described them as summer tires on ice — a reference that drew a compli-

ment from local newsman Roy Goshorn, who was part of the ABC News crew that accompanied President Richard Nixon on his 1972 historic trip to China — a big story when I was in high school.

While I spent a lot of years as the Mirror's education reporter, my reporting beats shifted during the years, so I acclimated by learning more about local and county governments as well as the county court system. That doesn't mean I know everything. But when a local story begins to develop, I generally know what the readers are expecting me to find out.

As the Mirror recognizes its 150th anniversary, I'll recognize its readers — in print and online — who appreciate the effort put into creating what is recognized as the first draft of community history. As many reporters have said over the years while typing all kinds of stories:

"We don't make this stuff up."



Kay Stephens



Colorado to host '25 conference

'The Next Frontier'

From the CPW newsletter

Now that the 2024 NFPW conference has concluded and Colorado Press Women's invitation to "The Next Frontier" has been extended, it's time to line up sponsors, engage colleges, identify speakers and specific topics, and organize pre- and post-conference tours for next year's conference in Golden.

The conference will be held in the fall — Sept. 11-13, 2025 — to take advantage of better weather and better rates found after the traditional tourist season.

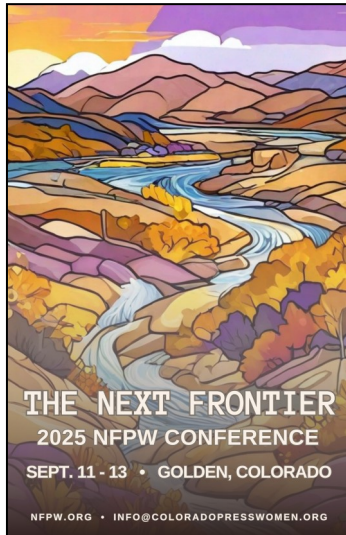
We laid out a high-level vision for the programming when we delivered the call to attend at the conference in St. Louis.

Colorado's conference theme, "The Next Frontier," spotlights Colorado's prominence in the tech and aerospace industries and its role in confronting climate change, protecting women's reproductive rights and addressing other pressing social issues.

It also points to our forward-thinking media landscape, which is a model for community-based journalism, specialty coverage, media ethics and literacy, and support for a free press.

"We need our fellow CPW members to help us hone that theme and make this a conference people want to attend," says Gay Porter DeNileon. "Our members' expertise and connections will be key to showcasing our great state and its talent, and we hope some of you will be presenters. It's a great way to increase your own visibility and network."

"We welcome anyone who wants to be part of curating a not-to-be-missed conference featuring dynamic speakers, compelling content and amazing pre- and post-conference tours," Karen Petersen adds. "This will be fun!"



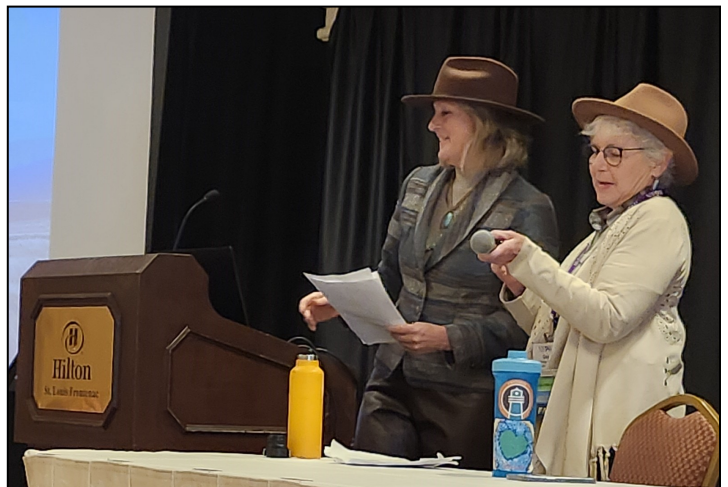
The conference hotel is the Denver Marriott West in Golden, and CPW is preparing to host 130-150 national members.

CPW distributed a survey about tour preferences to conference attendees in St. Louis, and their responses will guide CPW's planning for those popular conference highlights.

Immediate committee activities will include reaching out to Colorado colleges and universities to engage communications students and faculty in the conference and securing sponsors to offset costs.

"It may seem early to start planning now for September 2025, but considering college curriculum planning and corporate budget cycles, it's

not," says Petersen.



Karen Petersen, left, and Gay Porter-DeNileon issue the invitation to the 2025 conference in Golden, Colorado. They donned Western wear as they introduced the Saturday breakfast audience to the delights that await in 2025.

What is more St. Louis than Clydesdales?



By Kay Stephens
Pennsylvania Press Club

When I signed up to attend this year's NFPW conference in St. Louis, I had my heart set on getting to see the Budweiser Clydesdale horses. Despite the extensive tour schedule of the Anheuser-Busch marketing icons, I've only seen those horses on TV, usually during Super Bowl commercials.

So on Thursday morning before the NFPW conference got into full swing, I and fellow NFPW members Jill Miller, Cecilia Green, Marlene Cook and Cindy Cruz found our way to Grant's Farm a few miles outside the city. There, we got to greet, pet, brush and be photographed with a few of those big brown horses, including Logan, who is eight years old, stands 18 hands (six feet) tall at his withers (the base of his neck) and weighs 1,900 pounds.

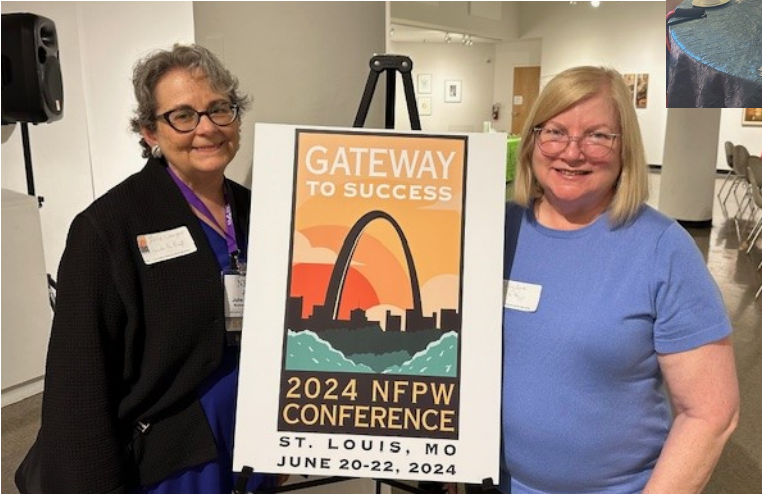
During a 75-minute tour, we learned it was August A. Busch Jr. and Adolphus Busch III who, in April 1933, purchased a six-horse Clydesdale hitch as a surprise gift for their father, August A. Busch Sr., to commemorate the repeal of Prohibition. Today, there are three hitches of 10 horses each, traveling 300 days of the year and covering 30,000 miles.

After getting home from the NFPW conference, I was happy to see that a miniature Clydesdale packed deep inside my suitcase had arrived with no broken legs. That gift shop souvenir is a great reminder of our 2024 NFPW conference.



Top, Kay Stephens makes the acquaintance of Logan during her dream visit to Grant's Farm, home of the Budweiser Clydesdales. Above, NFPW members, from left, Kay Stephens, Cindy Cruz, Marlene Cook, Jill Miller and Cecilia Green enjoyed a photo op during their visit to see the draft horse of Anheuser-Busch. Right, Cindy Cruz takes advantage of the opportunity to groom one of the Clydesdales at Grant's Farm. *Photos courtesy of Kay Stephens.*

Candids from conference



Affiliate and Member News . . .



Sherri Burr of New Mexico, right, receives an award for "most popular article by an emerita faculty member" for having the most downloaded article. Her "Free Blacks of Virginia: A Narrative," published in the *Iowa Journal of Gender, Race, and Justice* in 2016, has been downloaded more than 6,000 times all over the world. Burr is the Dickason Chair and Regents Professor Emerita at the University of New Mexico School of Law. Photo courtesy of Sherri Burr.

By Wendy Plotkin Arkansas Press Woman

I recently realized I know little about NFPW's history, other than the information on NFPW's webpages and that included in APW's own records and Charlotte Schexnayder's "Salty Old Editor." Dorothy Stuck and Nan Snow's "Roberta: A Most Formidable Fulbright" has a portion of a chapter about APW's founding, but little about NFPW.

I purchased the Kindle version of Elizabeth V. Burt, ed. "Women's Press Organizations, 1881-1999" soon after I became Arkansas Press Woman's historian. This book includes detailed histories of NFPW and several of its affiliates, as well as a few other organizations. Its bibliography provides a good source for other histories of NFPW.

NFPW directories from the late 1970s and early 1980s also have histories (especially by Betty Spencer). I don't have enough of these to know how general this practice was.

I have purchased several books about women in communications, including Willah Weddon, "Michigan Press Women, Today and Yesterday" and Eileen M. Wirth, "From Society Page to Front Page: Nebraska Women in Journalism," but these also have little about NFPW.

If NFPW has produced other histories, I'd be interested in obtaining a copy. I can be reached at wplotkin66@gmail.com.

(Editor's Note: Wendy has been appointed to the new NFPW History Committee. She has done extensive research about NFPW and is involved in an effort to obtain past NFPW publications from Google. Check the April 2024 issue for details about the controversy surrounding access to those NFPW records.)

We Remember . . . compiled by Amy Geiszler-Jones

Colorado Press Women

Mary Alice Parmelee, 76, of Denver, died June 16, 2024, of COVID complications.

Introduced to Colorado Press Women through her mother, who was a member, Parmelee was a 48-year member of NFPW. She was CPW's 2013 Communicator of Achievement, had a file full of state and national contest wins and served CPW in every office except president.



She worked for the American Water Works Association for more than 40 years, launching two publications and retiring as senior manager of AWWA periodicals.

She served Washington Park United Church of Christ as an important lay leader.

North Carolina Press Club

Iris June Vinegar died April 22, 2022, in Durham, North Carolina, at the age of 95.

A longtime NFPW member, Vinegar grew up in The Bronx and briefly attended Columbia University.

After her divorce, she received her bachelor's degree in writing and editing from North Carolina State University in Raleigh.

She started her business, named Write-Away, and specialized in writing feature stories about real estate for the News & Observer newspaper in Raleigh.

At age 52, she started running 10Ks, and half and full marathons. She was 83 when she ran her last marathon.



Just a thought . . .



By Cathy Koon
AGENDA Editor

Kudos to the Missouri Professional Communicators led by co-chairs Jan Denham, Deb Reinhard and Ruth Thaler-Carter for the great job they did hosting the 2024 national conference in St. Louis.

Wow! A great time was had by all. Check out the conference stories and photos featured in this issue for a taste of the "Gateway to the West."

The above photo was taken sometime in the early to mid-60s after an annual "Around the Block Parade," a summer activity held by the LDS Church's Primary organization for children. We dressed up and paraded through the neighborhoods surrounding our ward meeting house. The last house in the row behind the nurses is where I grew up.

That's me on the left, pulling the wagon; I was probably about 10. The nurse's caps and transfusion bottle were loaned by my grandmother, who was a licensed practical nurse. The doll was my best friend Marcia's. She's the one on the right. Not the doll, the girl.

The popsicles were our prize for participating.

Back when this photo was taken, nurses wore those caps and white uniform dresses. No slacks allowed. The ribbon around the cap indicated where you got your nursing license.

Grandma was in the delivery room during the delivery of my first three children. Our hospital closed the year my son, Tyson, was born, and I ended up in an ambulance that took me to the LDS Hospital in Idaho Falls for a C-section. Grandma

couldn't be there. When they wheeled me into that operating room, I thought I and my child were going to die. I wished she was there, holding my hand and coaching me through the pain and the fear.

If I close my eyes and listen carefully, I can hear her still. Her quiet wisdom and faith got me through some difficult times. They still do. The lessons we learn in our youth, the ones that stick with us the most, that pop into our heads at the most unexpected times, often come from the simple advice we get during the tough times. Advice we may have ignored at the time, unwanted even. I heard you, Grandma. I remember.

This column took an unexpected turn. It didn't start out to be about my grandmother and lessons learned. Have you ever had that happen when you're writing? The story takes on a life of its own? I've heard authors say the characters in their books determine what happens to them.

I've had news articles do that, but it was usually because I was lacking a critical piece of information. I'd try to write around it, knowing my editor would figure it out. I could never slip anything past him. He'd slam my typewritten story on the desk and ask me, "Where's the lead? What's missing here? Why didn't you ask this question?"

We learn from our mistakes, and from good editors. And we learn as we gain experience and confidence that it's easier to get it right the first time.

We work in an industry that requires us to ask the right questions so the people we write for get the right answers and learn to trust us to do our jobs. Not a bad lesson to learn.

NFPW Leadership Directory

2024 ELECTED OFFICERS

President:

Julie Campbell, Virginia

Vice President:

Debbie Miller, Arkansas

Secretary:

Kristin Netterstrom Higgins, Arkansas

Treasurer:

Karen Stensrud, North Dakota

Immediate Past President:

Karen Rowley, Louisiana

APPOINTED BOARD

Archivist:

TBD

Communicator of Achievement Director:

Karen Stensrud, North Dakota

FAN Co-Directors:

Marsha Shuler, Louisiana

Angela Smith, Texas

Historian:

Amy Geiszler-Jones, Kansas

Assistant Historian:

Mary Pat Finn-Hoag, Nebraska

Hospitality and Protocol:

Catherine Petrini, Virginia & D.C.

Parliamentarian:

Allison Stein, Missouri

POPPS President:

Ann Lockhart, Colorado

Professional Contest Director:

Helen Plotkin, Arkansas

High School Contest Director:

Teri Ehresman, Idaho

Presidential Advisers:

Marsha Hoffman, Iowa

Meg Hunt, South Carolina

Gwen Larson, Kansas

Cynthia Price, Virginia

Publications Director:

Cathy Koon, Idaho

Publications Assistant:

Jane Newton Falany, Alabama

Web Director:

Cate Langley, NFPW Executive Director

2024 Conference Committee:

Missouri Professional Communicators

Ad Rates for AGENDA

- Full / Page $8.250 \times 10.625 = \$50$
- Half / Page $8.250 \times 5.175 = \$30$
- Half / Page $4.063 \times 10.637 = \$30$
- Quarter / Page $8.250 \times 2.476 = \$15$
- Quarter / Page $4.064 \times 5.2 = \$15$
- 1/8 / Page $1.875 \times 10.563 = \$10$
- 1/8 / Page $4.075 \times 2.476 = \$10$

Discounts are available for multiple runs of the same ad.

NFPW Headquarters

Cate Langley, Executive Director

140B Purcellville Gateway Drive

Suite 120

Purcellville, VA 20132

Phone: 571-295-5900

info@nfpw.org

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- Ads must be submitted in JPEG format, camera ready.
- Design and content of ads are the responsibility of the advertiser. The AGENDA editorial staff has the final say on whether ad content is appropriate.
- Payment must be made at time of submission.
- Payment by check should be sent to NFPW Headquarters, 140B Purcellville Gateway Drive, Suite 120, Purcellville, VA 20132.
- Payment can be made by credit card over the phone (571) 295-5900.