

# Spot News

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## SPJ president Gratz to speak at GPC awards program

Irwin Gratz, president of the national Society of Professional Journalists, will be the featured speaker at the Golden Press Card awards program, 6:30 p.m., May 20, at the University Club on Neyland Drive.



**Gratz**

A broadcaster in Maine for 26 years, Gratz is now the voice of Maine Public Radio's Morning Edition. He was a charter member of the first chapter of SPJ in that state.

Gratz sees challenges ahead for journalists because of recent lapses in ethics, as evidenced by charges of plagiarism and inaccurate reporting of circulation data. All journalists suffer when others do not uphold high standards, he believes.

Gratz is also concerned about superficial reporting. Budget constraints, fewer resources and pressure to crank out stories have resulted in less investigative work. Readers and listeners have access to more news services today than they did 20 years ago, but the news is fragmented. In-depth reporting has suffered.

Young people are not interested in the news, which Gratz finds hard to understand. To what can we attribute their lack of interest? Is it the stories themselves, the presentation or the format. These are the things he believes we need to learn.

Another concern is that people are choosing to get their news from sources that reflect their political beliefs.

According to the Maine Public Broadcasting Web site, Gratz, a native New Yorker, loves subway rides,

egg creams and the New York Mets. Gratz has an undergraduate degree from Lehman College in New York City and a master's degree from New York University. He lives in Falmouth, Maine, with his wife, Bonny, and son, Eli.

The above story is based in part on an interview by Jeannine Guttman, editor of the Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram.

### April meeting

## 'When Johnny or Jane comes marching home again' Ethical coverage of the military

Covering the armed forces is far more than embedded reporters, news from the front and press releases from Public Affairs Offices. The real reporting often begins when soldiers return home and reenter society.

In addition to problems affecting standard military personnel, this age of Reserve and Guard call-ups and stop-loss orders have spawned a number of complex issues that face veterans returning from battle areas. Healthcare, employment security, job retraining, disability, burial and memorial benefits are all issues that will eventually face reporters and newsrooms.

How big are the issues? In a 2002 study by the East Tennessee Military Affairs Council, the military's annual economic impact in Anderson Blount and Knox County alone was estimated at \$634.5 million.

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*'You can make it in your car'*

## Meth production increasing, say participants

This story was originally published in The Daily Times March 2

by *Darren Dunlap*

In the last eight months Blount County has seen an increase in methamphetamine manufacture, a trend that will likely continue. That's the forecast from speakers at one session of the East Tennessee Society of Professional Journalists workshop, Drug Addiction and Recovery, held in February at Cornerstone of Recovery in Louisville.

"It's so difficult to police," said Knox County District Attorney General Randy Nichols. "You can make it in your car."

The drug presents unique problems for law enforcement, according to Capt. Jimmy Long, assistant chief deputy, Blount County Sheriff's Office. It's cheap and easy to make. The toxic environment created by meth labs often requires special teams of officers for meth lab seizure. The cost to clean up meth lab sites is an average of \$8,000 each, said Long.

Officers require additional training, an ongoing process, according to Long. And inmates who use meth also need additional medical attention.

"The hidden costs of it are something to see," he said.

Long said meth manufacturing has been more common in surrounding counties like Monroe and Anderson, but two recent busts for manufacture of the drug show that it is creeping this way. In both cases, the people arrested in Blount County for making the drug were Monroe County residents.

Nichols said he expects to see more of the drug in both rural and urban areas. Meth, he said, is now being mass-produced in Mexico.

"I think this is going to work both sides of the drug market," said Long. "The guy that's just afraid to cook it can go buy it."

There is even a market for the sale of meth users' urine in jails and prison, as well as the street, according to Nichols.

"There is a market for the urine now," said Nichols, who asked Long, "How you going to police that, chief? What's next?"

Tennessee accounts for 75 percent of meth lab seizures in the Southeast, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

To raise awareness, the Tennessee District Attorney's Conference recently produced a video called "Meth is Death." Nichols showed participants at the ETSPJ workshop the video, which has interviews with recovering meth addicts, inmates jailed for meth production and accounts from police officers.

"If we can't educate children not to use it, I don't see how we can overcome it," he said. Gov. Phil Bredesen recently introduced legislation aimed at addressing methamphetamine manufacturing and abuse called the "Meth-Free Tennessee Act of 2005."

Some major provisions of the bill include limitations on the sale of cold and sinus medicines containing the decongestant pseudoephedrine, a vital ingredient used to make meth; closure of the so-called "personal-use loophole" in criminal law, which allows

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## Meth

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meth cooks to get lighter penalties by claiming they manufactured the drug only for personal use; requirement of health professionals to report meth lab-related burns and injuries to local law enforcement; creation of an online registry within the state Department of Environment and Conservation listing properties quarantined by law enforcement due to meth lab contamination.

Even with these measures, the war on meth has really just begun, speakers indicated. The state's first meth-related murder was less than a decade ago in Warren County.

"I don't think you've seen anything yet," said Nichols

The ETSPJ workshop, co-sponsored by The Daily Times and Cornerstone of Recovery, included the following sessions: Addiction: The Neurobiology, Pharmacology, Genetics and Other Approaches to Addiction by Dr. Gary O'Shaughnessy, Cornerstone of Recovery medical director; A Brief History of Cornerstone of Recovery by Dan Caldwell, Cornerstone of Recovery CEO; Blount County Drug Court program by Judge D. Kelly Thomas Jr., Blount County Circuit Court; Treatment: Model, Goals, What's Needed and What's necessary by Dr. Scott Anderson, Cornerstone of Recovery clinical director; and A First-person Account: Addiction and Recovery by Steve Wildsmith, weekend editor of The Daily Times.

## Former Follies honoree dies

Richard D. Smyser, founding editor of *The Oak Ridger* and 1997 Front Page Follies honoree, died in Oak Ridge, March 13.

Smyser was a strong advocate for openness in the nuclear industry, especially when the news media began breaking stories about accidents at Three Mile Island, Pa., and Chernobyl. He was a regular speaker at seminars on public understanding of nuclear science.

He was active in national newspaper organizations for 40 years, serving as president of both the Associated Press Managing Editors (1973-74) and the American Society of Newspaper Editors (1984-85).

After retirement from the newspaper, Smyser was appointed Edward J. Meeman Distinguished Professor

## Military

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East Tennessee Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists will host a special panel on Military Affairs Reporting at 6:30 p.m., April 21, in the Community Room of the Knoxville News Sentinel. Among the panelists are retired U.S. Air Force Gen. Walter Bacon of the East Tennessee Military Affairs Council, Brig. Gen. David Greer of the Tennessee National Guard and Capt. Emmitt Furner of the U.S. Army Reserves. The program will allow reporters to familiarize themselves with the issues facing today's veterans.

With the modern use of embedded reporters, the United States military and many local media outlets are forming unusually close relationships in exchange for front line coverage. The ETSPJ seminar on Military Affairs will show journalists and news organizations how they can ethically redefine their coverage from issues overseas to those affecting individual soldiers at home. The media need to resume the watchdog role in American society on veterans' issues.

Spokespeople will be on hand to discuss and answer questions on issues that affect returning veterans and ways journalists can better prepare themselves when approaching a story involving the military.

The seminar is open to reporters and journalists, members and non-SPJ members of the working media. Those wishing to attend need to contact ETSPJ Program Chair Ed Hooper at [ed@tennesseehistory.com](mailto:ed@tennesseehistory.com).



of Journalism at the University of Tennessee in 1991 to 1993.

He served for 18 years on the board of the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing and was a leader in the effort to bring the National Association of Science Writers New Horizons in Science conference to Knoxville under Oak Ridge National Laboratory and UT sponsorship in 2003.

## ETSPJ hosts regional conference

ETSPJ is hosting the Region 3 conference in Charleston, April 8-9, and three members are on panels: Jean Ash, international reporting; Dorothy Bowles, FOI; and Georgiana Vines, blogging. In addition, Lisa Skinner, along with the others, is moderating a panel discussion.

The program emphasis on Friday is for students. Among the sessions are Campus Crime; Negotiating Your Future; I Have a Diploma, Now What? and One-Man Band: Backpack Journalism.

Saturday sessions include Blogging: Its Role and Influence in Modern-Day Journalism; The Emergence of Convergence; Journalism and the Military; The Art and Freedom of Freelancing; Foreign Correspondents: International Intrigue v. Reality; Computer-Assisted Reporting, or How Numbers-Challenged Journalists Can Find Scoops Among All Those Spreadsheets; FOI Around the South; Workshop for Broadcast Producers; From Reporter to Book Author: Making The Transition and Covering the Hispanic Population.

## Mark Your Calendar

April 21, 6:30 p.m., Military Affairs Reporting, News Sentinel Community Room

May 20, 6:30 p.m., Golden Press Card awards program, University Club

June 18, 6 p.m., Front Page Follies, Knoxville Convention Center