

Spot News

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A publication of the East Tennessee Chapter
of the Society of Professional Journalists

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Picnic and ethics program dates set and (we hope) Corker-Ford debate

The East Tennessee Chapter has two events scheduled in September and is at work on another for October, so mark your calendars.

The chapter will host its annual picnic from 4 to 6 p.m. on **Sunday, Sept. 10** at Tyson Park Shelter No. 1. We'll not only have a chance to visit with UT student members and potential members, but to meet two new UT administrators.

Michael Wirth, dean of the College of Communication & Information, and Peter Gross, director of the School of Journalism & Electronic Media, plan to attend.

The chapter treasury will provide sandwich fixin's, and we're asking professional members to bring drinks, side dishes and desserts. Please e-mail jeanash@comcast.net ASAP to sign up.

Entering Tyson Park from Kingston Pike, Shelter #1 is just beyond the interstate overpass with parking on the left.

Ethics program with PRSA

The chapter will meet with the local Public Relations Society of America for a discussion of journalism and PR

ethics.

This will be a lunch program from 11:30 to 1 on Sept. 21 at the University Club at the corner of Kingston Pike and Neyland Drive.

Susan Barnes of PRSA and Elenora Edwards, ETSPJ program chair, are inviting panelists, but program planning was still under way at Spot News deadline. More information will be mailed to members before Sept. 21.

Senate candidates debate

On Oct. 12 at 6:30 p.m., the chapter hopes to sponsor a debate between Bob Corker (R) and Harold Ford, Jr. (D), candidates for the U.S. Senate seat now held by Bill Frist.

Both candidates are now considering our invitation, and we are working on the details. If the Oct. 12 date doesn't fit both men's schedules, Oct. 5 is an alternate date.

The East Tennessee Historical Society Building, 601 S. Gay St., will be the setting for the debate. Local reporters will question the candidates. Ed Hooper, ETSPJ president, will be the moderator.

Successful Front Page Follies helps build UT scholarship endowment

by Dorothy Bowles

Proceeds from the Front Page Follies moved the chapter to nearly the halfway

point toward its \$50,000 goal of endowing two scholarships for Journalism & Electronic Media students at UT.

After 26 years of funding scholarships, the chapter entered a partnership with UT in 2005, to help promote and manage ticket sales for the annual grid-iron show so that the chapter could realize savings on labor and costs of staging the show; part of the ticket price would be tax deductible for buyers and student scholarships could be ensured in future years.

The 28th annual show was deemed a success by every measure. Honoree Tom Chester's friends and even some politicians who haven't always been happy with Chester-directed News



Part of the Front Page Follies cast rehearses a skit spoofing bridge demolitions on I-40 through Knoxville. (Photo by Jean Ash)

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Ash returns from leadership conference with new ideas for chapter

by Jean Ash

“Fail often to succeed sooner” and “Stick to observations; reality is what you choose to pay attention to” are two maxims that struck a chord with me in Indianapolis June 9-11 at the Ted Scripps 2006 Leadership Institute.

I’m the latest in a long line of ETSPJ leaders who have been selected over the years to attend this annual conference, funded by a generous grant from the Scripps Foundation.

Our time was fully booked from arrival to departure (via stretch limousine from and back to the airport!) with large and small group seminars designed to identify our personal leadership qualities and to familiarize us about using SPJ resources in our leader roles back home.

There was also plenty of time to network with other leaders from around the country over fantastic meals and duck-pin bowling. On the agenda, too, was an hour set aside Sunday morning to reflect and write a “Memo to Self.”

Here are some entries in my “Memo to Self.”

- **Don’t make people** who they are not. Find who they are and maximize their abilities and potential.
- **Make program** and board meetings have a fun atmosphere and be less hierarchical. Try an auction, raffle or 50-50 drawing at meetings. Don’t micromanage.
- **Make the newsletter** more interesting with ideas like profiles of old-timers



Jean Ash

and how they got their first journalism jobs, and other reminiscences.

- **Look up grant deadlines** and plan ahead for Ethics and Sunshine programs
- **Brainstorm ideas** to attract younger members. Many younger attendees have SPJ-related entries in mspace.com
- **Remind chapter members** of the great value they are getting for their dues and encourage renewals. Retention of present members is a bigger problem than finding new ones on a national basis.
- **Communicate with** members and area newsrooms.
- **Hold a “retreat”** for the incoming board of directors to get to know each other better and organize the year ahead. (We did this on July 30 and I think it will make for a year even better than last, for which we won a

national award – see story below.)

Another highlight in Indianapolis was being treated to a sneak preview of the newly revamped SPJ website (see it at www.spj.org), which is infinitely more informative and easy to navigate than its predecessor.

Check it out and find many of the materials distributed in our Leadership Institute, and make sure your name and contact info are in its directory so you can make SPJ connections from your home or office. The improvements in the site are stunning!

I picked up a lot of other ideas for chapter programming and fundraising that I’ll be sharing with the board, so watch for an exciting year ahead!

SPJ recognizes chapter for professional programs

INDIANAPOLIS – The Society of Professional Journalists, the nation’s most broad-based journalism advocacy organization, is pleased to honor the East Tennessee Pro chapter with a Circle of Excellence Award. The chapter is one of 10 recipients of these prestigious awards.

SPJ recognizes chapters for outstanding work during the preceding year in five areas: First Amendment and Freedom of Information activity; campus relations and scholarship activities; activities promoting diversity among

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ETSPJ Officers and Board of Directors

Ed Hooper, president

Jean Ash, vice president for Front Page Follies, communications coordinator

Mia Rhodarmer, vice president for Golden Press Card awards (co-chair)

Ann Lloyd, secretary

Dan Foley, treasurer

Dorothy Bowles, immediate past president, Spot News editor, Golden Press Card awards co-chair

Elenora Edwards, program chair

John Huotari, membership chair

Christine Jessel

Adina Chumley

Lisa Hood Skinner

Randy Tedford

Georgiana Vines

Letters to the Editor Policy: The board encourages letters to the editor of Spot News. Like letters policies at most newspapers, we ask that letters be limited to 200 words or less. Letters will be subject to editing for space and content. Send e-mail to etspj.communications@gmail.com

FOLLIES, from page 1

Sentinel coverage enjoyed poking good-natured fun at the guest of honor. Sheriff Tim Hutchison's surprise stage appearance especially delighted the capacity crowd.

Other local celebs making cameo appearances included Congressman Jimmy Duncan, state legislator Tim Burchett and attorney Herb Moncier. The latter came forth from the audience to declare TV newsmen Gene Patterson and Bill Williams "term limited" from serving in their usual capacity as Front Page Follies announcers.

Taking the anchor desks instead for the production were Bob Becker, WATE-TV; Abby Ham, WBIR-TV; and Kelli Parker from WVLT-TV. Local TV meteorologists Matt Hinkin, Bob Becker and Mike Witcher took the stage to sing a parody about Knoxville's never-ending maze of road construction

AWARD, from page 2

journalists; professional development and continuing-education programs; and chapter communications. Awards are given for each category to one large (75 or more members) and one small (fewer than 75 members) professional chapter.

In the category of professional development, the East Tennessee Pro Chapter is recognized as the best small chapter for its professional development meetings and awards. Among other programs, the chapter conducted a panel on covering disasters and a town-hall meeting on a new ruling limiting the terms of incumbent county commission candidates.

"These awards represent tireless hours of journalism advocacy, which is desperately needed right now," said Christine Tatum, SPJ president-elect. "We honor these chapters because they work incredibly hard to deliver top-notch professional training to journalists nationwide and to help the general public better understand the importance of how a free and fair press is vital to democracy."

projects.

Other news events and newsmakers taking a roasting from the cast included the county commission term-limit controversy, spirited campaigning in judicial races, Mayors Ragsdale and Haslam on duty at the Dukes of Hazzard movie premier, UT athletics, the newly reorganized TVA board, school policies and Cocke County shenanigans.

David Eilert directed the show during six weeks of rehearsals and was musical

accompanist.

The auction was also a success, as auctioneer Bear Stephenson worked the crowd to dig deeply into pocketbooks. Proceeds from the auction go toward supporting ETSPJ chapter activities.

Jean Ash was Follies chairperson, managing detail after detail with her usual efficiency.

Georgiana Vines expertly oversaw solicitations of auction items and payment collection.



Kelvin Moxley, left, plays the role of UT Athletic Director Mike Hamilton telling Coach Bruce Pearl (Michael Holtz) about the latest promotional strategy to capitalize on the Vols winning season. In the background in this rehearsal scene are Ryan Watterson and Christie Koppel. (photo by Jean Ash)

So, what else has the chapter done recently?

As though completing the annual awards competitions and Front Page Follies and squeezing in time for summer vacations weren't enough, the chapter has been busy with other tasks.

Help for high school journalists is on the way in the form of two booklets about student press rights that we purchased from Quill & Scroll and the Student Press Law Center. We are in the process of mailing them to principals and student publications advisers throughout East Tennessee. This is in

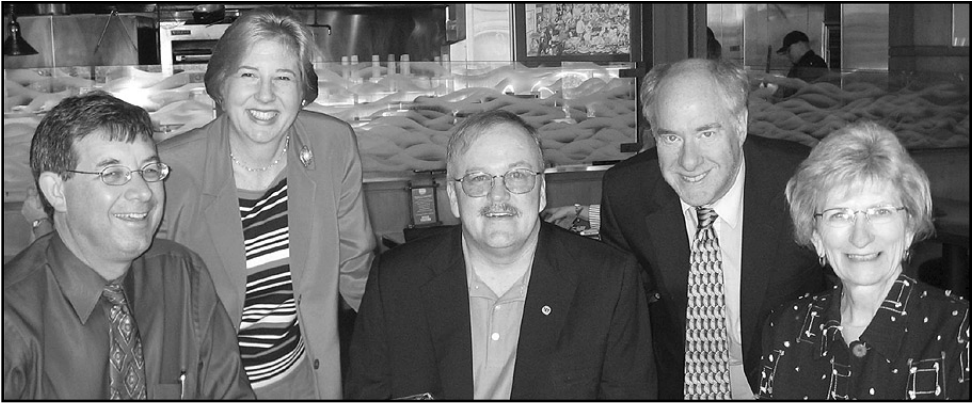
reaction to the Oak Ridge High School censorship incident last year.

Election of officers results are listed on page 2. We welcome new board members Ann Lloyd of WUOT, Elenora Edwards, editor for the Tennessee Press Assn., and John Huotari, Oak Ridger reporter. Biographical sketches of them will appear in the next Spot News.

National convention delegate representing us in Chicago at the end of August will be Jean Ash. Georgiana Vines is alternate delegate.

LUNCH BREAK

Pausing during lunch for a photo with national SPJ president David Carlsen, center, are (from left) Jack Lail, Lisa Hood Skinner, Mark Harmon and Georgiana Vines. Carlsen was in town as the featured speaker for the ETSPJ Golden Press Card awards dinner.



UT student, faculty member now produce PressNotes; SPJ Website revamped

Local readers of SPJ PressNotes started seeing familiar names in mid-August when Dorothy Bowles and Janet Tate of Knoxville began compiling and editing the daily e-mail newsletter.

The UT School of Journalism & Electronic Media was awarded the contract based on competitive proposals submitted earlier this year from colleges and universities.

Tate, a former writer and editor at Whittle and teaching associate at UT, currently is a Ph.D. student studying journalism. She compiles news items related to the mass media each weekday

from a broad range of Internet sources. Bowles edits the compilation, which is then posted to the SPJ national Website (spj.org) and sent via e-mail to subscribers.

Tate receives a tuition waiver from UT and a stipend from SPJ in exchange for her work on PressNotes and Quill magazine.

If you aren't already reading PressNotes, check it out under Today's News on the Website or subscribe via e-mail by sending a request to pressnotes@spj.org. Funded by a grant from the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation,

PressNotes is available also to non-members.

Members can subscribe to another service called SPJ Leads, a weekly e-mail newsletter that focuses on SPJ news and offers tips for chapter activities. Subscribe by sending a request to leads@spj.org.

As noted in Jean Ash's article on page 2, the recently revamped SPJ Website is a treasure trove of materials. Members can find resources for use in all areas of journalism, a job bank, freedom of information information and much more.



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