

# Spot News

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## NewsLab's Deborah Potter to speak at Golden Press Card awards program

Deborah Potter, a journalist and educator who spent 16 years as a network correspondent for CBS and CNN, will be the keynote speaker at the Golden Press Card awards program at 6:30 p.m. on April 27 at the Riverside Tavern.



Deborah Potter

Potter hosted the PBS series *In the Prime*, which looked at issues facing Americans at mid-life. She is now executive director of NewsLab, a non-profit television news laboratory that works with local stations to find better ways of telling complex stories on TV.

Potter is a featured columnist for the *American Journalism Review*, writing about broadcast news. Her work also has been published by *The Christian Science Monitor*, the

*St. Petersburg Times*, *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, the *National Civic Review*, and *Communicator* magazine. She is co-author of the *Poynter Election Handbook: New Ways to Cover Campaigns*, now in its third edition.

She is an experienced journalism trainer and workshop leader. She also moderates panel discussions and teleconferences. She has moderated sessions at the annual conventions of the Radio Television News Directors Association, the Society of Professional Journalists and the Society of Environmental Journalists and for the duPont-Columbia Forum, the National Press Club, and the Council for Excellence in Government. She has also moderated teleconferences for World Food Day and Renew America.

At CNN, Potter anchored news programs and reported on national politics and environmental issues. She joined CNN in 1991 after 13 years at CBS News, where she served as White House, State Department, and Congressional correspondent. She also was a frequent contributor to the prime time CBS News program, *48 Hours*, and hosted the interview program, *Nightwatch*.

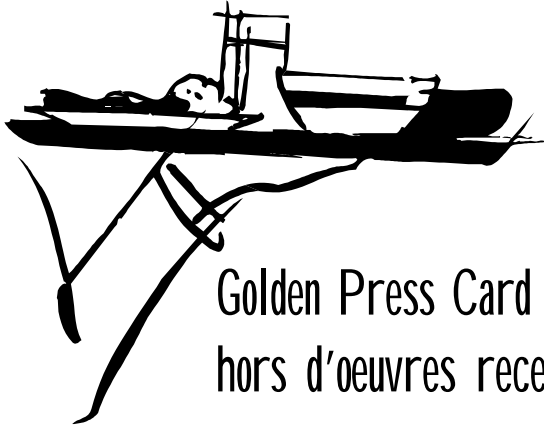
Potter has taught journalism at the Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Fla., and at The American University in Washington, D.C. She has judged journalism awards for the White House Correspondents Association, the Casey Journalism Center, Public Radio News Directors Inc., and the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights. She serves on advisory committees for Best Practices 2000, a project to improve campaign and election coverage, and for the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation Environmental Forum.

Before joining CBS News, Potter worked as a news anchor for KYW Newsradio in Philadelphia; as a reporter for the Voice of America in Washington; and as a news producer for WMAL-TV in Washington. She holds an undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's degree from The American University.

### Inside

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Delicious

Journalism ethics. . . . . page 3  
ETSPJ February meeting



## Golden Press Card hors d'oeuvres reception

The menu for the Golden Press Card hors d'oeuvres reception at the Riverside Tavern features the following:

- Decorative fruit and cheese display with assorted crackers
- Spinach and artichoke dip with grilled pita chips
- Veggie spring rolls with sweet/sour dipping sauce
- Sliced grilled veggie wraps in basil tortilla with boursin cheese and pesto

Butler-passed Hors d'Oeuvres:

- Mini crab cakes with dill caper remoulade
- Beef tenderloin on crostini with boursin and rosemary cream

Dessert: chef's selection of "mini" dessert

Please make your reservations before April 21 by sending a check for \$25 per person or \$30 for non-members (payable to ETSPJ Golden Press Card) to:

Dorothy Bowles  
1829 Chicadee Drive  
Knoxville, TN 37919

Reservations can be made by e-mail to [bowles@utk.edu](mailto:bowles@utk.edu).

If you have questions about the program, contact Adina Chumley at 273-5130 or [archumley@yahoo.com](mailto:archumley@yahoo.com)

This is a terrific opportunity to catch up with colleagues and recognize work done during the past year.

## ETSPJ protests attempt to bar media from trial

Following is the text of a letter sent to Richard Hollow, attorney for the Knoxville News-Sentinel, by Bonnie Riechert on behalf of ETSPJ.

The East Tennessee Chapter, Society of Professional Journalists, wishes to go on record supporting your client, The Knoxville News-Sentinel, in a case currently pending before Knox County Criminal Court Judge Richard Baumgartner.

Attorneys for a Knoxville man accused of killing a UT student five years ago have moved to bar the media from coverage of their client's murder trial. Javor Marquis Thomas is accused in the 1995 shooting death of Ashley Browning Carden in the Christenberry Heights housing development. Attorneys for Thomas argued in a recent motion that extensive media coverage will prevent Thomas from receiving a fair trial.

The Society of Professional Journalist supports the constitutional premise that the media have the right to publish information disseminated during the course of an open, public trial. We believe that truth is best served by open and public argument in our legal courts and that the motion to bar media coverage of this trial is unconstitutional, improper, and illegal. We are hopeful that the judicial hearing on Thursday will keep this trial open to the media and the public. Please contact us if we may provide any assistance in this important issue.

## Officers and Board

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Sally Guthrie (588-1474)

February meeting

## Nichols defends WBIR's use of student photo

by Sally Guthrie

A codes of ethics is a guide. "Sometimes it helps. Sometimes it doesn't," said Brian Trauring, news director of WATE-TV, Channel 6, and a board member of the Radio Television News Directors Association.

Trauring was one of four panelists from local media outlets who participated in the ETSPJ February 19 meeting, "Media and Ethics in the New Age." Others were Lara Edge, managing editor of the Knoxville News-Sentinel; Bob Benz, director of online content and development for Scripps' new media at Digital Crossing; and Margie Nichols, news director of WBIR-TV, Channel 10. Dorothy Bowles, professor of journalism at UT served as moderator.

The panelists discussed the different approach taken by their groups in handling coverage of a Powell High School student who took a homemade bomb to the school. The newspaper and WATE-TV did not identify the student, while WBIR-TV identified him and showed his photograph.

Nichols defended her station's position, saying, "He put a school full of children in danger. Why are we protecting people doing adult things?" There are absolutely no right and wrong answers, she added, because "you can only do the best with the information you have at the time." In the case of her station, she said that it was not aware that the student had mental problems.

"Since the killing at Columbine, things are looked at differently," Trauring said. You must use special caution in dealing with children.

Benz suggested that it seems easier to push ethical boundaries online. As an example, he told of WXYZ in Detroit, which streamed video of a hostage situation on its Web site. "How do you handle live video on the Internet?" he asked. Benz said that online should not be held to a double standard. The Internet is criticized and made out to be an unsafe place for children; yet those same pedophiles are placing ads in newspapers and magazines and hanging out at malls.

Is advertising content on front pages a breach of ethics? Edge doesn't think so, but she has changed her views. The way she was raised in journalism, "Every section front was sacred." But today, readers know an ad when they see it. "It's not a breach of ethics because ethics is being honest," she said.

Approximately 75 people attended the program on the UT campus.



From left, Lara Edge, Margie Nichols, Bob Benz, Brian Trauring



Dorothy Bowles and Lara Edge

## Follies auction items needed

The Front Page Follies auction committee is looking for items to sell at the auction. If you or your employer can donate something, please let Alan Carmichael or Georgiana Vines know.

The auction is the major source of funding for the scholarships we award each year to students at the University of Tennessee and Pellissippi State Technical College.

## Board nominations sought for 2001-02

Members of the east Tennessee chapter of SPJ are invited to nominate themselves or other individuals to serve on the chapter's board of directors during the 2001-02 term beginning Aug. 1. Nominations may be sent to any member of the 2001 nominating committee: Georgiana Vines, chair, at 342-6343 or vines@knews.com; Nancy Cann, 632-8004 or nmcann@tva.gov; or Jim Crook, at 974-5155 or jim-crook@utk.edu.

The elected positions would include the following: president, first vice president, second vice president, secretary, treasurer, membership chair, program chair, and one member-at-large. The term for members-at-large is two years, and other board positions are for a one-year term. (Next year, Lisa Hood Skinner will serve the second year in her two-year term as member-at-large on the board.) A slate of candidates will be submitted to the board by June 1, and ballots will be mailed to members by June 30.

### Mark Your Calendar

**April 27**, 6:30 p.m. Golden Press Card awards program at the Riverside Tavern      **Oct. 4-6**, National Convention, Seattle

**May 19**, Front Page Follies

**GPC . . . 6:30 p.m., April 27, Riverside Tavern**