

Spot News

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ETSPJ to hear political reporter Paula Wade

Award-winning political journalist Paula Wade, Tennessee Capitol Bureau reporter for the Commercial-Appeal of Memphis, will speak to ETSPJ, 6 p.m., Nov. 12, at Chesapeake's.

A 1983 UT journalism graduate, Wade covers politics, state government and public policy with an emphasis on TennCare, health policy and taxation issues. She also writes a regular opinion column on state issues for the Commercial Appeal.

During the last four years Wade has reported on the state's budget crisis, covering issues and policy decisions that will affect Tennesseans for generations.

"It was the best political drama a writer could ask for—stressed-out legislators passing out on the House floor, near-riots by tax protesters, and vivid displays of political courage and cowardice. Covering the complexities of making and implementing public policy, and the sometimes wacky personalities of our public officials is about as much fun as you can have in this business," Wade said. "This is the best job in Tennessee journalism, period."

Wade began covering government as a reporter with The Daily Beacon when she was a UT student. She also wrote a weekly political column. She had an internship with the Nashville Banner in 1982 and worked as the Shelby County government reporter for the Memphis Press-Scimitar after graduation. She joined the Commercial-Appeal in 1983 as a business reporter, covering the opening of the Saturn plant in Spring Hill, Tenn. In 1987 she became a



Paula Wade

general assignment reporter and then switched to state politics in Nashville.

Wade has won the Tennessee Associated Press Managing Editors award for deadline reporting as well as regional awards for commentary from the Society of Professional Journalists. She has also won awards for coverage of health policy issues from the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, the Tennessee Alliance for the Mentally Ill, the Association of Retarded Citizens, the Tennessee State Employees Association and the Tennessee Medical Association.

Wade is coming to Knoxville as the Edward J. Meeman Lecturer at the University of Tennessee, Nov. 11-15. While visiting the area, Wade will speak to classes and professional groups in the School of Journalism and Public Relations and will advise students interested in journalism careers.

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National board establishes Chapter star, reward system

The national board of SPJ in September established a four-level star system for chapters, thus changing requirements to remain in good standing. In the past, chapters were required to hold a specified number of meetings on certain topics and to fulfill other requirements. Chapters can decide which level they wish to achieve. Following are the levels and rewards:

FOUR STARS

- Chapter holds six full-membership meetings on journalism-related topics such as diversity, freedom of information, Project Watchdog, ethics or any other topic relevant to SPJ missions.
- Chapter supports student journalists by offering scholarship awards, mentoring programs or other assistance as identified by the chapter board.
- Board members are in regular communication with each other, national headquarters and their regional director.
- Chapter displays consistent communication with full membership via vehicles such as newsletters, e-mail or a Web site.
- Annual report is filed on time.
- Chapter is represented at regional conference and national convention.
- Chapter is successful in recruiting new members.

THREE STARS

- Chapter holds four full-membership meetings on journalism-related topics such as diversity, freedom of information, Project Watchdog, ethics or any other topic relevant to SPJ missions.
- Chapter supports student journalists by offering scholarship awards, mentoring programs or other assistance as identified by the chapter board.
- Board members are in regular communication with each other, national headquarters and their regional director.
- Chapter displays consistent communication with full membership via vehicles such as newsletters, e-mail or a Web site.
- Annual report is filed on time.
- Chapter is represented at regional conference and national convention.

TWO STARS

- Chapter holds three full-membership meetings on journalism-related topics such as diversity, freedom of information, Project Watchdog, ethics or any other topic relevant to SPJ missions.
- Board members are in regular communication with each other, national headquarters and their regional director, and communicate with full membership on a consistent basis.
- Annual report is filed on time.
- Chapter is represented at regional conference and national convention.

ONE STAR

- Chapter holds two full-membership meetings on journalism-related topics such as diversity, freedom of information, Project Watchdog, ethics or any other topic relevant to SPJ missions.
- Board members communicate with each other.
- Chapter is represented at regional conference or national convention.
- Annual report is filed.
- Chapter membership decreases.

REWARDS

1. Four-star chapters would receive a 35 percent discount of the price of registration for two delegates to attend the national convention.
2. Four-star and three-star chapters would be recognized annually in Quill and awarded a certificate at the national convention. Such chapter would also be recognized at regional conventions.
3. Four-star chapters would be able to buy SPJ merchandise at a 20 percent discount. Three-star chapters could buy SPJ merchandise at a 10 percent discount.
4. Any extra bags from the national convention would be divided first among four-star chapters, then to three-star chapters.
5. Improved chapters (those making the step to the three- and four-star level) will be recognized at the national convention.
6. SPJ Headquarters will finance one chapter mailing (i.e. newsletter, regional conference information) for four-star chapters.

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National convention has Knoxville angle

by Georgiana Vines

There was more than one Knoxville connection at SPJ's national convention in Fort Worth, Texas, this fall.

Women prevailed became a sub-theme.

Long-time Washington correspondent Helen Thomas helped the U.S. Postal Service unveil a large poster of the Women in Journalism stamps during a ceremony. Stamps and first-day issues were sold on site.

The four journalists: Nellie Bly, best known for circling the globe in 72 days, reported for *The World*. Marguerite Higgins, writing for the *New York Herald Tribune*, became the first woman to win a Pulitzer Prize for international reporting. Ethel L. Payne, the first lady of the black press, covered the civil rights movement for the *Chicago Defender*. Ida M. Tarbell was a muckraker who exposed industrial corruption in "The History of the Standard Oil Company" as well as serialized biographies for *McClure's Magazine*.

Sylvia Peters

Enter the Knoxville angle.

The only woman whose family attended the ceremony was Payne's--and it included Sylvia Peters of Knoxville. Peters, a former Chicago educator, came to Knoxville as part of the Edison Project of Whittle Communications and has remained here since the Edison Project moved to New York.

Payne was Peters' aunt--"an inspiration," Peters says.

Georgiana Vines recognized her immediately and introduced her to Adina Chumley. Vines and Chumley were the East Tennessee Chapter's convention delegates.

Moving ceremony

The ceremony itself because moving for several reasons. First, having Helen Thomas participate is a tribute to her own journalistic accomplishments. In addition, Francia Smith, vice president and consumer advocate for the Postal Service, became emotional in talking about writing. It reminded her of her late husband, also a writer, she said.

Then seeing Sylvia Peters in such an unexpected way was really a treat. Peters is willing to share experiences about her aunt with the chapter at a future meeting.



Photo by Holly Fisher

Stamps honoring women journalists were unveiled at the SPJ convention in Fort Worth.



Photo by Holly Fisher

Adina Chumley, Sylvia Peters, and Georgiana Vines meet at the convention where Peters' aunt was honored on a postage stamp.

Peters said she knew her aunt well. "We were a close-knit family. Either she or her letters were always with us in the house," Peters said.

Payne essentially was a one-woman bureau in Washington for the *Defender*, she said.

Wells Keys

The other big news involving women were the Wells Keys recipients.

Kyle Niederpruem, who worked diligently as FOI chair prior to her service as a national president, and Julie Grimes, SPJ deputy executive director, were the winners. Normally only one person is selected annually in recognition of outstanding performance on behalf of SPJ, but the executive committee decided to recognize two hard workers this year.

After all, the convention was in Texas, where everything is always done at a large scale.

New National President Robert Leger has named Niederpruem chapter doctor.

"She'll be a resource for chapters wanting to get better. She's seen what has worked at top-notch chapters, she knows chapter leaders across the country and she'll bring more than a fair share of creativity to this job," Leger said.

She'll also work closely with Grimes, whose duties now include membership.

We are winners

The East Tennessee Pro Chapter of SPJ was awarded a certificate at the national convention for being the outstanding small chapter in Region III. The South Florida chapter won the large chapter award.

Bonnie Hufford and Johannah Gilman supervise cooks, Luke Paiva and Dorothy Bowles. The UT student chapter and pro chapter joined forces for the annual picnic at Tyson Park, Sept. 29. Gilman and Paiva are students; Hufford and Bowles are members of the faculty.



Photo by Sally Guthrie

Mark Your Calendar

Nov. 12, 6 p.m., Chesapeake's, Chapter meeting--Paula Wade, speaker

Apr. 4-5, 2003, Region III Conference with IRE, Atlanta

Meeting: Paula Wade, speaker . . . 6 p.m., Nov. 12, Chesapeake's