
LeadTime

The Newsletter of AEJMC's Newspaper Division

Fall 2008

From Chi-town to Beantown

*Chicago was great,
but ideas are needed
now for '09 in Boston*

By Bill Cassidy
Vice Chair 2008-'09

The AEJMC convention in Chicago may have just ended, but planning for next year's event has already begun. We are seeking panel proposals for Newspaper Division programming in Boston. So, if you have an idea (or two, or three), please send it in by Oct. 15! See the formal call for panels on page 6.

Panel ideas should be submitted to only one division or interest group. Submitting proposals

'08 CONVENTION COVERAGE INSIDE

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to multiple divisions can hurt your chances for being selected. Programming chairs for the other divisions and interest groups are able to view all the submissions.

So, when they see that a panel has been proposed for more than one division, they may assume that the other division will work to get the panel on the schedule.

However, it is a good idea to suggest a co-sponsoring division or interest group when you submit a panel proposal. Almost all Newspaper Division panels are presented with the cooperation of another division or interest group. Co-sponsored panels allow for more variety in the division's programming as well as the opportunity to reach a larger audience.

If you have any questions about submitting a panel proposal, please contact me at bcassidy@niu.edu. I'm happy to help.

New teaching-idea competition offered

By Susan Keith
Division Chair 2007-'08

What is the best way to introduce students to the craft of writing, reporting or editing? The Newspaper Division is looking for your ideas.

This fall the division is launching a new online competition -- Teaching News Terrifically in the 21st Century, or TNT-21 -- designed to reward full-time faculty members, part-time lecturers and graduate student instructors for their good ideas for teaching foundational journalism

courses.

A top prize of \$100 will be offered for the best idea by each type of course instructor, so full-time faculty members and administrators are encouraged to share information about the competition with adjunct professors and graduate-student instructors. To facilitate participation by adjunct faculty and graduate students who are not able to attend AEJMC's annual convention, the competition will be held completely online.

Top entries will be published in a downloadable PDF booklet

available on the division Web site.

Teaching tips should be suitable for use in newswriting, reporting or editing courses, though they might be tailored for specific types of such courses. For example, tips for teaching newswriting across media would be welcome, as would tips for teaching a specific type of reporting, such as public affairs, business or environmental. Tips can address teaching practical skills, such as tracking down public

See **TEACHING**, page 7

Mini-plenary session explores transformation

By Jack Rosenberry
Division Chair 2008-'09

Headlines about the newspaper industry portray a situation aptly called a crisis. Plunging readership. Plummeting revenues. Widespread staff reductions.

At the 2008 AEJMC convention a panel of academics and industry figures sought to shed some light on the situation by examining the sources and nature of innovation affecting print journalism. The mini-plenary program titled "The Transformation of Print Journalism" was one part of the Newspaper Division's response to a call from AEJMC President Charles Self for programs addressing the convention's theme of "Transformation." It drew a standing-room-only crowd of more than 100 on the convention's first day.

Carl Sessions Stepp of Maryland, who has written about newspaper industry changes in *American Journalism Review*, noted that throughout its history, the newspaper industry has seen innovators who spark dramatic changes, such as the early 20th century press barons Pulitzer and Hearst, and the muckrakers of the Progressive Era who altered the nature and character of the craft.

Conversely, Stepp noted that cutting-edge information delivery is not happening within journalism but outside of it. The danger in that, he said, is what it could mean to the future of not just printed products but journalism in general, which he called "a public service that cannot be sacrificed." Stepp called for a focus on journalistic content and services along with an investment in resources to make the print product "irresistible."

Stepp predicted that "some-

one, somewhere will produce great journalism on the Web." And while so far most innovations have been outside of traditional media, news organizations have it within themselves to be the source of that great, innovative journalism if they steer themselves that way, he concluded.

Randy Jessee, special projects editor for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, described how some of that innovative thinking is coming into play in his newsroom, where he plays a key role in multimedia story production.

Richmond has reorganized its newsroom around a model called "continuous news," and the traditional beat system is breaking down in favor of generalist approaches. News meetings now begin and end with discussion of Web presentation, Jessee said, and everyone is responsible for filing to the Web. The theme is that one story might find outlets across multiple channels, including print, online and broadcast.

This poses challenges, he noted, including getting reporters and editors to think differently about stories and show more "agility" with digital presentations not only in print but also in audio and video.

Jan Schaffer, executive director of the J-Lab Institute for Interactive Journalism at American University, described some of the innovative journalistic thinking taking place outside traditional news organizations. Schaffer said many of the citizen-generated journalism projects that come to J-Lab's attention, especially through its grant programs, offer clues to the type of journalism that will connect more readily with audiences than what many traditional news organizations now offer.

Much traditional news coverage lacks an explanatory focus, Schaffer noted, whereas many of

the hyperlocal and citizen-directed projects reviewed by J-Lab have an element of social responsibility and explanation behind them. Citizens who commit "random acts of journalism" seldom use conflict as a story frame, in sharp contrast to most traditional news coverage. They are willing to use chronological story structure and long, complete quotes to help tell stories more fully and understandably.

Schaffer said traditional news organizations need to work more collaboratively with such initiatives and with each other rather than try to wring more revenue out of their existing models.

Connecting with community was also the theme of a presentation by Bill Reader of Ohio University, head of AEJMC's Community Journalism Interest Group. "Paper is still the dominant medium by which communities communicate with themselves," he said, noting that rural communities in particular eschew the Internet as a source of news about themselves. The newspaper industry's decline is happening mostly among the top 100 U.S. metro dailies, Reader added, and many smaller papers have stable if not growing circulation and staff.

The cost of producing and delivering news on paper is an obstacle, Reader said, but digital tools can improve efficiency and cut the overhead of newsgathering to help offset those expenses.

The industry's changing economic situation was addressed by Hugh Martin of the University of Georgia, vice chair of AEJMC's Media Management and Economics Division. Digital technology is disrupting both ends of the value chain by which newspapers produce content -- news and advertising -- and distribute it to

Pre-convention session teaches video skills

By Mike Grundmann
LeadTime Editor 2008-'09

I wondered if Jerry's head was going to hit the parked blue van. We were on a horse-drawn buggy loping down a busy Chicago street and Jerry was leaning out as far as he could to get a video close-up of the spoked wheel. It was going to be close, but warning him would ruin the shot. He cleared the van's side mirror by a few inches.

We were on an "outward bound" adventure: For two days preceding AEJMC's Chicago conference, roughly two dozen conference attendees whose normal world was print journalism were paired up, took a crash course in video, hit the streets, found stories, shot them and came back to edit them. It rained the entire day when we were out shooting.

Since newspapers are getting thoroughly webby, we print folks need to get viddy. So what's video journalism like? In the print world, reporting takes a while, writing is quicker and editing even quicker. In video, it's the opposite, at least for the beginner: Shoots are short and editing is forever. That's because it takes a lot of detail-diving to "capture" your best footage on computer, and the possibilities for arranging that footage are infinite. Once your video adventure becomes a newsroom assignment, however, that puts the crimp on infinitude.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, video is worth a million. Writing about something seems pale next to experiencing it. But experience includes all the unpredictable variables of life. Here's a surprise: the audio portion is more important than the video. If the viewer can't make out what your subject is saying, because the mike is too far away or the din of traffic obscures what



This still capture from video footage by Jerry Swope shows a horse and buggy plying rainy streets of Chicago.

he's saying, the viewer gives up. That's because bad sound is a familiar experience: home-movie time. Thus the use of professional mikes placed closer to the subject than the camera usually is.

Here's another fun fact: Wide angle has many advantages over zoom. Zoom is shaky. When handheld, it's very shaky -- home movies again. But with wide angle, camera shake is least noticeable, focus is much easier, more context is visible, the camera is forced to get close to the subject (a must if your mike is camera-mounted) and you can walk right alongside your subject while she throws hay to the horses. Yet another fact -- and still photographers know this -- is that overcast days are best for shooting. Clouds diffuse sunlight, tamping down the extremes of shadow and brightness that make it hard to bring out detail.

My partner was Jerry Swope of St. Michael's College in Vermont. He's an accomplished still photographer, so the video camera gravitated toward him. While the buggy was rolling, and Jerry was rolling, I interviewed our friendly young driver. Her name was Sara and the horse was Spike. "Sara 'n' Spike" was the two-minute piece that resulted. That was within the assigned length, roughly the same as a

broadcast featurette or a news Web site video.

Others in our group covered such things as water taxis, a mosque, an American Girl store and even the rainy day itself.

Most were humbled by the technical and creative challenge of a two-day production schedule. That, too, is often the deadline for a broadcast or Web assignment.

"The most tragicomical moment for my partner and me was discovering we had almost no audio because we had failed to push a button on those fancy-dancy cameras," reported Margo Wilson of California University of Pennsylvania. "Then, while editing, I accidentally killed some of the audio we did have. It was fun (if you're into masochism) as we tried to tame the multimedia beast."

As for those at the conference itself, many said they would sign up for such a workshop, so the organizers are trying hard to make it happen next year. The video-savvy trio in charge of our workshop were professors Edgar Huang of Indiana/Purdue, Brian Johnson of University of Illinois and Larry Dailey of University of Nevada-Reno. Canon USA and Apple supplied cameras and laptops with editing software.

Jerry, did I ever mention that thing about the van?

HEAD LINES

Members support raising convention fee, further discussion of unit's name

By Jack Rosenberry
Division Chair 2008-'09

Do you use computer projector equipment in your classroom? Do you find it frustrating not to be able to do the same when you have a research or panel presentation to make at the AEJMC convention?

A proposal under consideration by AEJMC leadership would provide projection equipment for many research and panel presentations at the convention, but at a cost. The association estimates that the registration fee would be raised about \$20 to offset the expense of having the convention hotel supply the video equipment.

Because of the magnitude of this proposed price hike, association officials asked all units with-



Jack Rosenberry

in the Council of Divisions to poll members for a "sense of the division" report on whether to impose that fee increase.

The Newspaper Division conducted a members' poll using Survey Monkey, with the poll link e-mailed through the listserv. With 49 responses, the fee increase was supported by a margin of 67 percent to 33 percent. That outcome and comments from members have been sent to Council of Divisions Chair Kim Bissell of the University of Alabama.

About 15 people added a comment to their vote. Some of the concerns and suggestions in the comments included disappointment that Internet access for presentations would not be included; a couple of people said the raise wasn't worth it for projection capacity alone, but they would be willing to pay even more if Internet access was included. Others said graduate student

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Division officers selected for 2008-2009

Chair: Jack Rosenberry, St. John Fisher College, jrosenberry@sjfc.edu

Vice Chair/ Programming: Bill Cassidy, Northern Illinois University, bcassidy@niu.edu

Research Committee Co-Chairs/Paper Competition Co-Chairs: John Carvarlho, Auburn University, carvajp@auburn.edu; and Chris Roberts, University of Alabama; croberts@ua.edu

Teaching Committee Co-Chairs: Bernie Ankney, Samford University, rnankney@samford.edu; and Brian Carroll, Berry College, bc@berry.edu

PF&R Committee Co-Chairs: Jin Yang, University of Memphis, jinyang@memphis.edu; and Liz Skewes, University of Colorado Boulder, elizabeth.skewes@colorado.edu

Secretary: Claire Serant, St. John's University, serantc@stjohns.edu

Newsletter Editor: Mike Grundmann; James Madison University, grundmmj@jmu.edu

Web Editor: Bob Stepno, Radford University, bob@stepno.com.

Print and Web production have different news values

By Marc Olson
Senior Copy Editor/Web Producer
Los Angeles Times

The message came from the newsroom at 5 p.m.: "What happened to the Iraq story? It's an exclusive."

The panicked *Los Angeles Times* editor two floors below had just seen our Web site lineup for Saturday evening. We were leading the homepage with stories on

Hurricane Gustav and Gov. Sarah Palin, and filling it out with various metro and biz items. That Iraq story didn't make the cut.

Why not? Because it had been on the homepage since noon. To the newsroom folk, it was a



Marc Olson

This is the latest in a series of *LeadTime* reports from professional journalists on the challenges of 21st-century journalism, which will continue for the 2008-2009 academic year.

scoop on troop-withdrawal talks, a report that would startle thousands of Sunday morning sub-

See OLSON, page 8

Awards honor research, teaching

The Newspaper Division gave awards for research, teaching, professional freedom and responsibility, and student newspaper project excellence during the 2008 AEJMC convention in Chicago.

Awards for top faculty papers in the general competition went to Chan Yoo of the University of Kentucky, Jennifer Wood Adams and Melissa L. Voynich of Auburn, and Amy Youngblood and Beverly Horbit of Texas Christian University. Amy Zerba of the University of Texas at Austin authored the top student paper.

Jack Rosenberry of St. John Fisher College received the top honor in the special call for industry-related research co-sponsored by the International Newspaper Marketing Association.

The division also gave awards honoring the work of faculty members. The distinguished edu-



Amy Zerba, left, accepts her award for top student paper from research chair Bill Cassidy at 2008 meeting in Chicago.



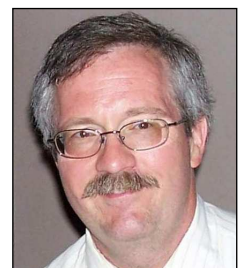
Chan Yoo



Jennifer Wood Adams



Amy Youngblood



Jack Rosenberry

cator award Janna Quitney Anderson of Elon University, while Dorothy Bowles of the University of Tennessee was named Professional Freedom and Responsibility Educator of the Year.

The division also honored classroom newspaper projects for excellence.



Dorothy Bowles



Janna Quitney Anderson

We Want 'LeadFolks'

Got a book that's just been published? Land a big grant? Been promoted? LeadTime will run a LeadFolks column each edition, with short (and we mean short) blurbs on your major achievements, not including academic papers. E-mail LeadTime editor Mike Grundmann with the particulars at grundmmj@jmu.edu

SE Colloquium at Ole Miss in March

The Newspaper Division is one of five co-sponsoring units of the 2009 Southeast Colloquium, to be held March 19-21, 2009 on the campus of the University of Mississippi.

Plans call for the opening reception to be held at the home of William Faulkner and paper sessions to be held in the newly renovated Farley Hall, home to the Department of Journalism.

The university is located in Oxford, Miss., about 75 miles

from Memphis, Tenn.

The event's co-chairs are former Newspaper Division head Kathleen Wickham and her Ole Miss colleague Nancy DuPont. Other sponsors are the History, Law, Magazine and Radio-Television Journalism divisions of AEJMC.

Authors are invited to submit completed papers for presentation at the colloquium by Dec. 5,

See SOUTHEAST, page 6

Panel proposals due by Oct. 15

Proposals for Newspaper Division panels for the 2009 AEJMC convention in Boston are due by 11:59 p.m. Central Time, on Wednesday Oct. 15, 2008.

We are living in a time of great change, concern, intrigue and opportunity regarding the newspaper industry. While the current climate of uncertainty is great fodder for a multitude of ideas, here is a guide designed to get the ball rolling as you think of possible proposals:

- The impact of interactive and participatory journalism on legacy newspaper organizations
- Economic challenges facing newspapers
- The industry shift toward online media
- The changing roles and conceptions of journalists working for newspaper online operations
- Evolving content genres
- Changes in newspaper ownership
- Analysis of the 2008 election coverage
- Implications of newsroom staffing cuts in an era of downsizing
- The future of editing
- Newspaper and Web design
- Covering natural disasters
- Instructional technology-best models and practices
- News subgroups in newsroom cultures

- Diversity and fairness issues
- War coverage

As you think of panel ideas, please consider whether your contribution would be of interest to another AEJMC division or interest group. If we can get other groups to co-sponsor panels with us, the panel has a better chance of being accepted. The full lists of AEJMC's 17 divisions and 10 interest groups are available at www.aejmc.org/_about/divisions.php and www.aejmc.org/_about/groups.php

Panel proposals must include

1. A working title and panel description
2. A statement of whether the panel would be a Teaching, Research or Professional Freedom and Responsibility panel. PF&R panels focus on free expression, ethics, media criticism and accountability, racial/gender/cultural inclusiveness or public service.
3. Suggestions for divisions or interest groups that might be interested in co-sponsoring the panel
4. A statement of why the topic is important
5. A brief description of issues the panelists could discuss
6. Names or descriptions of possible panelists. If you have specific people in mind, please identify them. Firm commitments are not needed, but it helps to know if those people would be willing to serve. If you don't have names, say what type of panelist you are aiming for -- a scholar

with a particular expertise or someone from a particular industry, for example. AEJMC tracks diversity among panelists, moderators and discussants. Please keep that in mind when planning.

7. Your name, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address.

Virtually all Newspaper Division panels are presented with the cooperation of another AEJMC division or interest group. If your panel is chosen for presentation, you will need to work with a representative from the co-sponsoring group to make sure that the interests of both divisions or interest groups are represented on the panel.

Funds for travel reimbursement are available for panel participants who are not AEJMC members. The deadline for those requests is late January and funds are limited. Please try for local panelists or AEJMC members who you expect will be attending the convention anyhow whenever possible.

If you have questions about the panel proposal process, please let me know. If you have a sketchy idea for a panel but aren't sure what to do with it, I'm happy to help you flesh it out.

Please send proposals to:

Bill Cassidy
bcassidy@niu.edu
Dept. of Communication
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
815.753.1711
Fax: 815.753.1709

Southeast

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2008. All papers must be mailed to the appropriate divisional chair; electronic submission is not available.

For the Newspaper Division,

papers should be sent to:

John Carvalho
217 Tichenor Hall
Auburn University
Auburn, Alabama 36849

His e-mail is carvajp@auburn.edu

For the full paper call and details about submission to other

units visit the event's Web site at <http://southeastcolloquium.wordpress.com>. Registration forms, hotel and travel information are available there as well.

For more information contact Wickham or Dupont at kwickham@olemiss.edu or ndupont@olemiss.edu, respectively.

Teaching

From Page 1

information in online records or editing to improve the organization of a story. Entries also can focus on conceptual knowledge, showing, for example, how to teach students to report ethically or edit to avoid libel.

Especially welcome are tips that help professors address the challenges of teaching in a world

of rapid technological change.

To enter, instructors should download and fill out the form that will be posted on the Newspaper Division's Web site in late September. The form should be e-mailed to the teaching competition coordinators, Susan Keith of Rutgers University and Andrea Frantz of Wilkes University, at 21centuryteachingtips@gmail.com. The deadline for entries is midnight Eastern Time Dec. 20.

Entries will be judged on

innovation, ease of application, completeness and originality.

Entries should reflect original teaching ideas that have not been published elsewhere and have not been finalists on display in other teaching awards competitions. Winners will be announced March 1.

If you have questions about the competition or would like to serve as a judge, please e-mail Susan Keith at susank@scils.rutgers.edu or call her at 732-932-7500, ext. 8235.

Head Lines

From Page 4

registrations should be exempt and that the association should determine just how large a proportion of presenters really need to use this equipment.

What's in our name?

The same survey was used to get a sense of whether to continue discussion of changing the division's name, because of the increasingly outdated nature of the "paper" in "Newspaper." By a margin of 58 percent to 42 percent, members said it was worth continuing the discussion. This portion of the poll drew 18 comments, ranging from "Why not continue this for another year then decide?" to "With all due respect, the debate seems to be kind of a waste of time."

Other comments reflected points made in the active listserv

discussion over the summer, notably that the division should retain its name because traditional newspapers are still an important part of the media and journalism landscape -- particularly in the short term. "Leave it alone unless it becomes impossible to do so," one member said.

But the other main perspective from the discussion, which favored a name change to reflect the evolution of the industry, also was noted in some comments. One member said, "It's not just about News on Paper anymore," and another said a new identity was needed so the division doesn't become "a diminishing presence in AEJMC."

Others were concerned about the level of support for a change. As one wrote: "Unless there is a clear consensus on the matter, a change would be divisive at the very least at this time."

Any interpretation of a straw poll such as this must be done

guardedly, considering its many limitations -- notably the self-selected sample and small response rate (fewer than 10 percent of members). But the split view reflects the disagreement in the original discussion. Clearly, there is no overwhelming support for a name change right now. But neither is there so little backing that the issue can be dropped. A portion of the membership thinks it's worthwhile to keep this option open and decide only after further review. Whether this is a majority or a minority view is impossible to tell, but it seems to be held widely enough that it should not be ignored.

So the question of a name change will remain open and on the back burner for now. It may need to move to the front burner before or during the 2009 convention. The executive committee is open to suggestions on how to proceed in conducting this further deliberation.

Miniplen

From Page 2

users willing to pay for it. On the production side, the public and advertisers can create their own content and distribute it independent of the newspaper. The public has many more channels to which it can turn for information tradi-

tionally provided by newspapers, and advertisers have many more ways to reach their audiences as well. On the distribution side, both the fixed and variable costs are different -- lower -- for digital distribution compared to ink and paper.

Newspapers have responded by trying to cut costs, such as staffing, and trying to increase the channels for their news, such

as posting it to the Web and offering it via e-mail and mobile devices. "Creating different versions of the paper means you also can create different bundles of news and information that appeal to a wider range of readers and advertisers," Martin said. Balancing gains in readership and revenue online with the losses of both in print is the industry's major challenge, he said.

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Olson

From Page 4

scribers picking the paper off their driveway. To the Web site crew, it was old news.

That's one of the biggest differences between print and online journalism. Too many print folk are still working on the traditional news cycle: gather the news during the day, edit in the evening, print at midnight and do it all again the next day. A news Web site has no such rhythm; it's a constant churn, and anything that's been on the homepage for three hours is getting stale.

Another difference: The Web site can handle all the content we can give it. No story has to be trimmed for length, no sidebar gets scrapped for lack of space, and no good photo is left behind. In fact, the news is not enough: The *Times* has created 43 blogs on topics as diverse as pets, traffic, "Heroes" and Bush's final months in office.

The demand for content puts a high value on journalists with ideas, not only for stories, but for photos, graphics and especially

video. Web sites love to put video on story pages because advertisers love video. They know a user will spend more time on a page that has a video clip.

Writing headlines for the Web is easier because there is seldom a specified width. If the headline is short or breaks over a line, no problem. The Web doesn't mind widows.

The main requirement for Web page headlines is that they contain the proper nouns that users are likely to type into search engines. For example, the *Times* newsprint headline on a Sarah Palin sidebar said: "She starts making U.S. rounds" The print headline could get away with "she" because the photos, page toppers and other headlines on the page made clear that "she" meant Palin.

Web site headlines must use words that a Google search will turn up. The Web version of that headline was revised to start with "Palin." This is search engine optimization, or SEO.

Online editors will have to know some HTML, but they won't have to master it. As long as they can write heads, decks and cap-

tions without generating errors, they'll do fine. The best way to avoid errors is to type over existing code.

They'll also have to learn Photoshop or some equivalent program, because photos have to be sized and cropped for the Web, and most need some sharpening and brightening before they're Web-quality.

But Web editing doesn't require a whole new skill set. In fact, that same attention to detail that's prized on a newspaper copy desk will prove valuable on the Web site, not just in keeping grammar and style up to newspaper standards, but also in checking links. Good Web editors are always mindful of links; they're constantly clicking on homepage headlines to make sure they track to the proper story.

Users are annoyed when they click on a homepage headline about, say, Iraq, and they're taken to a story on the county fair. And if you think users are annoyed, imagine how the reporter and editors of the Iraq story feel.

No Web editor wants to panic those guys in the newsroom.