

PRO FOCUS

The newsletter of the Virginia Pro Chapter, Society of Professional Journalists

May, 2005

Richmond, Va.

Jim Mann named 2005 George Mason honoree

*Banquet June 2
in Tyler Hanes
Commons at UR*

Jim Mann, recently retired managing editor of the Free Lance-Star of Fredericksburg, will be honored at the 42nd annual George Mason Award Banquet on June 2.

The Mason banquet honors outstanding achievement and contributions to Virginia journalism, and acknowledges achievements of two Richmond SPJ/SDX Educational Foundation Scholarship winners.

Mann was a unanimous selection. He was nominated for ethical practice of journalism, career-long mentoring of young reporters, and some 40 years of work

to provide college scholarships for Virginia journalism students through the Richmond SPJ/SDX Educational Foundation.

The George Mason Award has been presented annually by SPJ-Virginia Pro Chapter since 1964.

Mann is the third Free Lance-Star staffer to receive it, along with former editor and co-publisher Charles S. Rowe in 1974 and current editor Edward W. Jones in 1989.

Jones will present the award to Mann at the banquet, which supports the two \$2,000 scholarships awarded annually to Virginia college journalism students by the foundation, the chapter's not-for-profit arm.

Chapter members, guests and friends of the cause are cordially invited to attend.

The event will be held at the Tyler Hanes Commons at the University of Richmond. Festivities begin with a reception and cash bar at 6 p.m., followed by dinner and the program at 7 p.m.

George Mason-level members -- those who have contributed \$10 a year directly to the scholarship fund -- will be recognized in the banquet program.

Reservations are required by e-mailing Brian Eckert at beckert@richmond.edu.

When RSVPing, please indicate your choice of London broil, ratatouille-topped chicken, or mushroom strudel (vegetarian entree).

Payments will be collected at the door. Reservations will be considered binding unless cancelled by May 27 at noon.

AU prof to lead workshop in non-linear storytelling

Amy Eisman, former Gannett, AOL editor, presenting seminar

Explore new story forms.

Learn different ways to write a story, so that it works well both in print and on the Web.

Find out how to adapt a traditional 30-inch "start here, end there" print story for greater impact on the Web.

Stretch your concept of storytelling to include online photo stories and from-the-scene audio.

Non-Linear Storytelling, taught by American University professor Amy Eisman, will focus on writing and storytelling that translates well to the Web. It's not about Flash and technology, but story forms that have the greatest impact online.

Eisman worked as an editor for USA Today and USA Weekend and was an online content manager for AOL. She holds a master's degree from American University and teaches in AU's weekend master's program in interactive media.

This free program will be held from noon-3 p.m. May 25, at the Richmond Times-Dispatch, 300 E. Franklin St. Complimentary bever-

ages will be available; participants are invited to bring a bag lunch to eat during the session.

The Times-Dispatch, TimesDispatch.com and Media General Inc.'s Interactive Media Division are co-sponsors.

Parking is available in the Times-Dispatch garage at 3rd and Franklin; because of limited space in the garage, carpools are encouraged.

RSVPs are mandatory so that Times-Dispatch security can clear visitors into the garage and building. E-mail beckert@richmond.edu if you plan to attend.

Volunteers judge SPJ MOE and broadcast contests

For the third straight year, the Virginia Pro Chapter judged SPJ National Mark of Excellence television entries.

MOE judging captain Gene Lepley of NBC12-Richmond hosted a "judging barbecue" at his home on May 3, and recruited 14 NBC12 news department staffers, WDBJ-TV of Roanoke's Richmond bureau chief, Anne Buckley of VCU's communications office, and chapter member Lloyd Dobyns, retired from NBC network news, to judge approximately 60 entries in five categories. SPJ-Virginia Pro provided food and refreshments.

All the entries had won a regional MOE competition.

Thanks to all the judges, but especially the non-members of SPJ who gave up a Sunday afternoon to the cause. We hope some of them will soon become SPJ-Virginia Pro members.

NBC12 volunteers included: Ray Daudani, Eileen Geller, Elizabeth McDaniel, Cheryl Mettendorf, Dwight Nixon, Patrick Phillips, Mike Porter, Rob Richardson, Cheryle Rodriguez, Sabrina Squire, Richard Washington, Christina White, Po L. Wu.

Also, Virginia Pro Chapter members provided judging of SPJ-Detroit Chapter's broadcast and new media awards competition for the second year in a row.

TV news judges included chapter members Deb Wenger and Paula Otto, plus volunteer Rocky Dailley, all of VCU's School of Mass Communication. Radio news and new media judges were chapter members Dorothy Abernathy of The Associated Press and Brian Eckert of University of Richmond, with assistance from volunteer Bill Foy, former CBS6-Richmond news director.

2005 scholarship winners announced

The Richmond SPJ/ SDX Educational Foundation, an affiliate of the Virginia Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, has awarded \$2,000 merit scholarships to two Virginia college students committed to careers in journalism.

The 2005 scholarships were awarded to Tiffany Hoffman of Danville, who will be a senior at Virginia Tech, and to Jennifer Erin Rowell of Yorktown, who will be a senior at Christopher Newport University. Hoffman is majoring in communication and political science, and Rowell is a political science major.

Both have served as managing editors of their college newspapers. Rowell is a student-category member of the Virginia Pro chapter and plans to begin her professional career in newspaper work. Hoffman won a spot news award in the Virginia Press Association 2004 competition and plans a career in youth-oriented



Hoffman



Rowell

journalism. Both will be studying abroad for a portion of the coming school year, Hoffman in Ireland and Rowell in New Zealand.

The scholarships are awarded based on accomplishments, commitment to a career in journalism, and experience in journalism-related work and organizations. Applicants must be rising juniors or seniors attending a four-year accredited undergraduate college in Virginia.

“As professional journalists, we think one of our most important duties is to encourage and support young people who plan to become our colleagues. With these annual scholarships, we are fulfilling a major part of our mission. The two winners this year are outstanding student journalists, and we look forward to the accomplishments they will bring to our profession,” said Brian Eckert, president of the Virginia Pro SPJ Chapter.

Chapter membership down; invite your friends to join us!

Also, don't forget to send in your dues renewal

As of May 18, 2005, Virginia Pro Chapter has 78 members on record. That figure is down from 101 in January, apparently due to late or overlooked renewals.

The chapter also recruited a number of student-category members from colleges lacking campus chapters -- Richmond, Virginia Union, Hampton and Christopher Newport. Some of those students are graduating and might not be aware that they can continue their membership at the student rate for up to two years after college.

Fortunately, we have half a dozen SPJ professional members who have relocated to Virginia and chosen to affiliate locally with Virginia Pro Chapter, and we welcome them aboard!

All members are asked to identify and encourage just one colleague to join SPJ and affiliate with Virginia Pro. Chapter membership dues enable us to continue offering excellent free and low-cost professional development programs.

Be a Mason member and help tomorrow's journalists

By *Brian Eckert*

Virginia Pro Chapter President

For 34 years, our chapter has awarded merit-based scholarships to promising young journalists at Virginia colleges and or universities. At our annual George Mason Banquet on June 2, two more \$2,000 scholarships will be presented.

The chapter has twice made leaps of faith regarding scholarships - first by increasing the number awarded annually to two, then by raising the amount to from \$1,500 to \$2,000. To accomplish the latter, the chapter promised its Richmond SPJ/SDX Educational Foundation that we would make an annual appeal for contributions, run fundraising projects and offer a George Mason level of chapter membership.

Each chapter member has the option to pay \$25, instead of the regular \$15, annual dues. One hundred

percent of the extra \$10 goes into the foundation endowment. Members who donate early are recognized in the George Mason Banquet program.

We turned over processing of regular dues to SPJ headquarters a few years ago, saving the chapter much work and expense. However, SPJ is unable to create an extra line on its form for George Mason Club dues. Once a year in April, members receive this invitation to pay a voluntary, additional \$10 directly to the chapter. George Mason dues are completely tax-deductible. Send your \$10 check, payable to Richmond SPJ/SDX Educational Foundation, to Brian Eckert, University of Richmond, Maryland Hall, Suite 100, Richmond, VA 23173.

Please consider adding the George Mason Club to your regular chapter membership. It is a terrific way to support the chapter's highest goal: education of tomorrow's journalists.

SPJ Virginia Pro Chapter Treasurer's Report (April-May)

By *Dan Neman, Treasurer*
As of *May 18, 2005*

Beginning balance: \$2,215.44

Credits:

Interest, 3/31/2005 .17

Dues from national \$270.00

Dues paid directly to local chapter \$30.00

Interest, 4/29/2005 .17

Total \$300.34

Debits:

Sodexo (Catering, Fredericksburg event) \$89.00

Gene Lepley (tape-judging BBQ) \$189.93

Brian Eckert (refreshments reimbursement, Mosul event) \$93.87

Bank service charges (3/31, 4/29)* \$24.00

Total \$396.80

New Balance \$2,118.98

We are trying to get the bank to refund these charges, along with the 2/21 fee. This should add \$36 to our account.

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