The Associated Press Managing Editors is a professional, non-profit organization founded in 1933 in French Lick, Ind. Its membership includes senior editors from more than 1,700 newspapers and online sites in the United States and Canada affiliated with The Associated Press. APME’s mission is to assist editors in coping effectively with newsroom management challenges, to monitor service provided by The Associated Press and to support journalistic excellence. APME also sponsors the National Credibility Roundtables Project, NewsTrain and initiatives in areas including diversity and enterprise projects. APME News is the quarterly magazine for APME members. For updates on APME activities and programs, go to apme.com, or write to apme@ap.org to request an e-mail subscription to APME Update. Membership is $150 a year; find details and sign up at www.apme.com

features

3 Bobbie Jo Buel: Five things about great editors
4 Where Trust is a Must: APME project aims at meeting the challenges of online credibility
6 Time Well Spent: APME’s National Reporting Project attempts to bring transparency to stimulus spending
8 The Dogs Bark: AP integrates watchdog journalism from the White House to issues that impact your house
11 Two Tracks: NewsTrain hosts pair of training programs
30 Briefs: Industry news and notes
31 Member Showcase: The best in photography
32 Poll Positions: APME survey examines staff reductions

APME CONFERENCE SPECIAL SECTION

12 No Small Tasks: Tiny Virgin Islands Daily News makes huge impact
16 Best of the Best: APME and AP annual contest winners
19 Announced in St Louis: Three vie for Innovator of the Year honor
20 Great Read: Great Ideas, Great Journalism book debuts in St. Louis
22 Full Slate: Complete APME National Conference schedule of events
24 On the Ballot: Profiles of 2010 APME Board candidates

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**PERSPECTIVE**

**Bobbie Jo Buel:** Five things about great editors

1. They right wrongs. They save lives. They bust bad guys. Take a look at the package about the APME awards in this issue and you’ll see what I mean.

   Readers in the Virgin Islands are lucky to have J. Lowe Davis as editor of their daily paper. The Daily News is a winner of APME’s Public Service award for the third straight year (and sixth of the last 14). The paper roots out corruption year after year, this time at the only cancer center in the U.S. and British Virgin Islands.

   The same goes for readers of the The Press-Citizen of Iowa City, Iowa, led by executive editor Jim Lewers. The paper earned a First Amendment Award for pushing to obtain records related to an alleged sexual assault involving football players at the University of Iowa. The Press-Citizen spent thousands on two successful lawsuits.

   The Daily News, with a circulation of 9,000, and the Press-Citizen, with 14,000, are small newsrooms doing big-time journalism.

2. They make a difference in their communities week after week.

   One of the best things about my APME “job” is that I edit the portion of our weekly newsletter that highlights watchdog reporting. We’ve shared more than 500 examples so far this year from across the United States and Canada.

   Amid this bounty, certain names come up over and over. It’s great to blow the doors off with results of a 9-month investigation. It’s quite another to routinely produce watchdog work with a strong local and state focus. That level of commitment starts with an editor who makes it part of the newsroom culture.

   These are 15 newspapers whose names I’ve come to expect to see in the watchdog report:
   - Chicago Tribune
   - Lexington Herald-Leader
   - Contra Costa Times
   - Sun-Sentinel
   - Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel
   - Detroit Free Press
   - St. Petersburg Times
   - Oklahoma
   - Syracuse Post-Standard
   - Denver Post
   - Buffalo News
   - Rochester Democrat and Chronicle
   - Orlando Sentinel
   - Tulsa World
   - The Plain Dealer

3. They pave the way for continuous learning in their newsrooms.

   APME’s NewsTrain has brought high-quality, low-cost training to 4,486 journalists in 56 cities since 2004. We couldn’t continue without fabulous funders and trainers. And we definitely couldn’t do it without editors at local papers who help plan and organize the workshops.

   Thanks to editors at these papers, who believe in training and who’ve demonstrated it by working with NewsTrain in 2009: The Oklahoman, Tulsa World, Norman Transcript, Arizona Republic, The (Newark) Advocate, Columbus Dispatch; Fremont News-Messenger; The (Willoughby) News-Herald; The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer, St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

4. They stand up for the right things.

   Ninety-two journalists – nearly all top editors – responded to a recent APME survey on diversity in employment and coverage. At the same time most lamented the shrinking size of their newsroom, they also described their efforts to maintain diversity in their coverage and in newsroom discussions about sources and topics. Here are samples of what smart editors said:

   ● “Just because our reporting and editing ranks have been decimated by the cuts and the economy does not mean we cannot reach and diversify our voices, images and coverage. It is everyone’s responsibility to make this happen and we talk about it constantly.”

   ● “We find ourselves asking more often – before publication – whether our reporting truly reflects the community. Generally, it does. But it’s important to keep checking ourselves.”

   ● “Diversity remains front and center in our conversations of coverage and personnel.”

5. They support one another.

   APME wouldn’t exist without volunteers. With a full-time staff of exactly one, APME depends on editors to keep moving ahead.

   Members like Andrew Oppmann, president and publisher of The Leaf-Chronicle in Clarksville, Tenn., and The Daily News Journal in Murfreesboro, Tenn., who stepped up two years ago to become editor of this magazine. During his five years on the APME board, Andrew also served as treasurer of the APME Foundation and was chairman of APME’s 2007 conference in Washington. He hits his term limit in October, so this will be his last issue.

   Or Karen Peterson, executive editor and senior vice president of news at The News Tribune in Tacoma, whose APME board term also expires this fall. She’s helped define our important initiatives, from training and innovation to diversity and credibility. And for three years she held the little-coveted position of association treasurer.

   Or David Ledford, who continues to stoke the fire of the popular APME national reporting project. David, executive editor of The News Journal in Wilmington, Del., coordinates with the AP and the Sunlight Foundation to help local newsrooms track federal spending. Almost 150 journalists took part in our most recent training Webinar, bringing participation to more than 600 since David founded the project last year.

   As we say in Tucson, mil gracias – a thousand thanks – to the volunteers who keep APME true to its mission of supporting editors and nurturing journalistic excellence.
APME’s Online Journalism Credibility Project is supporting six newsrooms as they seek answers to thorny questions of online credibility.

Meeting the challenges of online credibility

- **The Victoria (Texas) Advocate** is examining the trustworthiness of user-generated vs. newsroom-generated content. What elements of online journalism do readers find credible and why? Editor Chris Cobler is overseeing a scientific research study that will find answers.

- **The Toronto Star** is exploring how to deal with problems of unfairness and/or inaccuracy that arise over archived content, and exploring how newsrooms handle requests to “unpublish.” About 100 APME members have helped out with this project by answering a survey about how they handle credibility challenges that result from the “long tail” of archived content. Kathy English, public editor at the Star, is using those survey results plus visits to newsrooms of different sizes, queries to several international journalist groups, and conversations with free-speech lawyers to help identify best practices.

- **The Knoxville News Sentinel** has studied how to better manage reader comments, or as its blog put it, “Getting the mean out of comments.” The news organization, led by Jack Lail, director of news innovation, held a reader roundtable and posted the video on its Web site, generating a whole new round of reader input. It also put up a poll, which generated 1,200 votes. The project led both the News Sentinel and its parent, Scripps, to make some changes in policies and practices.

- **Seattletimes.com** is investigating whether contextual advertising affects the credibility of news or if news content affects the credibility of advertisements in a project that involves the news, advertising and marketing departments. What do readers think when an ad for a hospital pops up next to a story about that hospital? Does it change their view of the credibility of the ad or the news? Kathy Best, managing editor for digital news and innovation, and her colleagues at seattletimes.com and the Seattle Times collected more than 1,000 replies to a survey and conducted focus groups to get the answers.

>>> Continued on Page 5
The Salem (Mass.) News is developing standards for putting its news on Facebook and Twitter, using the social networking communities to help devise the plans. The project is spearheaded by Editor David Olson.

The Sioux City Journal, led by Editor Mitch Pugh, is examining best ways of handling breaking news, particularly such issues as identifying “persons of interest,” how to correct information in real time, when to report “what we do not yet know.” The news organization is conducting several roundtables with readers and sources, and researching current practices in newsrooms around the nation.

Results of all six projects will be shared with APME members starting this fall. Editors from Victoria and Toronto will describe their projects at our annual training conference in St. Louis in October. We’ll highlight the other sites in an upcoming issue of APME News and in a series of Webinars.

The Online Credibility Project is supported by grants from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation and the APME Foundation. The Reynolds Journalism Institute at the University of Missouri has helped several sites plan their projects. Ken Fleming, director of the Center for Advanced Social Research at Reynolds, has conducted two large surveys of how both readers and editors view important questions of online credibility.

The manager of the APME Online Credibility Project is Elaine Kramer, a former managing editor at The Orlando Sentinel and editor at The Morning Call in Allentown, Pa. Contact her at apmeroundtables@gmail.com

William S. Rukeyser, a journalist living in Knoxville; Brittany Fulmer, daughter of former Tennessee football coach Phillip Fulmer; and WBI-TV News Director Bill Shory listen to the discussion during the APME Online Credibility Roundtable on Comments.

E.W. Scripps Interactive Newspaper Group Vice President Rusty Coats makes a point about online comments as moderator Bob Benz (now of Greenspun Interactive in Las Vegas) looks on. Online producers Lauren Spuhler, shown, and Erin Chapin shot and produced videos from the APME Online Credibility Roundtable on Comments.
From Albany to Honolulu, 150 journalists participated in the first leg of APME’s National Reporting Project aimed at bringing transparency to stimulus spending under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Reporters and database editors attended Webinars designed to help them chronicle the huge sums of money coming into their markets, part of $787 billion worth of spending and tax cuts pushed by the Obama administration, and passed by the 111th Congress.

Reporters and editors learned how to use a federal database assembled by the Associated Press to fuel local stories on the first wave of transportation funding, more than $19 billion. Webinar leaders Bill Allison of the Sunlight Foundation and Matt Apuzzo of The Associated Press also provided participants with suggestions for augmenting raw data with gumshoe reporting to tell readers what contractors are getting the work, and whether they are connected to state and local politicians determining which firms are hired.

“The reaction has been overwhelmingly positive,” says Allison. “There are ideas they can follow up on right away.”

Adds Apuzzo: “People want to do this stuff, to tell these stories.”

APME forged a partnership with AP and Sunlight to bring the free Webinars to members nationwide. Allison notes that Sunlight is working with the Pew Foundation to develop powerful new search tools that may be made available to APME members in September.

In October, the government will release how much money has been spent on stimulus projects, which companies received the money, and how many jobs have been created.

As it did with the mountain of information on transportation, the AP will compile the latest data into a spreadsheet that can be used in each state, county, metro area and congressional district.

Not since the public works projects of the 1930s has so much federal money been directed at boosting the nation’s economy.

Because so much of the implementation of the Recovery Act depends on state and local officials, local newspapers are best positioned to determine if the money is being well spent – and if government claims of jobs saved and created are credible.

“You really have to dig into the weeds with this stuff,” says Allison. “When you do, you’ll find things that pop up.”

He noted that President Barack Obama tied the plan to state and local governments to help thwart allegations political cronies are being enriched with federal contracts. Yet soon after initial awards were made, The Denver Post reported that Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter awarded some of the state’s first stimulus money to his former employer in a no-bid contract.

Ritter hired his former law firm, the Washington-based Hogan & Hartson, in a no-bid contract to review stimulus spending, paying the firm $40,000 in stimulus money through June.
Apuzzo, a reporter for the AP’s investigative team in Washington, recently reported that a Montana checkpoint on the Canadian border that sees about three travelers a day, and another on the North Dakota border which sees about 75 travelers a day, will each get $15 million in stimulus money for improvements even though a government priority list ranked them low in importance.

A checkpoint in Laredo, Texas, meanwhile, which serves more than 55,000 travelers a day, was passed over for stimulus money.

Despite President Obama’s pledge that the Recovery Act funds would be disbursed free of politics, it appears powerful politicians clearly had sway in this case. And Apuzzo believes local reporters will find more of the same if they dig deep at home.

“I’ve yet to see the story (somewhere in America) on the contract for paving going to the governor’s buddy,” Apuzzo says. “But I’m willing to bet it’s happening. There’s a lot of opportunity. And this is journalism that if your local newspaper isn’t doing it, people in your town are not going to know about it.”

Moving forward, APME will send to editors nationwide data sets for stimulus money including Infrastructure, Law Enforcement, the Environment, Housing, Energy, Health Care, Military Construction, Education and State and Local Budgetary Support (aimed largely at preventing layoffs in the health and education sectors).

And the editors’ group will continue to sponsor free Webinars to help newspapers chronicle the extraordinary infusion of taxpayer dollars into communities nationwide.

“You really have to dig into the weeds with this stuff. When you do, you’ll find things that pop up.”

- Bill Allison, Sunlight Foundation
AP is integrating watchdog journalism from the White House to issues at your house

Mike Blood, Los Angeles reporter for the AP, knew something was not right.

It was President Obama’s first visit to Los Angeles since the election. Times were hard in Southern California. Unemployment and the economy were on everyone’s mind.

The President’s Town Hall was the centerpiece of the trip. The White House said the doors were open to anyone who wanted tickets to come question the president. “We haven’t prescreened anybody,” the president said that day.

Yet, Blood sensed something was missing. “There was no procession of the jobless and the luckless to the microphones that day,” Blood recalled later.

If the tickets had been given out randomly, as the White House claimed, why did all the questions seem to be from supporters?

Blood wasn’t satisfied. So he set to work ferreting out the story behind the story. He is one of many AP reporters who now include an energetic commitment to watchdog journalism in their daily rounds.

“For a reporter,” Blood said, “the absence of anger and anxiety in the gym was puzzling since the event was advertised as ‘free and open to the public.’”

Tickets had supposedly been distributed by lottery.

Blood started questioning people as they headed for the exits, asking how they had won the lottery for tickets. “Some looked back with blank faces. What lottery? They said tickets came from employers – a political consulting firm or a law office – or friends with connections.”

The White House refused to explain. Blood kept digging. It took him 11 days of pressing for the answer. Finally he got to the bottom of the matter. City Hall confirmed that fewer than half the tickets had been given out in the lottery. The rest went to politically connected supporters.

By itself, Mike Blood’s effort to hold the White House to account was hardly a huge moment. Another White House caught taking another liberty with the facts. But for the AP it was one piece of a much bigger effort. “This is the kind of story we’re trying to make an AP hallmark,” said Ron Fournier, the Washington bureau chief.

At the AP, we are integrating watchdog journalism into our work at all levels all around the world – from the White House to the state house, from foreign governments to major companies.

AP reporters have checked the quality of the drinking water in your neighborhood. They have surveyed the travel records of governors from Alaska to South Carolina (as well as the idling time of the vehicles of the mayor of New York). They have studied where the stimulus money is going, and why.

“As surrogates for the public interest,” said AP’s investigative editor, Richard Pienciak, “we ask the tough questions, obtain the documents and analyze the data that, hopefully, tells us what our public officials and public entities have been up to.”

This kind of reporting has gone by many names, from what an earlier generation called muckraking to simply working a beat.

As surrogates for the public interest, we ask the tough questions, obtain the documents and analyze the data that, hopefully, tells us what our public officials and public entities have been up to.”

- Richard Pienciak, AP’s investigative editor

 continues on Page 9
to the popular phrase these days: accountability journalism (a catch phrase the Washington Bureau used extensively, only to find it “borrowed” by Politico.com. The sincerest form of flattery, no doubt).

Behind all of these names is a simple idea with deep roots in our profession. The best journalism comes from digging deeper, asking more questions, speaking to more sources, double-checking more facts until what emerges is not what others want you to report but your own best judgment as a journalist of what is really happening.

This reporting takes a commitment of time and resources. In a news media age when those can be scarce, the AP is increasing its efforts to dig behind the news. To break stories. To turn over rocks that had been left undisturbed.

Often, as with Mike Blood in L.A., it is a reporter’s own instinct that questions haven’t been answered that produces the best stories. By changing both the culture and the editing structure of the AP, we are trying to give reporters the time to pursue those instincts.

Fournier, Pienciak and other AP editors are stepping up the focus on holding newsmakers to account. In part they do this by teaching and preaching the importance of watchdog journalism as an essential responsibility of all journalists. “Reward the truth-tellers, expose the liars and help readers navigate the squalls of spin” Fournier urged his colleagues.

Powering the vision of independent and thoroughly reported journalism, there are important structural changes. Fournier, for example, has named the first accountability editor in the Washington bureau. The job went to veteran journalist Jim Drinkard.

Rather than just designating specific reporters to be the watchdogs, Fournier instructed Drinkard to recruit every reporter to the task. And not just in the Washington operation.

Drinkard has been working with the Central Desk’s new editor, David Scott, and other regional desks to help state house bureaus develop their watchdog journalism techniques. Pienciak, too, spends much of his time working with AP reporters on honing investigative skills.

Watchdog journalism is not a specialized beat. It is everyone’s beat!

Yet the creation and expansion of beat reporting is an important part of watchdog journalism. The Financial Desk has been out front on this effort and the U.S. staff is following that path, too.

“The AP reinvented how it covers financial news,” reports Business Editor Hal Ritter. At the core of this reinvention was the creation in 2008 of a dozen specialized beat teams, from autos to technology to energy.

“Instead of a newsroom of generalists, AP Business news now has a newsroom of experts,” Ritter said. “This has enabled reporters to pursue a caliber of watchdog journalism that was difficult before the reorganization”

There are many examples.

The AP’s formula for reporting CEO pay has become the industry standard.

Wells Fargo had to call off a Las Vegas junket after the AP reported the company had booked 12 nights at a resort on The Strip. And in August, reporter Daniel Wagner, using court records and shoe leather reporting, disclosed that mortgage companies who have been accused of preying on homeowners are now being trusted by the government to distribute billions of dollars of government funds designed to help avert foreclosures.

Editing has been refocused all around the world to strengthen original reporting. The AP’s new regional editing hubs, throughout the United States and around the world, will each have an enterprise editor.

In New York, Mary Rajkumar oversees enterprise coming in from international staff positioned around the globe. “As fewer news outlets can afford international reporting, The AP’s role as a watchdog has become more important than ever around the world,” she said.

Take for example the enterprise of Kenya correspondent Elizabeth Houreld. Human Rights activists had alerted Houreld of a jail where dozens of children were being held for months and tortured by the Kenyan Army. Their crime? They had been child soldiers for the Rebel Army. So, many of these children were in fact being terrorized twice. First by the rebels who forced them to enlist and then by the army that punished them for this.

Houreld convinced a jailer to let her in to the jail – without the knowledge of the government or the military. It was very risky. “Dozens of scared children filed silently into the bare room,” Houreld wrote, “their eyes on the cracks in the floors.” One by one they told of being tortured, Houreld related. They told of being made to shake hands with corpses. They told of being forced to crawl through tunnels lined with barbed wire.

Then they took off their shirts. Houreld could see the white scars crisscrossing their backs. “Some were still bleeding.”

A week after the story ran the children were released.
Sometimes, as Elizabeth Houreld showed, the most powerful form of watchdog journalism is simply to watch and witness.

At other times, watchdog journalism calls for sophisticated use of databases and computer power. Ted Bridis, who oversees the enterprise team in Washington, has been mobilizing to follow the billions in stimulus money as it flows out of Washington.

Already the work has borne considerable fruit. In fact, as part of this effort, Matt Apuzzo and Brett J. Blackledge of the Washington bureau offered an invaluable lesson in the importance of remembering history and context.

It was not long ago, after the Minnesota highway bridge collapse, that fixing America’s deteriorating bridges seemed a top priority. Then came the recessions and billions of dollars of stimulus money to create jobs fixing roads and bridges.

How much of that money had gone to fix the worst bridges? Apuzzo and Blackledge analyzed and compared stimulus spending records with reports on dangerous bridges.

The result: Tens of thousands of unsafe or decaying bridges, carrying 100 million drivers a day, would have to wait for repairs because the stimulus money was being used on faster projects such as repaving bridgeways already in sound shape.

This was watchdog journalism at its best. The piece made clear that many communities spent the money to generate jobs quickly, which they deemed a more urgent priority.

Apuzzo and Blackledge did not pass judgment on this choice. They simply provided citizens with the information to make their own decisions about how their governments were spending their money.

It won’t surprise many people to hear that governments are not often eager to share the information that goes into makes for an effective watchdog story. So AP associate general counsel, Dave Tomlin, has bolstered our ability to use freedom of information laws to pry information free and has worked with APME on various access issues. Karen Kaiser, recently hired from the Tribune Co. as AP assistant general counsel, works with AP editors across the country on effective freedom of information requests.

The importance of this effort was brought home in a forceful way in three states where three governors were suddenly thrust to national attention – Juneau, Alaska; Springfield, Ill.; and Columbia, S.C. One governor, Sarah Palin, became a candidate for national office. Illinois’ Rod Blagojevich was indicted. Mark Sanford of South Carolina vanished from sight and eventually admitted he had a mistress in Argentina.

In all three cases, AP reporters combed state records for further news and explanations. In South Carolina, for example, the AP obtained the records for Sanford’s use of the state plane.

Turns out he was ferrying his wife and kids around, against the rules, and on one occasion was flown back from a political event at a cost of $1,200 so he could make a discount hair appointment.

Digging in after the story breaks is important. But the cases drove home how much there is to be done in the way of watchdog reporting in our state capitals.

"An important lesson has been learned from the experiences covering Palin, Blagojevich and Sanford," Pienciak said. "We can all do a better, proactive job covering our governors."

This will continue to be a top priority for the AP over the next year.

Pienciak said AP state bureaus are initiating regular open records requests for all 50 governors and other key state officials.

"In the future," Pienciak said, "the type of dirt uncovered in such cases hopefully can be found beforehand."
two tracks

NewsTrain hosts pair of training programs

Norman, Okla. September 25-26

NewsTrain, APME’s training program for front-line editors, will offer separate learning tracks for the first time at its workshop at the University of Oklahoma’s Gaylord College. Participants will be able to choose a track and choose a day, and may attend one or two days.

Track One will provide hands-on instruction for editors in coaching better video and use of social networking. Track Two offers useful and sophisticated topical workshops to help editors coach better journalism.

Faculty members are Robb Montgomery, Mark Briggs, Ken Fleming and David Arkin. Bob Dotson of NBC’s Today show will speak about the value of storytelling in a luncheon address on Friday, Sept. 25.

This workshop is the sixth NewsTrain co-sponsored by Mid-America Press Institute. Local partners are: The Associated Press, The Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at University of Oklahoma, The Norman Transcript, the Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation, The Oklahoman, The Tulsa World.

Columbus, Ohio October 3

NewsTrain will offer a high-impact one-day workshop for frontline editors at the Columbus Dispatch. With the theme of making the most of technology, time and people in difficult times, the workshop courses are: The Big Picture / Staying Ahead in the Changing Media World; Covering Communities in New Ways; Alternative Story Forms for Print; The Skeptical Editor; and Story Planning for Multiple Media.

Faculty members are Ellyn Angelotti, Michael Roberts and Kathy Schenck.

The local partners for this workshop are Associated Press Society of Ohio; The (Newark) Advocate; The Associated Press; Columbus Dispatch; Fremont News-Messenger; Kent State University; Ohio State University; The (Willoughby) News-Herald; The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer.

Find out more

For more information about the Oklahoma and Ohio NewsTrain workshops, contact Elaine Kramer, APME NewsTrain project director at apmenewstrain@gmail.com.

New at NewsTrain

With the help of David Arkin from GateHouse Media and Brian Murley from Mid-America Press Institute as well as MPI student scholars attending the workshop, we will try two new things at the Norman workshop:

- Live-blogging the workshop on the MPI and APME Web sites via coveritlive.com.
- Creating the first installments of what we hope will be a video learning library for APME, which will be housed at the new APME Web site, which is coming soon.

If these experiments prove popular and worth the commitment, we’ll try to continue them at future NewsTrains.
How does a newsroom with six reporters do investigative journalism that saves lives, frees the innocent and exposes the corrupt? The Virgin Islands Daily News just won APME's Public Service award for the third straight year – and six of the last 14. We asked editor J. Lowe Davis to explain and inspire us.

The Virgin Islands Daily News has a small circulation – on a really great day we sell 10,000 copies – but has a huge importance to people of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The tradition here of passing along copies of the paper makes our circulation manager gnash his teeth but makes our news staff smile because we know that by the end of the day, about 40,000 people have read the paper. We also know that those who have not seen the paper will most likely have heard all the local stories read on one of the local talk radio shows.

All this makes our mission clear and our task difficult. Since The Daily News is the end-all, be-all source of information, we have to be right, be thorough and be timely. It's not a job for slackers. In fact, it is not a job that many journalists would ever want because it is so relentlessly demanding.

Our readers want us not only to cover the news of the day, but also to dig into it, analyze it and explain it to them. They count on us to clue them in on the truth behind the avalanche of press releases flowing from the government offices.

And of course, they also expect us to tell them who is doing what with their money.

The writer of a Letter to the Editor once said: “The Daily News is the only agent for positive change in the Virgin Islands.”

Such wonderful praise!

Such a burden!

Perhaps the main factor that defines The Virgin Islands Daily News and makes us different from many other papers, including our competition here in the territory, is that we give investigative and analytical work as high a priority as daily beat coverage. Given a choice between having a reporter spend
time following a trail of corruption or having the reporter sit through a board or agency meeting, we will opt for the investigative work.

We are the newspaper of record, which means we watch the police blotters, cover the courts, the schools, the legislature, all the executive branches of government and on and on and on. We need a reporting staff of at least 60 to do it all. Sadly, we have only six. We scramble and juggle every day, constantly assessing what we can and can’t do. Sometimes I think it’s pure miracle that we get the paper out every night!

The Virgin Islands government has an inordinate influence and control over people’s lives here: One in every three households is headed by a government employee, and many families have multiple members working for some branch or agency of the V.I. government. The V.I. government owns and operates the seaports, airports, cruise ship docks, hospitals, water and power utility, public transit system, public housing complexes, schools, ballparks and arenas and the university. The V.I. government regulates the casinos, the telecom companies and the inter-island ferries.

From time to time, various V.I. demagogues have even made noises about needing to put the newspaper under government ownership or control. Oh, boy!

Combine the pervasive nature of the government with the pernicious culture of corruption and you have a journalist’s paradise — or a journalist’s nervous breakdown. Reporters and editors who embrace the work and live it and breathe it can thrive here. Those who don’t, or can’t, don’t last long.

As a result, we are extremely careful about hiring. The news staff has a term for a particular category of unsuitable applicant: “Jimmy Buffett Journalist.” That’s someone who pants for the opportunity to “experience the islands” and “explore the exciting opportunities to write.” Or words to that effect. People who think that working at The Virgin Islands Daily News means lolling under a palm tree with a laptop on your knee and a rum coke in your hand need to think about a different place to pursue that goal.

We look for journalists who are confident, aggressive but congenial, energetic but emotionally grounded, and profoundly, endlessly curious. People who have never been to foreign places or never ventured beyond predictable, comfortable experiences are likely to be pole-axed by the difficulties and differences in living and working here. But people who like to taste something new every day usually find this place and this newsroom a real treat.

A sense of humor is a mandatory survival skill here. Newsrooms are notorious for cynical humor and dark wit, and ours is no exception. Here, however, there just seems to be more of the ridiculous and more that invites laughter.

>> Continued from Page 12

News staff at the Virgin Islands Daily News entrance.

>> Continued on Page 14
We support one another constantly. All our reporters know that every other reporter, every editor, the publisher and I have their backs. We don't let politicians, business honchos or anyone belittle or bully our staff. Our newspaper's attorney is on my speed dial, and he is a master of the stern letter.

We are not afraid to go to court, and over the years we have succeeded in getting rulings that expanded the territory's open records and open meetings laws. When a board or agency or government official gets a no-excuses demand from us or a no-nonsense letter from our attorney, they know we are willing to go the distance and they risk humiliation and possibly their jobs if they mess around and lose in court.

We can't afford to go to court over everything, of course, so we carefully pick our fights. Fortunately, our courtroom track record, combined with the community's view of us as their champion, helps knock down a lot of obstacles.

We equip our reporters with laminated cards bearing on one side the key points in the V.I. public meetings law and on the other side a fill-in-the-blanks challenge for them to read aloud at any government meeting where they suspect violations of the "Sunshine Law."

The city editor, the reporters and I all spend a lot of time with new reporters acquainting them with the access laws, how to challenge them and what to do when anyone balks. It is vital for reporters to know what they are entitled to and what steps to take to get it. It is equally vital for them to know what they can't have. Wouldn't we love to look at the personal income tax returns for public officials? Wouldn't we love to have subpoena power? Too bad, so sad, gotta move on to the good stuff that we have a right to have.

In hiring, we gravitate toward schmoozers, who have a knack for attracting sources. When they get here, we encourage them to form networks, outside work, that give them a bigger net to cast for information and ideas.

I strongly believe that journalists who breathe air that's different from the newsroom air have a better shot at keeping healthy balance in their lives and a clearer view of where they are.

A great help to me, personally and professionally, for example, has been my "outside" activity in the V.I. Episcopal diocese in recent years. As a candidate for ordination as a priest, I work in a number of churches plus serve as an on-call chaplain at the hospital. I cannot and will not let journalistic interest prevail over confidentiality rules and clergy ethics, but I do benefit as an editor from the different values and perspectives I encounter as I see our community from the inside out.

That said, I must in all honesty disclose that nearly every investigative report we have ever done started with information that someone from "outside" shared with us.

When a reporter goes full bore on an investigative project – and all the reporters have several such projects in process – we give them time to work, and time to talk, talk, talk about what they are doing. We help them with the devices and techniques of getting and staying organized on a complex project: dumping notes into the computer every day, making physical space to spread out the documents, creating and maintaining good files and spreadsheets to keep track of interviews, timelines, information intersections and so forth. It's similar to the way police detectives keep track of information in murder cases.

We are committed to giving every investigative project all the editing time and attention it needs. It is so tempting to rush blockbuster stories to print, but we try to control ourselves.

Not only do I, personally, line edit every story, the city desk and copy desk edit the stories as well. We also have at least one reporter who is not part of the project act as an extra reader. At proofing, all editors, reporters - plus everyone we can grab from other departments - get the page proofs and are urged to mark them up thoroughly. I then consolidate all the proofs, make the needed fixes and pull a second set of...
proofs for final review.

It’s a lot of time and effort, but worth it. I cannot recall ever making a mistake in our investigative reports.

We also place high value on the presentation of our projects. I have a rule for designing the front pages of our investigative projects: Make it “a kill shot between the eyes.” If that seems extreme, consider the goal: Get the reader’s attention and convey instantly and graphically that this is urgently important and special.

We like photographs but don’t rely on them alone. At times, we have used all-text front pages. With artful handling of font and size, we can show the readers that they are getting something special.

We’d like for them to think we marinated the front page in hot sauce.

Talent alone cannot always get the job done. Executive editors need a staff with courage. For example, several years ago, we produced a complicated investigative project that had many inter-connecting parts, multiple intersections of information and layers of relative importance.

We used timelines and breakout boxes of explanatory details in the margins plus every other device we could think of to make the information accessible, but finally, when the time came to fully design the dang thing, we were overwhelmed and daunted.

I had ordered open pages to run as a separate tab inside the daily paper. That’s a presentation method we’ve found our readers like because it gives them something easy to handle and set aside to spend time reading and mulling.

Unfortunately, I had ordered 44 pages, and at 5 p.m. the afternoon we had to go to press, we still did not have the layout concept clear in our heads.

So I pulled the plug. We did not publish the project until a week later, at which time the design had finally come together in an ingenious way that achieved all our goals.

Another time, more recently, I stopped a print run when a press operator spotted something everyone else had missed: a bad date. I could almost hear money going down the drain, but I knew we had to stop, make the fix, toss out the bad papers and start over.

Publishers may weep over the cost of such actions, but their tears will be bigger and flow longer if a project is blemished by something that could have been fixed.

A number of years ago, I worked at The Philadelphia Inquirer and later at The Albuquerque Tribune. At both newspapers, investigative journalism was revered. At both newspapers, I was privileged to experience much of what I know to be good and true about journalism. Out of that, I was able to develop these guidelines for editors:

- Give reporters time to develop sources and find stories.
- Never betray a reporter’s trust.
- Give reporters the gift of your undivided attention and give unstintingly of your knowledge.
- Force reporters to narrow their focus - every good project boils down to answering one, and only one, key question. Really. Think about it.
- Praise good work and throw back bad work.
- Don’t be afraid of disappointing or angering sources.
- Keep public officials in perspective: They are servants, not lords.
- Never print anything that you doubt in any way. Trust your suspicion.
- Spend your resources of time, money and talent on work that matters the most to your community. Some projects might be fascinating to the reporter but have little likely effect on what’s important to the readers. Forget those projects.

Finally, there is a semi-rule that’s a semi-joke, but only semi: Be prepared to see praise and honors go to the non-participants. Publishers may bask in the reflected glory of the newsroom’s work, but fortunately, APME helps keep the Earth on its right axis by honoring the whole newspaper.

I would love to see reporters’ names on the award plaques, but in truth, all elements of the newspaper do contribute to the production of good work.

The best editors know that and make sure others know it.
**APME annual contest winners**

APME, an association of editors at AP’s 1,500 member newspapers in the U.S. and newspapers served by the Canadian Press in Canada, recognizes journalism excellence with annual awards in five categories. This year's winners were selected during a meeting of the association's board of directors. The awards will be presented during the group's annual conference Oct. 28-30 in St. Louis. Directors did not participate in discussions or votes on their own newspapers' entries.

**Public Service**

- An investigation into the spread of a deadly drug-resistant staph germ at hospitals in Washington state earned The Seattle Times a Public Service Award from the Associated Press Managing Editors Association.

  In “Culture of Resistance,” the newspaper uncovered 672 deaths from methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA, that had been undisclosed to relatives and the public. The report also revealed that the number of patients treated each year for MRSA had increased from 141 to 4,723 in just 10 years.

  In uncovering the staph germ epidemic, The Times had to fight for records and made many of those documents available to readers in a searchable database. By the end of the three-day series, the state said it would require hospitals for the first time to report all cases linked to MRSA. The project also resulted in new state laws requiring hospitals to screen at-risk patients for MRSA and providing for surprise hospital inspections.

  "The Seattle Times’ reporting will save lives, and that is public-service reporting at its best," the judges said in making the award.

- The Virgin Islands Daily News of St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, won the small-circulation category for uncovering life-threatening corruption at the only cancer center in the U.S. and British Virgin Islands. It is the newspaper’s third straight Public Service award and sixth in 14 years.

  The newspaper reported that the hospital awarded its chief executive officer a record $750,000 in salary and benefits at the same time it wasn’t paying bills for drugs and equipment. Some patients couldn’t get chemotherapy treatments on time because drug companies had cut off supplies.

  In the 40,000 to 150,000-circulation category, the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader won for a series of investigations into the spending of tax dollars by quasi-government groups. One examined the lavish expense account of the executive director of the Blue Grass Airport as well as his top four lieutenants. Other targets were the Lexington Public Library, the Kentucky League of Cities and Kentucky Association of Counties.


**Innovator of the Year**

Three finalists were selected for APME’s third annual Innovator of the Year Award: The Oklahoman of Oklahoma City, for a staffwide commitment to video; The News-Press of Fort Myers, Fla., for audience engagement efforts including packages that brought experts and readers together with in-depth reporting, photo and video to tackle issues; and The News Journal of Wilmington, Del., for environmental coverage called AllGreenToMe that brings print and online together and provides an international look at environmental challenges facing Delaware.

Judges: Bob Heisse, vice president and executive editor of the Centre Daily Times of State College, Pa.; Brad Dennison, vice president of news operations for GateHouse Media Inc.; Jon Broadbooks, executive editor of The State Journal-Register of Springfield, Ill.; and Ruth Gersh, AP director of product integration.

**First Amendment**

- The Courier-Journal of Louisville, Ky., for an examination of the University of Louisville Foundation.

- The Democrat and Chronicle of Rochester, N.Y., for exposing and helping to correct a system in which court officials failed to file court documents in their proper place.

- The Press-Citizen of Iowa City, Iowa, for extensive efforts to report and obtain records related to an alleged sexual assault involving football players at the University of Iowa.

Judges: Peter Kovacs, managing editor, The Times-Picayune of New Orleans; Jan Touney, executive editor, Quad-City Times, Davenport, Iowa; Otis Sanford, editor for opinion and editorials, The Commercial Appeal of Memphis, Tenn.; David Bailey, managing editor, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette of Little Rock, Ark.; and David Tomlin, AP associate general counsel.

In addition, the judges awarded these APME First Amendment Citations:

- The Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch for an examination of how major colleges use a vague federal law to shield information about their big-time athletics departments.

- The Memphis (Tenn.) Commercial Appeal for stories and a searchable database of state handgun carry permit holders.

- The Argus Leader of Sioux Falls, S.D., for stories showing the consolidation of casino licenses into the hands of a few main players.

- The Victoria (Texas) Advocate for shedding light on a dysfunctional local judicial system.

> Continued on Page 17
Online Convergence

- **Las Vegas Sun** for a cutting-edge multimedia presentation and interactive exploration of a serious water shortage in the Las Vegas valley.
- **The News-Press** of Fort Myers, Fla., for the best use of its print and online products to tell the story of a boy’s dying dream to build an orphanage for the children of Africa.
- **Lawrence (Kan.) Journal-World** for an in-depth, multimedia look at off-limits sites, valuable resources and fascinating features that exist beneath the surface of the Sunflower State. This is the newspaper’s third straight Online Convergence Award.

**Judges:** Hollis Towns, executive editor and vice president for news, Asbury Park Press of Neptune, N.J.; Kurt Franck, managing editor, The Blade of Toledo, Ohio; Michael Days, editor, Philadelphia Daily News; and Shazna Nessa, AP director of multimedia and graphics.

The judges listed these Online Convergence finalists or honorable mentions.

- **Over 150,000**
  - **The Seattle Times** and seattletimes.com for a two-year investigation into the murky world of congressional earmarks.
  - **40,000 to 150,000**
    - **The Roanoke (Va.) Times** and roanoke.com for an interactive tour of the new $66 million Taubman Museum of Art.
  - **Under 40,000**
    - **Victoria (Texas) Advocate** and victoriaadvocate.com for an interactive package complementing a 16-month examination of illegal immigration.

”It was a company-wide effort that included several powerful and exclusive images by many photographers on the ground; multiple video packages; interactive graphics that explained how the flight failed; and bureaus around the country being enlisted in the reporting effort, from California to North Carolina to Washington, D.C.,” they said. “A job well done on news that literally fell from the sky.”

- Gaza photographer Khalil Hamra received the News Photos award for images chronicling the destruction, chaos and Palestinian rage associated with the Israeli incursion into Gaza, the neighborhood where Hamra lived with his partner, pregnant with twins when the fighting began. Islamabad photographer Emilio Morenatti earned honors for Feature Photos for his portraits of women victims of acid attacks in Lahore, Pakistan.

- The Iraq war was central to three AP staff awards. National writer Sharon Cohen was honored for Feature Writing for a seven-part story on the longest deployment of an American unit, soldiers from the Minnesota National Guard. Photos taken for that package, “Long Haul,” were part of a portfolio that earned Jae C. Hong the John L. Dougherty Award for a newer AP staffer.

- Best Use of Video was awarded to photojournalists Evan Vucci, Maya Alleruzzo and Rick Bowmer, and multimedia producer Matt Ford, for “Killer Blue: Baptized by Fire,” a multimedia package blending video, still photos and text telling the story of one of the last Army units to serve a 15-month combat tour in Iraq before tours were cut to 12 months.

- An exclusive AP national economic stress index received the...
Best Use of Multimedia Award. Credited were South Editor Brian Carovillano and multimedia editor Peter Prengaman in Atlanta, Central Editor David Scott in Chicago, Orlando correspondent Mike Schneider, newsman Mike Baker in Raleigh, N.C., artist Carrie Osgood in New York, producer Jake O’Connell in New York, developers John Balestrieri and Allen Chen in New York and developer Troy Thibodeaux in Washington.

● Africa correspondent Michelle Faul received the Enterprise Reporting award for a series focusing on unrest in the Congo, including accounts of how girls, young children and even babies had been raped by rebel soldiers.

● Springfield, Ill., newsman John O’Connor received the Charles Rowe Award for Distinguished State Reporting for a body of work that included coverage of the misconduct of ousted Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich, wasteful spending by bureaucrats and details about the parole status of the man accused of killing singer Jennifer Hudson’s family.

The judges also awarded the following honorable mentions:

● Deadline Reporting: reporters in Chicago, Washington and elsewhere for coverage of Blagojevich’s arrest.

● Feature Writing: special correspondent Helen O’Neill for a profile of a brilliant young chef who faces cancer of the tongue; O’Neill for a profile of an aging racist who apologized for beating a young black activist a half-century ago – now Rep. John Lewis; Texas sports editor Jaime Aron for a narrative about the premature birth of his twin sons and the tiny babies’ struggle to survive; and Orange County, Calif., correspondent Gillian Flaccus for a look behind the “roll call of the dead” reading of the names of 148,000 veterans at Riverside National Cemetery.

● Enterprise Reporting: breaking news, scoops and features from the U.S.-Mexico border by San Diego-based writer Elliott Spagat; medical writer Marilyn Marchione for a critical look at the claimed curative powers of alternative medicine; AP teams in Afghanistan and Pakistan for groundbreaking stories from the region; and the investigative team of Jeff Donn, Martha Mendoza and Justin Pritchard for reporting that America’s drinking water supplies are contaminated with trace concentrations of a multitude of pharmaceuticals.

● John L. Dougherty Award: Kenya correspondent Katharine Houreld for a variety of stories from the region.


● Best Use of Video: Julie Pace, Jason Brins, Bonny Gosh, Rich Matthews, Sagar Meghani and Michael Waldon for coverage of the inauguration of Barack Obama.

● News Photos: David Guttenfelder, chief of Asia photos and based in Tokyo, for dramatic photos from being embedded with an American military unit in Afghanistan; Emilio Morenatti for photos of refugees from Swat Valley violence.

● Feature Photos: Guatemala-based photographer Rodrigo Abd for a photo of a Guatemalan transvestite talking with her sex worker, surrounded by dogs, puppies, chickens and children; Ariana Cubillo, Caracas, Venezuela, for a story on a maternity hospital in Haiti.
Three newspapers are finalists for the coveted APME Innovator of the Year award, and again this year conference attendees will determine the winner.

Innovator of the Year is the only contest with suspense remaining as we plan for St. Louis. APME judges again had a tough job in selecting the finalists from an outstanding field.

The award recognizes innovation in print, online, management, structure or other area that demonstrates a bold, creative effort to improve a news or information product and increase audience.

The finalists are the Fort Myers News-Press, the Oklahoma City Oklahoman and the Wilmington News Journal.

They each are preparing a five-minute video – to be shown in St. Louis – demonstrating their innovation. The audience will have a chance to question an editor afterwards, before the vote takes place.

Fort Myers won the initial Innovator of the Year award in 2007, while the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel won in 2008.

Here’s what makes the three finalists stand out:

- **The News-Press** submitted several examples of audience engagement that showed it is a core of its news presentation in print and on news-press.com.
  
  “We infused our journalism with the wisdom of our readers and community experts,” wrote Cindy McCurry-Ross, senior managing editor, in the entry letter. “We used creative approaches, traditional communication tools and whiz-bang technology to complement traditional narrative storytelling with interactivity.”

  Among the examples cited was a “Summer of Hunger” project that brought together readers to identify the scope of the problem in southwest Florida and offer solutions.

  The first meeting led to a commitment of $100,000 for an emergency hunger fund, and two months later the fund stood at $405,000 with 420,000 pounds of food collected.

- **The Oklahoman** calls it “total approach” – and it starts with an 11-person video team that includes videographers and editors and has transformed NewsOK.com.

  Many staffers have been trained in video, and a special video editing studio has been placed in the middle of the newsroom. Video along with social networking during major breaking news stories like an ice storm, tornado and a fire drew great audience response and thanks.

  “While some newspapers may be pushing the TV version of the 90-second news video and others are pushing more documentary-style video, The Oklahoman is doing both while innovating in other areas such as live streaming, special segments and even educational documentary-style video,” wrote Joe Hight, director of information and development, in the entry letter.

- **The News Journal** created an environmental portal called AllGreentoMe that provides local and international content, social networking tools, staff blogs and more.

  It officially launched on Earth Day with a 40-page print tabloid section and it grows with regular environmental projects in print and online at delawareonline.com.

  “We marshaled print-centric jobs for the creation and feeding of this new portal that’s attracting loyal followers and stimulating content submissions from ordinary citizens, community groups and scientists,” wrote David Ledford, executive editor, in the entry letter. “... AllGreentoMe highlights the day’s top environmental and energy news from Delaware and beyond.”

  – Bob Heisse is executive editor of the Centre Daily Times in State College, PA, and is APME Innovation Committee chairman. He can be reached at bheisse@centredaily.com.
Editors who attend the APME conference in St. Louis this fall will be the first to receive copies of our annual "Great Ideas, Great Journalism" book. This year’s edition will feature 200 examples of watchdog reporting, alternative story forms and other journalism submitted by AP-member newsrooms. CD versions of the book will be mailed to editors late this fall.

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Free to flee

How do you make a watchdog story built upon an analysis of data and court records touch readers?

St. Louis Post-Dispatch investigative reporter/editor Joe Mahr and graphic artist Cara DeMichele designed a richly detailed interactive map that took readers into individual stories of fugitives and their victims.

The investigation showed that hundreds of thousands of felony warrants are not being entered into the FBI’s national fugitive database. So fugitives can be stopped by police but sent on their way because cops have no way of knowing the person is a fugitive.

Using photos, police reports, and court files they built an interactive map detailing the cases of 30 fugitives, their contact with police, their release, and the people victimized when the fugitive committed more crimes. The warrants not recorded weren’t for minor crimes. They included murder, kidnapping, rape and child molestation.

Find the project at stltoday.com/fugitives

Submitted by Jean Buchanan, AME/projects, jbuchanan@post-dispatch.com

>> Continued on Page 9
What’s old is news again

The Patriot-News in Harrisburg, Pa., took its small, tired zoned neighborhood editions, gave them a re-design, and beefed them up with lots more hyper-local content.

This is as local as it gets – lots of municipal meeting coverage that would never make the main paper, charity check passings, events calendars, Little League baseball team photos, etc. And a chatty columnist for each section.

Both sections run on Fridays and may be broken into even more specific zones in the near future.

The response – from readers AND advertisers (they have their own lower rate card) – has been great.

The process involves one editor per section and contributions from all municipal reporters and sports stringers.

Submitted by Cate Barron, managing editor, cbarron@pnco.com

Sobering statistics

San Jose Mercury News reporter Sean Webby spent several months documenting the police department’s aggressive use of the “public drunk” law to arrest people they suspected would cause trouble – with no Breathalyzer or any objective standard to support the arrest.

San Jose was arresting more people than any other city in the state. A disproportionate number were Latino.

Webby’s articles prompted widespread outrage and led to a series of reforms, including new standards for arrests, a new sobering station, and orders that people not be prosecuted who were not repeat offenders.

Submitted by Rick Tulsky, investigations editors, rtulsky@mercurynews.com
### Wednesday, Oct. 28

- **2 p.m.:** Welcome by Bobbie Jo Buel, president of Associated Press Managing Editors and executive editor of the Arizona Daily Star.
- **2:05 p.m.:** Welcome by president of Associated Press Photo Managers, Mike Fender, Indianapolis Star.
- **2:10 p.m.:** New directions in a turbulent media landscape. We examine bold steps taken by two newspapers, the Detroit Free Press and the Chicago Tribune, and explore how they implemented radical change against a backdrop of declining revenues.
- **3:15 p.m.:** The State of the Associated Press: Executives from the world's largest news cooperative update APME member editors on changes ahead for the organization, along with accomplishments and innovations in the previous year. Editors are encouraged to ask questions about the report and member services.
- **4:20 p.m.:** Break
- **4:30 p.m.:** Jill Geisler, Leadership and Management group leader, The Poynter Institute offers tips on how to lead in the brave new world.
- **5:35 p.m.:** Break .
- **6 p.m. to 9 p.m.:** Enjoy fun and fellowship with APME members at a great location, the City Museum of St. Louis, hosted by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The APME Foundation will be offering unique and memorable items in silent and live auctions.

### Thursday, Oct. 29

- **9 a.m.:** Session opens. Bobbie Jo Buel, APME president
- **9:05 a.m.:** Building Online credibility: It's the Wild, Wild West out there, and editors are daily faced with having to sift through what practices build credibility and which ones detract from it. Representatives of an APME-sponsored initiative to assess how to build online credibility.

**Continued on Page 23**
Elaine Kramer moderates.

• Pete Wevurski, vice president and managing editor, Bay Area News Group/MediaNews.
• Ann Clark, news executive, Gannett Co. Inc.
• Mark Colosimo, executive editor, Suburban Life publications, a chain of weeklies in Chicago.
• An Associated Press regional editor. The AP has organized a series of regional desks that serve members. They face many of the same challenges that newspapers do.

10:15 a.m.: Losing focus: Has the economy sapped efforts to build diverse staffs? Many newspapers have had to go through multiple rounds of layoffs. In the process many talented journalists of color have left newsrooms. What is the state of efforts to build diversity in newsrooms, and what are the pitfalls of this approach? Moderator will help change the face of the newsrooms. Three finalists talk about their entries. Short, 5-minute video and then a 15-minute conversation about each. Then votes are tallied and the awards are handed out. Bob Heisse, editor of the Centre Daily Times, moderates.

12:15 p.m.: Reporting on the Stimulus Plan: APME and its partner, the Sunshine Foundation, has looked at how billions of dollars are being spent and how little we really know about where the money is going. Panelists will share the latest findings, and discuss whether there has been any progress. David Ledford, executive editor of the News Journal in Wilmington, Del., moderates.

12:30 p.m.: AP Awards Lunch. AP staff members honored for excellence in competitions judged by APME board members.

1:30 p.m.: What newspapers need to be doing now. Amy Webb, president of Webb Media, shares with APME her thoughts on the way forward.

2:35 p.m.: Break

2:45 p.m.: Concurrent workshops

Some days don’t pay: That’s causing newspapers to eliminate them in some cases. What can we learn from the papers that have done this. Does this poison the well for ramping frequency back up when economic conditions improve? How do you explain this to your readers? What is the reaction, or was there reaction?

Consolidating desks: With costs eating into the bottom line, many newspapers are turning to centralized copy desks that handle layout and design for more than one publication. How does it work and what are the pitfalls of this approach? Moderator will be Martin Reynolds, editor, Oakland Tribune. Pete Wevurski, vice president and managing editor, Bay Area News Group/MediaNews.; Ann Clark, News Executive, Gannett Co. Inc.; Mark Colosimo, executive editor, Suburban Life publications, a chain of weeklies in Chicago.

What structure works best: Jobs are being eliminated, layers are disappearing. What is the best newsroom structure for your shop, and what do you need to know about how to get the best out of a fluid situation. And how do you sell this to a staff that may already have gone through multiple rounds of job cuts. Linda Cunningham, executive editor of the Rockford Register Star moderates a panel.

3:45 p.m.: Break

4 p.m.: Concurrent workshops

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5 p.m.: Break

6 p.m.: Election results announced and committees for the next year selected.

6:15 p.m.: Dinner on your own.

Friday, Oct. 30

9 a.m.: Social Media: Simple tools, expansive reach. How do you use blogs to create a deeper link with readers? How do you use linking in stories as a way to enhance reporting? And how to use RSS feeds and other search tools to make sure you create reporting that has more depth.

Kurt Greenbaum, social networking editor, St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Jack Lail, director of news innovation, Knoxville News Sentinel.

10:15 a.m.: Innovator of the Year Awards: What’s new and helping change the face of the newsrooms. Three finalists talk about their entries. Short, 5-minute video and then a 15-minute conversation about each. Then votes are tallied and the awards are handed out. Bob Heisse, editor of the Centre Daily Times, State College, Pa., moderates.

11:30 a.m.: Break

11:45 a.m.: APME Awards Luncheon. Awards of excellence are presented to APME member newspapers. APME President Bobbie Jo Buel delivers her State of the Association address.
Accomplished journalists from across the nation step forward as candidates to serve on the association’s national board of directors. The election concludes during the St. Louis conference.

Dennis Anderson

- **Title:** Managing Editor
- **Newspaper:** Lawrence Journal-World, Lawrence, Kan.
- **Recent accomplishments:** The Journal-World staff was thrilled to win the APME OnlineConvergence Award for the third consecutive year. Each award was for a different style of journalism presented in multimedia. For example, the first award was for an investigative report about forgotten mining communities that are literally sinking into the ground from undermining; next we were recognized for a fun project bringing to life Kansas University’s 2008 national basketball championship; and this year we won for an educational project examining natural resources beneath Kansas’ surface. These were all staff projects involving cooperation among many departments inside and outside the newsroom. I have also been involved in several projects to improve readership, including Go! a Monday lifestyles tabloid magazine that wraps the Journal-World.
- **APME activities:** I spoke at last year’s APME convention on the topic “Industry Cutbacks and Online Growth: The Impact on Journalism,” and have attended other APME conventions. I have also spoken to media groups about multimedia reporting and editing.
- **APME should:**
  - APME and The Associated Press must work together to ensure each is serving its members’ needs, from connecting with the audience to staff development. That can happen only by asking members about their concerns, listening to them and then reacting.
  - Help members — and their staff and ownership — better understand and promote opportunities to reach a larger audience using the Web and social media tools. This is especially important for smaller newspapers.
  - Educate our audience about the importance of maintaining and supporting a strong local media in their community.
  - **In my spare time:** I’m a dad, a husband and a Big Brother to a 12-year-old boy in Lawrence. My wife Julie and I have two sons, Eric, 17, and Thomas, 13. Julie and I enjoy watching our boys play baseball and hockey. I also coach Thomas’ traveling baseball team. I start and end each day taking our two dachshunds, Lorenzo and Francesca, on walks.

Mark Baldwin

- **Title:** General Manager/Executive Editor
- **Newspaper:** Stevens Point Journal, Stevens Point, Wis.
- **Career summary:** I’ve been in Gannett’s Central Wisconsin Media group since 2000, most of that time as executive editor of the Wausau Daily Herald. Since a July corporate restructuring, I’ve been GM/editor of the Stevens Point Journal, though I have groupwide responsibilities for staff development, project planning, recruiting and other functions. Before arriving in Wisconsin, I was managing editor of Gannett’s Star-Gazette of Elmira, N.Y., and I previously held a variety of editing positions at the Chicago Sun-Times, Wichita Eagle and Clearwater (Fla.) Sun. I’m a former lecturer in journalism at Northwestern University, my alma mater.
Continued from Page 24

- **Recent accomplishments:** Under my leadership, the Wausau Daily Herald in 2008 won the Wisconsin Newspaper Association’s award for overall general excellence, the second time we’d won in five years. I’ve also had a leading role in pushing the digital revolution in our newspapers group, and we dominate the online scene in Central Wisconsin. Through two rounds of layoffs over the past year, I’ve succeeded in keeping the content-gathering capabilities of our four-newspaper group largely intact.

- **APME activities:** At various points over the past eight years, I’ve been involved in the readership, innovation and diversity committees and have contributed a couple of pieces to the APME News. I was assistant coordinator of the Mall of Ideas at the Las Vegas conference, and am coordinating the Mall in St. Louis. I’ve also served as president of the Wisconsin AP Editors and remain on the executive committee of that group.

- **APME should:**
  - Given the way training and development budgets have been squeezed, APME must continue to place a priority on providing high-quality, low-cost training opportunities to newsrooms of all sizes, using NewsTrain, the Web and whatever other forums make sense.
  - The second priority may seem a bit gauzy, but it’s no less important: APME must help editors rediscover the “why” that got us all into the business. (And yes, indeed, I borrowed that idea from Butch Ward’s excellent presentation at last year’s conference in Las Vegas.) Tight finances across the industry have forced every editor to become more and more operationally focused - no surprise there, as we’ve all had to come up with new ways simply to get the paper out the door every day with fewer people than we’d like. If you’re not careful, it’s easy for nuts-and-bolts operational concerns to divert attention from the sources of inspiration that propelled us into the business in the first place and that ought to inspire us still - a passion for open government, a desire to provide coverage to those portions of society that often have no other voice, the sheer enjoyment of the written word. APME must use its resources to help keep those “whys” front and center.

- **In my spare time:** I enjoy spending time with my three daughters (when they’re around) and with my wife of 25 years, a group of women who constitute one of the funnier foursomes on the planet. I work out regularly, play some tennis, read (mostly history and biography) and try to keep the magazine pile in the family room from overtaking the house. And I’m always on the lookout for a good microbrew.

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**Cate Barron**

- **Title:** Managing Editor
- **Newspaper:** The Patriot-News, Harrisburg, PA
- **Career summary:** I’ve spent 30 years in journalism – most of that with The Patriot-News in Harrisburg, Pa., first as an assistant city editor and later as Sunday editor and features editor. I’ve been managing editor for seven years. My first job in print was reporting for The Sentinel, in Lewistown, Pa. I fell into the business right out of college when I took a job as news and sports director at a radio station in Lewistown.

I’m vice president on the Pennsylvania Associated Press Managing Editors board of directors and past president of the Pennsylvania Society of Newspaper Editors. I helped found the Pennsylvania chapter of the Freedom of Information Coalition and have been a Pulitzer Prize juror. I’m a frequent API discussion leader on topics including leadership, coping with change and brainstorming.

- **Recent accomplishments:** I helped guide the newsroom through a buyout that cut staff by 25 percent; a major redesign; a reorganized copy desk; a new staffing system for municipal coverage; a series of bureau closings; and several specialty publication launches — And that’s the past six months ... During my tenure as M.E., The Patriot-News has won three statewide Newspaper of the Year awards and was name one of E&P’s “Papers that Do It Right.”

- **APME activities:** As vice president of Pennsylvania APME, I’m helping lead an AP statewide fall audit of Pennsylvania’s new Open Records Law. I’m also involved in PAPME’s Wire Watch program monitoring how members use AP and what coverage areas they want to see improved.

- **APME should:**
  - Work with AP on its rate structure and content packages. AP’s monthly charge is such a huge part of everyone’s budget we must be sure we’re getting exactly what we need at the best price. APME should also be a strong advocate for more alternative story forms from AP — more breakouts, infographics, videos, analyses and behind-the-scenes packages that take stories beyond the standard breaking news format.

- **In my spare time:** I’m micromanaging our teenager’s search for the perfect college. I counsel our dog for his separation anxiety disorder. And I help my husband keep the rabbits out of our vegetable patch.

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**J.B. Bittner**

- **Title:** News Editor, Community Newspaper Holdings Inc., and editor, Stillwater News-Press, Stillwater, Okla.
- **Career summary:** I joined United Press International in Oklahoma City while still a student at Oklahoma State University. (Those of you too young to remember UPI please feel free to skip ahead.) After graduation I became UPI’s youngest bureau manager – staffing the UPI bureau in Tulsa and later in Wichita, Kan. I left UPI to become editor of a startup newspaper that for a time made Woodward, Okla., the nation’s smallest city with competing daily newspapers. I joined CNHI nine years ago as an
editor. I later was named CNHI Oklahoma bureau chief and then CNHI News Service deputy national editor. I became news editor in 2008. My work with CNHI has included editing our news service, coaching reporters, and helping launch the Elite Reporter national journalism project to train CNHI’s promising writers to produce meaningful in-depth projects that have gained attention throughout CNHI and outside the company. I maintain the CNHI News Service site with CNHI stories and columns of national interest, industry news and coaching blogs. This spring I returned to the newsroom – this time in Stillwater, Okla., while continuing in my news editor corporate position.

Recent accomplishments: Did she just say she is editing a newspaper again? In a small market? Paginating? Assigning stories? By choice? NOW?

Yes, and add to that being involved in multimedia training, mentoring, Tweeting and guiding heretofore print-oriented journalists forward in a new electronic world.

After a half-dozen years at the corporate level coaching, mentoring and training journalists at news organizations throughout CNHI I decided this spring it was time to take a step back – to move into one of our newsrooms and see how the video, reverse publishing, reporter as videographer and photographer, Web updates, meaningful writing, news readers can use, government watchdog – all that I was preaching was fitting into a real-world setting.

I took the step with the support of a CEO who was first to stand up and demand those reciting our industry’s eulogy stop and check their sources and a newsroom that has maintained quality work during a period of rapid change and downsizing. I was honored as the 2008 Suburban Newspapers of America “Editor of the Year” and awarded First Place for column writing from the Society of Professional Journalists, San Diego chapter, 2008. (The “Hand in Hand” columns recount the journey and aftermath as my wife died from lung cancer. http://www.nctimes.com/news/opinion/columnists/davy)

APME activities: I am a new member, so I have no track record with APME, but believe I can contribute especially to the group’s First Amendment-related activities.

APME should: Consider building benchmarking data by circulation categories for participating newsrooms in the form of confidential newsroom responses. It could cover a range of topics that might be useful for newsroom managers attempting to gauge the quality, productivity and best practices. For instance (and only by way of example): Content creator to content processor staffing ratios; locally produced content to wire service ratios; page production ratios per copy desk employee; per employee travel expense allocations; salary survey data. Subsequent data analysis might lead to “best practice” suggestions.

Above and beyond the Sounding Board feature, create a uniform feedback or “customer satisfaction” tool to advise AP.

Create a robust Web-based training resource that leverages the AP NewsTrain effort by digitally capturing part of those sessions and preserving that work, including session handouts as PDFs, and create a knowledge base for on-demand presentation. Beyond that, consider moving portions of the APME training effort to shorter, Webinar-styled productions that would allow more remote, resource-stretched newsrooms to participate more often.

In my spare time: I am an amateur bassist and play in both a worship band and a jazz trio with a coffee shop gig a la Woody Allen. My adult son and I build skateboards and surfboards in our garage workshop. (My broken leg last year had nothing to do with any of the above activities – but saying that it did would make for a more fascinating story.)

Continued from Page 25

Kent R. Davy

Title: Editor
Newspaper: North County Times, Escondido, Calif.

Career summary: I have a B.A. in English from the University of Nebraska and graduated in 1977 with a J.D. from the University of Nebraska College of Law. After several years of practicing law, including a couple of years as a Deputy Territorial Prosecutor on Guam, I gave up the law and started as reporter with the tiny Fulton (Mo.) Daily Sun-Gazette in 1984. I moved from there to upstate New York (The Citizen, Auburn, N.Y.), to downstate Illinois (Pekin Daily Times), and then to the Indiana suburbs of Chicago (Times of Northwest Indiana). In 1996, I took the post of editor of the North (San Diego) County Times, which was then hanging on for dear life.

Recent accomplishments: I have the good fortune to lead a resilient newsroom that has maintained quality work during a period of rapid change and downsizing. I was honored as the 2008 Suburban Newspapers of America “Editor of the Year” and awarded First Place for column writing from the Society of Professional Journalists, San Diego chapter, 2008. (The “Hand in Hand” columns recount the journey and aftermath as my wife died from lung cancer. http://www.nctimes.com/news/opinion/columnists/davy)

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Continued on Page 27
Laura Sellers-Earl

- **Title:** Director of Audience Development
- **Newspaper:** East Oregonian Publishing Co., Salem, Ore.
- **Career summary:** After 17 years with EOPC, I’ve shape-shifted from managing editor to online director to director of audience development, with many other title switches in between. We’re still searching for the right title that describes a role that includes all digital activities, brand development, partner opportunities, alternative products and whatever else that comes down the pike for our nine small newspapers and 14 Web sites. Oh, and we publish books, too. Prior to that I worked for Student Media at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and several other newspapers in Texas.

  In addition to APME, I am a member of the Online News Association (including being a past judge twice for the Online Journalism Awards), the Newspaper Association of America, where I was a past new media diversity fellow. I’m also a former fellow with the Knight Center for Specialized Journalism multimedia program.

- **Recent accomplishments:** We are currently remaking our 11 community Web sites on a new platform. This followed an extensive five-month vetting process, which I led, with almost 200 different attributes we were seeking. As a result of a circulation summit, I helped design and administer a database of front pages with the goal of improving rack sales. I also lead monthly idea-sharing sessions online with all our editors to improve not only our products, but increase communications. We’ve increased our digital media staff from just one (me) in 2000 to five today, including a multimedia specialist who helped us earn regional and state awards for video. We have a comprehensive digital media strategy and are expanding to other fields.

- **APME activities:** APME board of directors, 2000-2006; Awards tab design 2003-2005; Awards Committee chair 2005; Membership Committee chair 2004; Great Ideas session speaker 2004-06; revamping APME awards process 2003; Online Committee chair, 2001-02; helped create and judge APMEOnline Convergence Award, 2002; Great Journalism Online session leader, 2001-2002; Diversity committee, 2001-02; Program committee, 2000; student mentor, 1999-2006; student session speaker, 2001-2002; small newspapers committee, 1998-2001; organized or presented various other sessions.

- **APME should:** We should not only learn more from our readers and customers, but also talk more directly to those we serve. APME should help facilitate those conversations and give editors the tools they need to reach beyond the medium of yesterday and today to embrace the path of tomorrow.

  I believe APME offers practical tools for newsroom leaders and the times mandate that those tools grow and change with our audiences.

- **In my spare time:** I live in Astoria, Ore., with husband Carl, systems guy for the same company, and two Welsh terriers. I count my time with APME among the highlights of my career and the hard-working newsroom leaders I met through this organization among the best I have ever known. I hope to continue to serve the organization and journalism well. I also promise to finish off any ouzo left on the table.

J. Todd Foster

- **Title:** Managing Editor
- **Newspaper:** Bristol Herald Courier, Bristol, Va.
- **Career summary:** I have more than a quarter century’s experience as a hard-hitting journalist, mostly as an investigative reporter for such newspapers as The Oregonian, The Spokesman-Review (Spokane, Wash.), and the Pensacola News Journal. I crossed over to editing’s dark side six and a half years ago because I figured the best way to control my fellow inmates would be from a position as warden. I’ve worked for newspapers large and small and learned that circulation, salary and advertising revenues in no way equate to quality journalism, which can be practiced anywhere. I was part of a Pulitzer-finalist team in Spokane for coverage of Ruby Ridge, Idaho, and white separatist Randy Weaver.

- **Recent accomplishments:** In the same month, I landed an interview with President Barack Obama, completed a social-networking fellowship through the Knight Digital Media Center at the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School for Communication, and launched a 15-day series on financial disclosure forms – specifically how these forms are required of all public officials in Tennessee and Virginia but often are not completed, contain omissions or include outright errors.

- **APME activities:** Joined APME’s 2008 earmarks project, hosted APME’s elfin editor Mel in 2007 and gave him a tour of the Bristol Motor Speedway, and led a project that was an APME national finalist in 2007 for best multimedia series.

- **APME should:** Do more outreach for community newspapers.

- **In my spare time:** I sleep.

>> CANDIDATES Continued on Page 28
Joe Hight

Title: Director of Information and Development
Newspaper: The Oklahoman, Oklahoma City, Okla.
Career summary: I am The Oklahoman/NewsOK.com’s director of information and development and have been in journalism as a reporter, editor or director for more than 29 years. I was a managing editor before being named to my current position, which includes, among other duties, the supervision of new information strategies within the News and Information Center and staff development for both print and online initiatives.

Recent accomplishments: I served for two terms as president of the Dart Center for Journalism & Trauma, an international organization based at Columbia University. I authored and co-authored print and online booklets and columns that are still used by the Dart Center, including “Tragedies & Journalists: A Guide for More Effective Coverage,” and a book on leadership during crisis that will be published soon. I also co-founded the People and the Media Program at the University of Central Oklahoma.

In my spare time: I dedicate myself to my family. My wife, Nan, and I have two children – Elena, a junior at Washington University in St. Louis, and Elyse, a sophomore at Bishop McGuinness High School in Oklahoma City. I’m also involved in local community causes, including the leadership of them.

Laura Kessel

Title: Managing Editor
Newspaper: The News-Herald, Willoughby, Ohio
Career summary: I have been managing editor at The News-Herald (Journal Register Co.) for four years, and have a weekly column that appears on the Comment section. I moved up from service as news editor for five years. Prior to that, I served as a copy editor and page designer here at The News-Herald; from 1994-1997 at the Valley News-Dispatch/ North Hills News Record (Gannett) in Tarentum, Pa; and from 1992-1994 at The Morning Journal (Journal Register Co.) in Lorain, Ohio. I served an internship at the Battle Creek Enquirer in Battle Creek, Mich., in summer 1990.

Recent accomplishments: In May, I was elected to an at-large seat on the Associated Press Society of Ohio’s Board of Trustees. In 2006, I was named best columnist by Suburban Newspapers of America; and in 2005, I was named best editorial writer in Ohio by the APSO. This year, I joined with APME Board Member Alan Miller at a multimedia conference in Columbus, sharing 30 ideas for multimedia stories during a lunch-time address.

APME activities: This marks my third consecutive APME convention.

APME should: Continue its push to educate journalists on the future of journalism. Our business sometimes changes by the hour, and it’s important that we understand the new ways we can get our stories, photos and message out to readers and users of
our Web sites. By sharing techniques and methods, we will stay at least on the same speed as the technology that is available. Now’s not a time to be afraid. It’s a time to embrace our future and take control of our own destiny. As we do so, and learn what’s available, we can share it with those around us and save ourselves.

In my spare time: I’m a movie fan who also loves to cook and shops far more than I should. I enjoy traveling, and have become a fitness fanatic, working out five days a week.

Jack Lail

Title: Director of News Innovation
Newspaper: Knoxville News Sentinel, Knoxville, Tenn.

Career summary: Newspaper journalist who made the leap to online in the mid-1990s and has spent the last 15 years pioneering what we once called online journalism, what we now call “digital,” and what we’ll soon just call “journalism.”

Recent accomplishments: Launched a redesign of our knoxnews/govolsxtra Web sites, help organize an Online Credibility Roundtable on Comments that has had continuing discussion, helped implement a large-scale training effort in the newsroom on digital skills on topics ranging from simple HTML to what is Twitter, was a presenter at an API workshop in Murfressboro, Tenn., organized a one-day workshop sponsored by ONA at the Freedom Forum in Nashville, and will appear on a panel in late August at the SPJ National Convention.

APME activities: Currently serving a one-year term on the board, helped organize an Online Credibility Roundtable on Comments in May, participating in a panel session at the convention, and have written a couple pieces for the APME magazine.

APME should: Take the lead in helping newsrooms evolve as the media landscape changes, seeking out innovative approaches and initiatives, gathering information and data on common issues, and highlighting success stories.

In my spare time: I blog at jacklail.com, hang out on Twitter and spend a lot of time in baseball parks.

Carole Tarrant

Title: Editor
Newspaper: The Roanoke Times, Roanoke, Va.

Career summary: I joined The Roanoke Times in 2005 and was named editor in 2007. Prior to that, I was managing editor at The Forum in Fargo, N.D., an editor and reporter at The Tampa (Fla.) Tribune and a copy editor at The Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser.

Recent accomplishments: During my time in Roanoke we’ve been repeatedly recognized on the national level for our online journalism. The latest came from Pictures of the Year International (documentary project of the year) and the Casey Medals for Meritorious Journalism (best multimedia project). In 2007, we were cited by Editor & Publisher as one of “10 That Do It Right” after our coverage of the Virginia Tech shootings. Our paper/Web site is a three-time winner of APME’s Online Convergence Award and won Virginia’s top public service journalism award the past two years.

APME activities: Served on the APME board since 2007; assisted in Las Vegas convention planning; served on membership, online, diversity, credibility and APME Update committees; spoke as a panelist at the 2003, 2004 and 2007 conventions.

APME should: Continue to bring inexpensive but worthwhile training to our regions with NewsTrain; look for more ways to do Webinar training, recognizing our travel budgets have been nuked; serve as a strong conduit to AP regarding the real-world budget and readership issues in our newsrooms.

In my spare time: I dream about having spare time.

Alan English

The executive editor of The Augusta (Ga.) Chronicle, was recently appointed to fill an unexpired term on the board of directors of the Associated Press Managing Editors. He goes before the membership as a board candidate in this election. A full profile of English was not available at press time for APME News. English’s service to the association has included planning and logistics for recent annual conferences. English joined the Chronicle in April after five years as executive editor of the Times of Shreveport, La., where he also spent four years as managing editor. He started as a photographer with the Knoxville (Tenn.) Journal in 1987. He worked as a photo editor for several newspapers, was photo director for Gannett Suburban Newspapers in White Plains, N.Y., and assistant managing editor for photography at the Democrat and Chronicle in Rochester, N.Y.
Southeastern Conference revises media policy following protests

Responding to a protest by the Associated Press Managing Editors and three other media organizations, the Southeastern Conference issued new guidelines for media coverage of football games just two weeks before the season kicked off.

The revision followed discussions that involved SEC Commissioner Mike Slive and representatives of APME, Associated Press Sports Editors, the American Society of News Editors and the Radio and Television News Association.

Those groups complained that new guidelines would hinder coverage of games through news outlets on the Internet.

"It's a very significant step forward from where this whole thing began," David Tomlin, AP's associate general counsel, said of the revised credential issued Aug. 27. "It's still not going to be universally acceptable by any means to all news media. But the SEC has clearly tried very hard to address some of the concerns."

The credential dispute threatened coverage of the league's Sept. 5 season opening weekend. AP, Media General and Gannett Co., among other news companies, had directed staff to not sign early versions of the SEC credential form.

"We feel we've addressed most of the concerns that were brought to our attention by media associations who filed the complaint with us," SEC associate commissioner Charles Bloom said. "We took care of most of the major issues right at the beginning of the review process."

John Cherwa, chair of the APSE legal affairs committee, said the media organizations wouldn't issue a formal recommendation about the latest credential, leaving it up to individual members to decide whether it meets their demands.

One remaining concern was that television stations would only be allowed to show game highlights on the Internet as part of a simulcast with their regular newscast. "There were some things that were important to us that we felt we needed to keep," Bloom said. "Mainly, the digital rights on the Internet and game footage on the Internet."

The SEC will make game highlights available to newspaper Web sites at no cost through its own, soon-to-be-launched digital network. Also, there are no in-game restrictions on the use of social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook, as long as they are not used to provide play-by-play descriptions.

"There's been a lot of improvements since last week, and some of the credit goes to the SEC for being responsive to our concerns," Cherwa said. "No, we didn't get everything we wanted. It's not a perfect credential. But we got some stuff that was important to us." For example, media outlets have unlimited rights to all audio and video they produce outside the game itself. Also, proposed restrictions on the use and resale of photographs were removed from the revised guidelines.

"One thing I am sure of is this is an improved credential from where we started," Cherwa said. "And the SEC is willing to continue the dialogue with us."

Poynter's Jill Geisler to offer free personal coaching at APME conference in St. Louis

The Poynter Institute's Jill Geisler is offering personal coaching to four editors at the APME training conference in St. Louis. Each session will take place the morning of Wednesday, Oct. 28, just before the conference opens. Jill's interactive and inspiring teaching helps leaders break old habits and create new successes in their changing organizations. She'll also speak in a general session during the St. Louis conference, but it's first-come, first-served for this personal coaching. To snag a spot, register for the APME conference now, then reserve a coaching session by emailing APME executive director Mark Mittelstadt, mmittelstadt@ap.org.

Jill loved leading a newsroom; now she helps other journalists master that responsibility. She heads the Leadership and Management Group of the Poynter Institute, the country's pre-eminent, non-profit school dedicated to the improvement of journalism. She is responsible for the Institute's seminars for print, broadcast and online managers. At the Institute and in newsrooms and workshops from New York to New Zealand, she has helped thousands of managers. Her teaching and coaching are distinguished by humanity, humor and a passion for quality journalism.

She joined Poynter's small and special faculty in 1998, after a 26-year career in broadcast journalism and several walls full of national and local journalism honors. She brought experience in reporting, producing, anchoring and special expertise in management. Jill became the country's first female news director of a major market network affiliate at the age of 27.

She built an award-winning newsroom culture at WITI in Milwaukee. Hers was a teaching newsroom, where coaching and collaboration were as important as ethics and enterprise; where fun and families mattered, too.

Jill is the perfect teacher for the APME conference, "Inspiration Starts Here." We'll also hear from editors whose newsrooms underwent radical change and still produce top-quality journalism. Tech guru Amy Webb will show how to preserve traditional journalism practices and watchdog reporting by exploiting digital technology. The three finalists for innovator of the year will show off their projects. And that's just a sampling of what you'll learn if you join us in St. Louis.
A local construction worker, suspended from a crane, rescues a woman who fell into the Des Moines River near the Center Street Dam in downtown Des Moines, Iowa Tuesday, June 30, 2009. A man in his 50s found floating downriver from the scene was pronounced dead.

A mud covered competitor in the annual Calf Scramble at the Clark County Fair in Springfield, Ohio holds onto the 250-pound calf he caught as he tries to drag the animal through several inches of mud to a circle Friday, July 31, 2009. The competitors who get their animal into the circle get to keep the calf and bring it to the fair next year.
Cost-cutting newspapers are losing many of their youngest reporters, editors and photographers at the same time publishers are trying to break some of their old habits and learn new tricks on the Internet.

The findings emerged in a recent survey conducted by the Associated Press Managing Editors, an industry group. The report suggests the massive staff cuts at newspapers across the United States will make it even more difficult for the industry to adapt and remain relevant in the age of digital media.

Most of the 95 editors responding to the August survey said their newsroom staffs had shrunk by more than 10 percent during the past year. And workers between 18 and 35 years old represented the largest age group affected by the layoffs, buyouts and attrition, the survey found.

Meanwhile, the survey’s respondents indicated minorities working in newsrooms were among the demographic groups least affected by the cutbacks.

Most of the survey respondents said cultivating an ethnically diverse staff remains a high priority, even as their newsrooms shrink. That echoes an April survey from the American Society of News Editors, which found that daily newspapers cut 5,900 newsroom jobs in 2008 - but maintained the percentage of minorities at roughly 13 percent.

The more recent survey by the Associated Press Managing Editors didn’t seek to quantify the percentage of minorities currently working at newspapers. But diversity isn’t just about ethnicity, said Tom Kearney, managing editor of the Stowe Reporter, a weekly newspaper in Vermont.

“Because Vermont is sooooo white, diversity doesn’t involve race as much as it does gender and background,” Kearney wrote in his survey response.

Men have been harder hit by the past year’s cutbacks than women, according to the newspaper editors who answered the APME survey.

The 13-question poll didn’t mine a representative sample of
the roughly 1,400 daily newspapers in the United States. Still, the findings highlight how staff reductions are making it harder for many newspapers to cater to the interests and needs of their audiences.

"We did not have enough diversity to begin with," wrote Lyle Muller, managing editor of The Gazette in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. "Cutting positions put us more at risk. Meanwhile, our community is becoming more diverse so we are getting farther behind in our efforts to reflect it."

Retaining younger workers may be more important than ever as the Internet reshapes the way stories and photographs are assembled and presented. While many older journalists are adapting, the adjustment presumably isn’t as difficult for younger workers who have grown up with the Internet and may have honed their digital skills in college. Having the viewpoints of younger workers also helps newspapers identify trends and issues affecting younger generations.

The Huntsville Times in Alabama has been relying on its younger reporters to help teach everyone else in the newsroom how to tap into popular sites like Facebook and MySpace to find story ideas and sources, said Curtis Coghlan, the newspaper’s managing editor.

"It really has helped our coverage become younger (in tone) and more in touch with what’s going on in the community," Coghlan said. "It has really helped us get more diverse stories into the paper faster."

Publishers often offer buyouts or early-retirement packages to older workers in hopes of retaining their younger - and typically lower paid – employees, said newspaper analyst Ken Doctor of Outsell Inc. But when the job cutting dictates layoffs, union rules sometimes handcuff management by requiring workers with the least tenure to be shown the door first, Doctor said.

Persuading current and prospective workers that newspapers remain an attractive career option is getting more difficult as the industry’s financial woes mount. Nearly one-quarter of the newspaper industry’s annual advertising sales have evaporated during the last two years, and analysts don’t expect all of it to come back after the U.S. economy recovers from the longest recession since World War II.

The gloomy outlook reflects a widely held belief that advertisers will increasingly shift spend more of their marketing money to the Internet. Newspapers have been building up their Web sites to capitalize on the shift, but online ads don’t generate nearly as much revenue as print ads.

With less money coming into newspapers, a large number of employees are seeking better opportunities in other industries that offer more job security, according to the survey.

"Newspapers have lost of lot of their mojo," Doctor said. "If you are 25 or 35 (years old), you are going to be part of an industry that is going to thrive in the future. That is not the way newspapers are perceived right now, rightly or wrongly."

- Ken Doctor, newspaper analyst of Outsell Inc.

Newspapers have lost of lot of their mojo. If you are 25 or 35 (years old), you are going to be part of an industry that is going to thrive in the future.

Many editors responding to the survey seemed to understand the reasons for the defections, citing lengthy freezes on pay and hiring that have made newsroom jobs less enjoyable.

To lure and retain workers, newspaper publishers “should increase their pay and benefits and treat people with kindness and dignity,” wrote Kristen Mustain, editor of The Grove Sun in Oklahoma.

Other editors responding to the survey seemed resigned to finding ways to maintain their newspapers’ standards with a less diverse staff.

The Leaf-Chronicle in Clarksville, Tenn., is hoping better use of the Web can help offset its recent reductions in staff.

"We still know what to do (on diversity),” wrote Richard Stevens, The Leaf-Chronicle’s executive editor. “It’s just harder and harder to do it with fewer resources. A main challenge now is to understand how diverse readers are using digital tools, and to remember diversity concepts when shaping digital content.”
What big names will you miss if you skip APME’s October conference?

For more than 75 years, the Associated Press Managing Editors have gathered in conference each year to celebrate successes, share ideas and bear witness to interesting people in and out of our industry. Please join us Oct. 28-30 in St. Louis for what promises to be another milestone in our conference tradition. For more information on registration and schedule, go to APME.com.

Bob Hope entertains at the 1951 APME convention in San Francisco. (AP Photo)
Officers

• Vice President: Otis Sanford, The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, Tenn.
• Secretary: Hollis Towns, Asbury Park Press, Neptune, N.J.
• Treasurer: Jan Touney, Quad-City Times, Davenport, Iowa

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(Officers above plus)

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• AP Senior Vice President/Executive Editor: Kathleen Carroll, New York
• AP Vice President/Senior Managing Editor for International News: John Daniszewski, New York
• AP Vice President/Senior Managing Editor for National News: Michael Oreskes, New York
• Conference Program: Jon Broadbooks, The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ill.

Directors

(Terms expiring in 2009)

• Calvin Stovall, Press & Sun-Bulletin, Binghamton, N.Y.
• Ken Tuck, The Dothan (Ala.) Eagle
• Andrew Oppmann, The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro, Tenn.; The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville, Tenn.
• Peter Kovacs, The Times-Picayune, New Orleans, La.
• Carole Tarrant, The Roanoke (Va.) Times

Committee Chairs

• First Amendment:
  David Bailey, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock, Ark.
• Diversity:
  Calvin Stovall, Press & Sun-Bulletin, Binghamton, N.Y.
• Great Ideas:
  Kurt Franck, The Blade, Toledo, Ohio, and Terry Orme, Salt Lake Tribune, Salt Lake City, Utah
• Nominations and Elections:
  Carole Tarrant, The Roanoke (Va.) Times
• Sounding Board:
  Alan D. Miller, The Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch, and Bob Stover, Florida Today, Melbourne, Fla.
• Innovation:
  Bob Heisse, Centre Daily Times, State College, Pa.
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  Peggy Bellows, Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch
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