

Vines attends business seminar

Georgiana Vines of ETSPJ was one of 12 fellows attending a Business Journalism Professors Seminar in January at the Donald W. Reynolds National Center for Business Journalism at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University, in Tempe.

The three and one-half-day program featured Chris Roush of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; James Gentry, professor and former dean at the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Kansas; Josh Mills, professor of business journalism at Baruch College/CUNY in New York City; and Jodi Schneider, economics and financial editor of the Congressional Quarterly.

Vines, retired associate editor of the Knoxville News Sentinel, teaches public affairs reporting at the University of Tennessee. UT is considering adding a business journalism course as an elective in the fall of 2008.

ETSPJ gives to McMahan scholarship

ETSPJ has contributed \$100 to a UT journalism scholarship bearing the name of Ron McMahan, who died Feb. 19 in Naples, Fla. He was a Front Page Follies honoree a number of years ago.

Regions 12 and 8 Spring Conference

Make plans to attend the Regions 12 and 8 SPJ Spring Conference March 28 and 29 on the Loyola University campus. Meet colleagues from Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas for professional development and fun.

Spring Conferences are professional development meetings bringing area journalists, students and journalism educators together in one place to hear from industry experts on topics ranging from improving writing to leveraging technology in today's new media climate. Networking opportunities at the conferences allow participants to build relationships that can lead to the sharing of best practices in newsrooms.

Contest under way

The Society of Professional Journalists wants to increase high school students' knowledge and understanding of the importance of the free news media to our lives. So, for the first time this year, ETSPJ is conducting a contest in some area schools. Larry Van Guildler, editor of the Halls Shopper-News, is serving as chairman.

The Knoxville native delivered The Knoxville Journal as a boy, became a reporter while a student at UT and fulfilled his dream when he became Journal editor and owner. He sold the paper in 1988.

Check for details on www.spj.org.

Sonny Albarado, projects editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, is Region 12 director. Earlier he was business editor of The Commercial Appeal, Memphis.

ETSPJ has arranged a program that will focus on the Jack McElroy (New Sentinel) vs. Knox County Commission lawsuit.

Any SPJ member can attend.

To read more about it, go to the ETSPJ Web site, <http://etspj.org/nationalregional-spj/>.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March - ETSPJ High School Essay Contest judging under way (deadline is past)

March 2 - ETSPJ board meeting, 5:30 p.m., Mandarin House West, Knoxville

March 6 - Open meetings program, 7 p.m., Shiloh Room, UT Student Center, Knoxville

March 25 - Alfred and Julia Hill Lecture, 8 p.m., UT. Alan Boyle, MSNBC science correspondent, "Science Reporting in a Tabloid Culture"

March 28-30 - Regions 12 & 8 spring conference, New Orleans, La.

May 9 - Golden Press Card banquet, The Foundry, Knoxville

June 4-6 - Ted Scripps Leadership Institute, Indianapolis

July 19 - Front Page Follies, Knoxville Convention Center

Sept. 4-7 - SPJ National Convention & Journalism Conference, Atlanta



The ETSPJ guy

BY JOHN HUOTARI
ETSPJ president

Keeping the 'watchdog' alive

In January, I wrote a series for The Oak Ridger on the compensations earned by leaders of local nonprofit organizations. I was surprised at how many people told me they enjoyed the series; I probably got more feedback from that one series than I had from my previous two years worth of stories combined.

While the series itself might not have been groundbreaking, I did learn a lesson from talking to readers about it. The lesson is: People have a hunger for investigative reporting. They have ideas about issues they think journalists ought to look into. They want us to hold governments and other groups accountable. And they want reporters to dig deeper to find new information, going beyond press conferences, meetings and speeches.

Those of you who live in Knox County already know this. Last year, residents in your county overwhelmingly supported the media's efforts to expose government wrongdoing.

Unfortunately, though, some people think this kind of reporting will be harder to do as industry layoffs and hiring freezes continue, and staff sizes shrink. Less reporting could mean that citizens would know less about their governments, businesses and other organizations. That could



HUOTARI

ETSPJ sets FOI workshop

The East Tennessee Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists has scheduled an open government workshop. Journalists and other interested people who want to attend public meetings and/or look at public records are invited.

It will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 6, in the Shiloh Room of the University Center (UC) in Knoxville. ETSPJ John Huotari is handling arrangements.

Co-sponsor is the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy, Knoxville.

The workshop will teach people what records and meetings are open to the public under Tennessee law and what to do if one is denied access.

Panelists will be Don Dare, WATE-TV, Knoxville; Frank Gibson, executive director of the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government, Nashville; David Keim, assistant managing editor, News Sentinel, Knoxville; and state Sen. Randy McNally, chairman of the legislature's open govern-

ment committee, Oak Ridge.

Jamie Foster, news director, WATE-TV, will serve as moderator.

Handouts on pertinent topics will be provided.

Parking is available at the UC garage (for a fee) and free at a surface lot (S9) just south of the UC. To get to the UC from Cumberland Ave., turn south onto Philip Fulmer Way a block east of 16th St. The UC is on the corner, and the garage is just beyond the UC. A little farther south is parking lot S-9 at the corner of Andy Holt Ave. and Philip Fulmer Way. This is generally available in the evenings at no cost unless there's a sporting event or concert.

One can see the campus building locator at www.utk.edu/maps/buildings/.

Local dues will be waived for non-members attending this seminar and completing membership applications and submitting national dues.

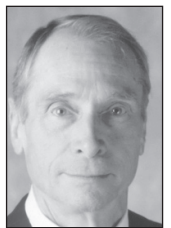
Journalists to honor McElroy and Hollow

The East Tennessee Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (ETSPJ) will honor Knoxville News Sentinel Editor Jack McElroy and Knoxville Attorney Richard L. (Rick) Hollow for defending the state's Open Meetings Act in a case that continues to reverberate in Knox County government.

McElroy and Hollow will be recognized for their contributions to open government during the 2008 Front Page Follies show the evening of Saturday, July 19, at the Knoxville Convention Center.



McELROY



HOLLOW

In October, a jury agreed with a lawsuit brought by McElroy that Knox County commissioners violated the law during closed-door sessions in January 2007.