



PRESIDENT INFORMATION

President's Name: Gregory Cancelada
Term Expires: May 2008
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NATIONAL AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATION

At 2006 Convention? Yes
Representative(s) at Convention: Greg Cancelada
At 2006 Regional Conference? Yes
Representative(s) at Regional Conference: Jeff Douglas

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Description of Recruitment Activities:
After a long period of dormancy, the St. Louis Pro Chapter has reactivated. We spent most of our inaugural year reintroducing ourselves to the St. Louis media community, organizing a regional conference and reaching out to student journalists. While our official roster lists 37 members, we count about two dozen active individuals, some of whom are not yet official members. We hope to soon convert them into members and harness their energy and enthusiasm toward recruiting and retaining more members.

We sent a letter inviting nearly 500 local journalists to join SPJ in January. Reaction was positive with many pledges to join, but resulted in only a few additions to our roster. To follow up, we will be visiting media outlets and universities in the next six months in our recruiting efforts.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

Description of Retention Activities: Our chapter sponsors a Happy Hour on the fourth Thursday of every month. We have become a fixture a local pub, The Royale, that is a favorite of the St. Louis media. The events are a crucial part of membership retention as we mix, mingle, network and discuss topics of interest to journalists. Some lively ethical discussions take place over beer and burgers at these events, which often draw 20 or more people.

Programs such as our monthly luncheons are also both recruiting opportunities and an opportunity to cement our relationship with existing members by giving them substantial discussions about topics of interest and importance.

Our Working Journalism committee is becoming an increasingly important part of membership recruitment and retention. We are crafting wallet cards to explain sunshine and shield laws in both Missouri and Illinois.

CHAPTER PROGRAMMING

Diversity Project or Program? Yes

Description of Program: We hosted a March panel about the role of niche publications aimed at covering diverse local communities and what journalists can do to promote more diverse voices in the newsroom. The panelists included Sylvester Brown, Post-Dispatch columnist and former publisher of an African-American publication; Robert Cohn, editor-in-chief emeritus, St. Louis Jewish Light; and Pam Schneider, publisher, The Vital Voice, a weekly aimed at the local gay, lesbian and transgendered community

FOI Project or Program? Yes

St. Louis Pro Chapter
2007 Annual Report (May 1 to April 30)
Submitted June 1, 2007

Description of Program: In September, we held a panel on FOIA access in Missouri and Illinois, discussing how to seek out public records and what to do if requests are denied. The award-winning panelists included Scott Reeder, the Small Newspaper Group's Springfield, Ill., bureau chief; Carolyn Tuft, an investigative reporter with the Post-Dispatch; and Mike Owens, an investigative reporter with KMOV-TV (CBS).

We also had a strong FOIA program at the SPJ Regional 7 conference, held April 14, 2007. Charles Davis, associate professor of journalism at the University of Missouri - Columbia, talked about how to regularly using FOIA on a beat.

Ethics Project or Program? Yes

Description of Program: Many of the programs the chapter produced had an ethics component -- last month, a panel of food, art and music critics, for example, spent quite a bit of time discussing the ethical compass they use in deciding what to review and issues regarding free tickets, etc. Our strongest ethics program of the year was part of the SPJ Region 7 conference, held April 14, 2007, which the chapter organized and hosted. George Kennedy, a professor at the University of Missouri school of journalism, gave a presentation entitled, "Are journalists biased? Of course we are, and that's a good thing."

Kennedy discussed how many of the tenets of objective journalism -- acting independently, giving voice to the voiceless, investigating wrongdoing -- have come to be seen by politicians and the public as "liberal" traits. So, much of the time, when journalists are accused of bias, we're merely doing our jobs. It was a perspective on the bias issue that many in the audience had never heard before.

Another conference discussion with a strong ethics component was led by KMOX radio veteran Bob Hamilton. He discussed ethical quandaries he's faced -- and ethical compromises he has seen others make -- in a long newscasting career. Bob was critical of broadcast media for their refusal, in many cases, to issue corrections when they've made errors.

Project Watchdog Project or Program? Yes
Description of Program: We held an October panel that discussed the problem of consolidating cor-

porate media ownership affecting coverage of local issues and editorial independence with the media. Panelists included Jeff Gordon, president of the St. Louis Newspaper Guild; Dave Ervin, vice president/general manager, KMOX 1120; William A. Lanese, vice president/general manager, KPLR-TV Channel 11 CW; Alvin Reid, city editor, St. Louis American; Ed Bishop, editor/general manager, St. Louis Journalism Review; and Antonio French, PubDef.net.

We also plan on hosting a reverse press conference later this year.

Participate in Service Project? Yes

Description of Program: The SPJ local chapter sponsored the Region 7 Conference on April 14. About 100 people attended the event. (A program will be send via email)

Other Programs/Activities: A November panel on the challenges of finding reliable sources and navigating the use of unnamed sources. Panelists included Megan Lynch, the investigative reporter at Newstalk 1120 KMOX; Jeremy Kohler, reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch since 1998; Chuck Maulden, director of news operations at NewsChannel 5 KSDK-TV.

A January panel on working with the law enforcement and dealing with attempts to restrict reporting or access. Panelists include Pat Gauen, public safety editor of the St. Louis-Post-Dispatch; Ed Rich, manager of the assignment desk at KSDK; Heather Ratcliffe, police reporter, St. Louis Post-Dispatch; Richard Wilkes, director of communications, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department; Sgt. Sam Dotson, aide to Chief Joe Mokwa, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department; Lt. Steve Lewis, public information officer, Chesterfield Police; Corporal Jeff Meyer, public information officer, Town and Country Police.

We also have a monthly Happy Hour that allows professionals to interact, exchange ideas and network in an informal setting.

CHAPTER FUND RAISING

Successful Fund-raising Programs: Most of our fundraising efforts this year centered around the regional conference held in St. Louis April 13-14. We were able to get support from several journalism non-profit groups, universities, and media outlets raising a total of \$8,500.

We have also held two book sales with the help of Marion Street Press in Chicago. The first was held in January at the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, where we raised nearly \$100 and got information out to print journalists about the revival of our chapter. The second was held at the regional conference and raised about \$120.

We're in the planning stages for several events this fall, including a trivia night and a "reverse" press conference, where elected officials and the public will get the chance to ask a few well-known local journalists questions.

CHAPTER COMMUNICATIONS

Methods of Communication: The St. Louis chapter leadership communicates internally via electronic mail and in person at regular meetings. Our chapter website located at <http://stlspj.org> uses Word-Press to manage the content in a blog-style format. Leadership is authorized to post new information so that it is instantly available on the web. RSS feeds allow people to subscribe to our site. Search engines such as Google are routinely "pinged" with each new entry so as to make our site easier to find in the future.

Our website, still in its early stages of development, includes links to websites including SPJ and Missouri's Sunshine Law information site.

We currently have an email list of about 325 people in the journalism community -- students, professionals, activists, public relations people -- who receive our events announcements.

And we also use "snail mail" for directed mailings to SPJ members.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Comments: Though we don't have a separate educational foundation, we donate money (\$1,000 this year) and a judge to the Journalism Foundation, a local scholarship fund for students studying journalism.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Institution: U.S. Bank

Cash on Hand as of 4/1/07: \$6,767.17

Investments on Hand as of 4/1/07: \$1,500

Total Cash, Investments and Assets: \$8,267.17
Outstanding Debts: \$0

Restricted Funds: \$1,500 (For scholarships)

Closing Balance: \$8,637.51

FINANCIAL RECORD REVIEW PERFORMED BY:

Reviewer #1 Name: Greg Cancelada

Reviewer #2 Name: David Nicklaus

Reviewer #3 Name: Mary Jo Feldstein

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