

# Nebraska Press Women

March 2016



## NPW's 70th anniversary conference set for April 23

Register by April 8 for spring conference

*By Ruth Brown*

Circle Friday, April 8, on your calendar and write yourself a note to make sure you have registered for the Spring NPW Conference and booked a room at the Red Roof Inn in Lincoln.

You don't want to miss NPW's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference on Saturday, April 23, at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln: national speakers, lots of awards, giveaways, three meals and cake, too.

Headlining the conference will be Nebraska native Jane Hirt, former *Chicago Tribune* vice president and managing editor, who will speak at 10 a.m. on "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Journalist: Adapt or Quit."

A 1982 UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications graduate, Hirt embodies the conference theme, "Embracing the Future. Respecting the Past."

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Photo by Sherry Thompson  
Andersen Hall, 16th and Q streets in Lincoln, is where parking and registration take place for NPW's special 70th anniversary convention. April 23 convention co-hosts (from left) Cheryl Alberts Irwin, Molly Klocksinn and Ruth Brown and other NPW members are helping plan the event.

## Andersen Hall of Fame honorees to be recognized April 23

*By Cheryl Alberts Irwin*

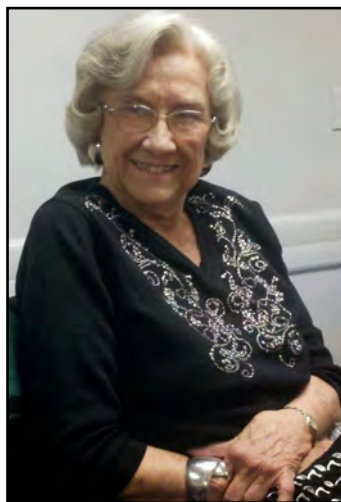
The two honorees to be inducted into the Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame spent their careers – a sum of 75 years -- as colleagues working at the *North Platte Telegraph*.

Mary Ann Koch Blackledge and Sharron Hollen, both of North Platte, will be recognized April 23 at Nebraska Press Women's spring convention luncheon in Lincoln.

Both were and are committed to their craft and to the people in the *Telegraph* coverage area, at one time 22 counties. Hollen was a reporter for 48 years, covering every beat from 1962-2010. Blackledge found her true calling as regional editor in her 27 years at the paper, from 1968-1995.

As editor, writer and "Dear People" columnist, Black-

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(Courtesy of Mary Bargman Crawford)  
**MARY ANN BLACKLEDGE**



(Courtesy of North Platte Telegraph)  
**SHARRON HOLLEN**

**Spring conference details on page 4-5**

# Happy Anniversary, Nebraska Press Women!

## President's Column by Sherry Thompson

I hope that you will join me April 23 at the spring conference in Lincoln as we officially kick off our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. With the theme “Embracing the Future, Respecting the Past,” the conference will pay tribute to NPW’s rich past, while also providing opportunities for participants to broaden their knowledge of topics important to today’s communicators.

When the 40 original members of what was then the Nebraska Women’s Press Club gathered for the first time on March 22, 1946, the Nebraska Press Association was not yet open to women. We can only envision the dynamics of that meeting – most likely an energetic and determined group of journalists who realized the benefits of professional development opportunities and camaraderie.

Over the last seven decades, Nebraska Press Women has continued to provide these same opportunities – and so much more. Membership has expanded to include diverse communications professionals working in the media, in public relations and advertising, as authors and freelance writers and more.

As we move into the next decade, Nebraska Press Women is doing so with a renewed energy and focus on ensuring that we are meeting the ever-changing needs of our members, and that we reach out to the next generation of journalists.

Much has changed in our field during the last 70 years, and it’s inevitable that changes will continue to occur. How better to embrace the future than by being an active member of NPW?

## Are you part of the NPW Facebook group?

Networking is one of the biggest benefits of being a Nebraska Press Women member. It’s always great to connect with other communicators at conferences and exchange ideas. Now, those connections can continue throughout the year. The NPW Facebook group is a members-only forum where participants can pose questions to their peers, post job openings, share interesting articles, join in conversations and more. The group also makes it easier to keep up with NPW news posts.

If you are on Facebook and aren’t yet part of the group, search for “Nebraska Press Women” closed group and request to join it. While you are at it, be sure to “like” the Nebraska Press Women public page if you have not already done so.

Once you are part of the group, please use it and keep the networking going.

Each month, Professional Development Director Jill Claflin shares items she’s found particularly thought-provoking from a communications perspective in the PD Digest that she emails members. Links to the original articles are provided, along with discussion questions. Members are encouraged to share thoughts on the topics in the email chain or in the NPW Facebook group.

NPW’s action plan, “Looking to the Future,” was officially launched in October. Team leaders and members have begun to implement a number of the action steps – all in an effort to ensure that NPW continues to grow and thrive.

The spring conference features nationally known speakers. Former *Chicago Tribune* managing editor Jane Hirt has been described as a “charismatic leader who could make change happen” by Gerry Kern, the *Chicago Tribune* editor. UNL CoJMC’s dean, Dr. Maria Marron, will provide an update on the current state of journalism education. Also on the agenda is a social media workshop by UNL’s Michelle Carr Hasler. The evening awards dinner features Joe Starita, who will talk about his new book on Nebraska’s Susan LaFlesche Picotte, the first Native American female physician.

Check out the articles on the conference in this issue and register now!



**SHERRY THOMPSON**

### 2016 NPW Board

President: Sherry Thompson  
Vice President: Cheryl Alberts Irwin  
Secretary: Nancy Hansen  
Treasurer: Lori Potter  
Achievement Award: Barb Batie  
Communication Contest: Terri Hahn  
High School Contest: Bette Pore and LuAnn Schindler  
Historian: Mary Pat Finn-Hoag  
Member Services: Barb Micek  
Membership: Judy Nelson and Kerry Hoffschneider  
Newsletter: Mary Pierce  
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Legislative/First Amendment: Stephanie Geery-Zink  
Parliamentarian: Beverly Wieler  
Scholarship and Professional Development: Jill Claflin  
Past President: Bette Pore

# NPW's 70th anniversary conference set for April...

(Continued from page 1)

A 25-year veteran of the news media industry, she may be best known as the co-founder of RedEye, a *Tribune* experiment to create a successful commuter news and entertainment publication for young, socially-minded, busy adults who weren't reading daily newspapers.



**JANE HIRT**

The conference sessions, which start with registration and a continental breakfast from 8:30-9 a.m., will be held in room 109 at the CoJMC's Andersen Hall, 16<sup>th</sup> and Q Streets where parking will be available in the adjacent lot at no additional charge, thanks to the CoJMC sponsorship.

Leading off the program is CoJMC Dean Maria Marron, who will discuss the "State of Journalism Education Today." A native of Ireland, Marron worked as a journalist and a public relations professional. She came to the U.S. as a Rotary International fellow, obtained her masters degree at Ohio State University and her Ph.D. at Ohio University. She was department chair at Central Michigan before accepting the position in Lincoln in 2014.



**MARIA MARRON**

Both the Hall of Fame Luncheon and the Awards Banquet will be held in the Regency Suites on second floor of the City Campus Nebraska Union, just two blocks away. Transportation will be available for those who are mobility challenged.

The 11:30 a.m. luncheon will recognize two Nebraskans who will be inducted into the Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame. Also recognized will be first place winners of the NPW High School Communications Contest as well as recipients of the Marianne Beel Scholarship for a graduating high school senior and the NPW Memorial Scholarship for a college student.

Afternoon sessions will again be in Andersen Hall, beginning with a tour of the physical Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame on second floor of the building. This will be followed by Happy 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary festivities, with coffee and cupcakes.

At 2:15, the focus will turn to using social media for reporting, for community involvement and for promotion.

The 90-minute session will be led by Michelle Carr Hassler, a national award-winning assistant professor of practice who teaches courses on social media, multimedia reporting and online journalism. A UNL graduate, Hassler was a reporter and editor at newspapers in Colorado, Arizona and Nebraska before joining the CoJMC faculty.



**MICHELLE  
CARR HASSLER**

The NPW Membership Meeting at 4 p.m. will complete the afternoon, but there is still more in store.

Nationally-acclaimed author Joe Starita will provide those at the 5:30 p.m. Awards Banquet a preview of his latest book, "A Warrior of the People," due out in November, which is about "the indomitable courage" of Nebraska's Susan LaFlesche Picotte, the first Native American physician. Starita, a riveting speaker, also wrote "I Am a Man: Chief Standing Bear's Journey for Justice" and "The Dull Knives of Pine Ridge – A Lakota Odyssey." A Nebraska native, Starita was an investigative reporter for the *Miami Herald* before joining the CoJMC faculty. He teaches reporting and ethics classes at UNL.



**JOE STARITA**

Also on hand to help NPW celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) President Marsha Hoffman and NFPW Communications Contest Director Julie Hoffman, both of Council Bluffs, Iowa.

You get all of this plus networking and friendmaking for just \$55. Time flies, and memories fade, so register now or make a note to do so by April 8. Half-day registrations are \$30, or meal-only for \$25. You can register online at [nebraskapresswomen.org](http://nebraskapresswomen.org) or send a check, along with the form in this newsletter, to treasurer Lori Potter, Nebraska Press Women, P.O. Box 1988, Kearney, NE 68848. To contact her, email [potterspox@gmail.com](mailto:potterspox@gmail.com).

In addition to the CoJMC, sponsors are the Nebraska Press Association, Nebraska Broadcasters Association, Firespring, Nebraska Lottery, Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation, BH Media (Omaha World-Herald) and Lincoln Journal Star.



## Nebraska Press Women 70th Anniversary

April 23, 2016 Spring Convention

*"Embracing the Future, Respecting the Past"*

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Andersen Hall, corner of 16th and Q streets  
College of Journalism and Mass Communications



Keynote speaker: Jane Hirt, 25-year newspaper veteran, former Chicago Tribune editor.

- UNL grad and cofounder/ editor of RedEye for young, socially minded adults, will describe her experiences.



Dr. Maria Marron, journalism dean, UNL

- Updates on the state of journalism education. High school and college instructors, take note!



Michelle Carr Hassler, award-winning journalism professor

- Hands-on workshop on using social media for reporting, for community involvement, and for promotion.



Professor, author Joe Starita

- Previewing his new book on Nebraska's Susan LaFlesche Picotte, first Native American female physician.

### Noon luncheon

Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame 2016 inductions  
High School Communications Contest recognitions

### April 23 NPW 70th Anniversary Registration

\$55 full day, all meals

\$30 half day, one meal

\$25, lunch OR dinner only

Send payment postmarked on or before April 8, along with name, address, city, zip, email, phone number and meal preference to: Lori Potter, Nebraska Press Women, P.O. Box 1988, Kearney, NE 68848

Open to the public. Partial reservations specify lunch or dinner. Meals at the Nebraska Union, UNL City Campus.  
Checks payable to Nebraska Press Women.

More information: [nebraskapresswomen.org](http://nebraskapresswomen.org)

Nebraska Press Women on Facebook, or call Ruth Brown, 308-325-1111.

Convention sponsors include UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications, Berkshire Hathaway Media Group, Firespring, Lincoln Journal Star, Nebraska Broadcasters Association, Nebraska Lottery, Nebraska Press Association

# Nebraska Press Women 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Spring Conference

April 22-23, 2016 University of Nebraska-Lincoln

## “Embracing the Future. Respecting the Past”

### Friday, April 8

Deadline to register for the conference and to book a room.

To reserve a room, call the Red Roof Inn (402) 477-1100. To register for the conference go to [nebraskapresswomen.org](http://nebraskapresswomen.org) or use the form below.

### Friday, April 22

6 p.m. Board BBQ supper, followed by Board meeting, Red Roof Inn second floor meeting room, 3939 N 26th St., Lincoln.

6:30 p.m. Hospitality room for socializing available to all NPW members and guests.

### Saturday, April 23

8:30-9 a.m. Registration and continental breakfast, Andersen Hall room

109, 16<sup>th</sup> & Q Streets. Parking provided in lot at 16<sup>th</sup> & Q by the College of Journalism & Mass Communications.

9- 9:10 a.m. Welcome by NPW president and convention co-chairs.

9:10 -9:50 a.m. Maria Marron: “State of Journalism Education Today.”

9:50 -10 a.m. Coffee and Stretch Break

10-11:10 a.m. Jane Hirt: “The 21st Century Journalist: Adapt or Quit.” Follow-up conversation with members.

11:30 a.m.- 1:15 p.m. Hall of Fame Lunch at City Campus Union Regency Suites (2nd floor). Welcome, Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame inductions, recognition of scholarship winners and high school con-

test winners.

1:30-2 p.m. Tour Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame and the CoJMC – Andersen Hall

2-2:15 p.m. Happy 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, NPW! Cupcake & coffee break.

2:15 - 3:45 p.m. Social Media Workshop by Michelle Hassler – Andersen Hall 109

4-5 p.m. Membership Meeting in Andersen Hall room 109.

5:30-7:30 p.m. Professional Contest Awards Banquet at City Campus Union Regency Suites. Speaker: Joe Starita on Nebraska’s Susan LaFlesche Picotte, the first Native American female physician (topic of his latest book).

### Spring 2016 NPW 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Friday** night, April 22, board meeting dinner, \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday**, April 23, options:

All day registration, \$55 \_\_\_\_\_ Includes all sessions, continental breakfast, lunch, afternoon break, dinner.

Half day with lunch, \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ Includes continental breakfast, morning sessions and lunch.

Half day with dinner, \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ Includes afternoon sessions, cupcake break and dinner.

Lunch only, \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Includes lunch and recognitions.

Dinner only, \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Includes banquet, speaker and recognitions.

**Total enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form and your check to Lori Potter, P.O. Box 1988, Kearney, NE 68848. Checks should be payable to Nebraska Press Women. **Deadline Friday, April 8.**

## Red Roof Inn is conference motel

The Red Roof Inn, 3939 N 26th St., Lincoln, will be the conference motel for the NPW 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary event April 22-23.

A former Holiday Inn Express, the motel is just south of 27<sup>th</sup> and Superior, which is about 5 miles from UNL. The motel has been refurbished with new carpet, paint and bedding. It has numerous amenities including indoor pool, hot tub, fitness facility, hair dryer, flat screen TVs, elevator, free hot breakfast, free wifi, and free coffee in the lobby.

A block of rooms for NPW is reserved for both Friday and Saturday nights, April 22 and 23. The rate is \$78 for one king-sized bed or \$89 for two queen-sized beds, but reservations must be made by Friday, April 8.

All rooms are non-smoking.

To book a room, call the Red Roof Inn at 402- 477-1100 and mention NPW.

# Andersen Hall of Fame honorees to be recognized...

ledge initially joined the newspaper as a typesetter, then moved to news desk assistant. She soon had responsibilities to recruit and coordinate 14 freelance regional correspondents. Younger staffers learned from her advice on the importance of writing for a community newspaper, with Blackledge taking great pride in their successes.

She also encouraged the correspondents to join NPW. She served as NPW president and treasurer, won numerous awards and was Communicator of Achievement in 1991. Currently Blackledge is Chapter EB P.E.O. historian, and is writing excerpts for a book about her late husband, Keith Blackledge.

Hollen, an exemplary writer, championed causes such as firefighter salaries, a better jail, Crime Stoppers, feeding the needy, and promoting the arts. She also wrote her "Reporter at Large" column by traveling 17 counties, and writing about people, places and things. Editors rarely touched a word of her copy, and she could make any topic interesting -- including weather and obituaries. Hollen was early on the scene of the 1975 Kellie family murders at

Sutherland. A gag order on coverage of the Erwin Charles Simants' trial led to the Nebraska Press vs. Hugh Stewart lawsuit that was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. That decision now is taught in journalism and law schools nationwide. Hollen has received some 500 awards from NPW, media and community, including North Platte's 2012 Woman of Achievement. She recently came out of retirement to develop a series of publications about the history of North Platte.

The public is invited to attend the luncheon at the Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln City Campus.

Luncheon reservations of \$25 are due April 8. Payment may be made to Lori Potter, P.O. Box 1988, Kearney, NE 68848. Details, as well as online registration, are available at [www.nebraskapresswomen.org](http://www.nebraskapresswomen.org).

The April 23 event is part of NPW's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the theme of "Embracing the Future, Respecting the Past." Other activities include speakers, honors and evening banquet.

# Journalists Hall of Fame to have 18 members

With Mary Ann Koch Blackledge and Sharron Hollen, the Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame has 18 members.

The Hall is displayed on the second floor of UNL's Andersen Hall, and can be seen on the website, [www.nebraskapresswomen.org](http://www.nebraskapresswomen.org).

Other honorees are Joan Rossiter Burney, Beverly Deepe Keever, Leta Powell Drake, Gwen Lindberg, Elia Wilkinson Peattie, Maxine Moul, Clara Bewick Colby, Mary McGrath,

Mildred Brown, Harriet Dakin MacMurphy, Bess Furman Armstrong, Marj Marlette, Wilma Crumley, Beverly Pollack, Lynne Grasz and Deanna Sands.

The women journalists are recognized for their talent, initiative, intelligence and stamina, and for making a difference for the profession, for their communities and for those who follow in their footsteps. Nominees are sought from the public and are chosen by the NPW Board of Directors.

The Hall of Fame was established in 2011 by NPW, with funding support by Harold and Marian Andersen, to commemorate the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization as an affiliate of the National Federation of Press Women.

A nonprofit professional organization of women and men in communication, Nebraska Press Women provides opportunities for professional development for Nebraska's communicators.

# Drake to receive UNL Hixon-Lied College of Fine and Performing Art Award of Merit

Leta Powell Drake will receive the Award of Merit from the Hixson-Lied College of Fine & Performing Arts at UNL on April 23.

Drake has enjoyed a 60-year broadcasting career that included work at KOLN/KGIN-TV, where she hosted and produced more than 10,000 TV shows during a 28-year career there, which included hosting and producing the 10/11 Morning Show and Cartoon Corral with Kalamity Kate. She also worked at NETV from 1989-2002 and volunteered as emcee for auctions and pledge drives for 30 years.

Her passion for live performance continues, as she has acted in more than 100 plays and two movies.

She was elected into the Nebraska Broadcasters Hall of Fame and the Marion Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame.

She recently released a book titled "The Calamities of Kalamity Kate: A History of Nebraska's Children's TV Shows."

She has served on the Nebraska Repertory Theatre Board, was an actress for the Nebraska Repertory Theatre, is a Purple Masque Member and Donor.



**LETA POWELL  
DRAKE**

## Board to Meet April 22 at Red Roof Inn

The NPW Board will meet at 6 p.m. Friday, April 22, in the second floor meeting room at the Red Roof Inn, 3939 N 26th St., Lincoln. All board members and officers are expected to attend, but other Press Women are welcome.

Supper will be catered by the regionally owned Hog Wild Pit BBQ, at a cost of \$10/person, payable that night, for barbeque pork or chicken sandwiches, beans, salad and dessert.

Board members should use the registration form in this newsletter to choose the Friday night supper and also the Saturday conference option.

## High school awards to be presented during April 23 luncheon

Awards in the Nebraska Press Women High School Journalism Contest will be presented during the luncheon at the NPW Spring Conference April 23.

A total of 186 entries were submitted this year in 20 categories. The first-place winners will advance to the National Federation of Press Women contest.

For the second year, a sweepstakes award will be presented to the school with the most award points, similar to the sweepstakes award for NPW's professional contest. The addition of this award has encouraged high school journalism advisers to submit more entries of their students' work.

## Join other NPW members at the NFPW conference Sept. 8-10 at Wichita

Make 2016 the year that you attend the National Federation of Press Women conference.

If you've never been to an NFPW conference, this is the year to find out what makes them so inspiring. And if you've been to a national conference – or several, as may be the case – you'll want to add this one to your national conference list.

Our neighbors, Kansas Professional Communicators, are hosting the

2016 NFPW conference Sept. 8 to 10 in Wichita. We hope to have a large contingent from Nebraska attend and take advantage of the many professional development opportunities, be there as NPW is recognized for its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary and support Lori Potter, our nominee for the Communicator of Achievement award. National communications contest award winners also will be recognized.

On top of all of this, the confer-

ence offers great networking opportunities – and it's fun!

Watch for NFPW emails or check out the NFPW website ([www.nfpw.org](http://www.nfpw.org)) for additional details on the conference and the optional tours that are held before and/or after the conference.

If you are a national member and have not attended a conference in the past, you may qualify for a first-time attendee grant.

## von Kampen joins North Platte Telegraph staff

Joan von Kampen will join the *North Platte Telegraph* as managing editor on April 4.

She is currently the *World-Herald* News Service manager, where she acts as a liaison between the *Omaha World-Herald* and other regional newspapers owned by BHMedia.

Joan joined the *Omaha World-Herald* in 1997 as a copy editor. Her husband, Todd, is a freelance writer and musician. The couple previously worked together at the *Telegraph*, the *Scottsbluff Star-Herald* and the *Des Moines Register*.

She can be reached at [joan.vonkampen@gmail.com](mailto:joan.vonkampen@gmail.com).

## NPW Historical Highlights

The Nebraska Women's Press Club was founded on March 22, 1946, when 40 newspaper women gathered at Omaha's Hotel Paxton for breakfast, compliments of the Nebraska Press Association, which was not yet open to women.

Revisions to the club constitution in 1960 included changing the name to Nebraska Press Women.

Since its founding, NPW has evolved to include a diverse group of communication professionals working in the media, in public relations and advertising, as authors and freelance writers and more.

## Calendar of Events

March 13 to 19 – Sunshine Week

April 22 – NPW board meeting, Lincoln

April 23 – NPW Spring Conference, Lincoln

Sept. 8 to 10 – National Federation of Press Women conference, Wichita, Kansas

Oct. 7 – NPW board meeting, Rowe Sanctuary, Gibbon

Oct. 8 – NPW Fall Conference, Minden area



Newsletter items?

Email them to

[marypierce97@yahoo.com](mailto:marypierce97@yahoo.com)