

Summer 2017



NEBRASKA PRESS WOMEN



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accepted

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Spring conference recap

Conference, programs provide opportunities for involvement, discussion

SHERRY THOMPSON NPW PRESIDENT

What a wonderful spring conference!

It was great seeing so many members and guests in North Platte for a very rewarding day of professional development, networking, fun and good food! Thank you to conference planners Joan von Kampen, Jill Claffin, Heather Johnson and Tammy Bain for putting together an outstanding program at Mid-Plains Community College. The speakers were inspiring and the two awards programs recognized some incredible talent.

A few other notes:

The Friday night presentation of NPW's **Fake News PowerPoint** during the conference generated some great discussion.

We hope members will now feel confident to take the presentation into

their communities and continue the dialogue. The presentation was emailed to members earlier this year, complete with presenter notes and handouts.

Contact Jill Claffin at jillclaffin@yahoo.com if you have questions. Also, be sure to drop Jill a note when you give the presentation so we can track its reach.

The new **NPW Omaha Network** launched April 6 with a networking/brainstorming meeting. Fifteen communicators attended, with a large majority expressing interest in future gatherings. The next meeting is scheduled for August 22, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Swanson Library, 90th and Dodge. Special guests were Lisa Peltó, president of Concierge Marketing Inc., an Omaha book publishing company, and Sandra Wendel, a book editor who specializes in helping authors write, polish and

publish their manuscripts.

Our hope is to engage communicators from the Omaha area and involve them in other NPW activities and programs. Special thanks to Jan Knight for coordinating the Omaha Network. Jan's email is jknightfree-lancing@gmail.com if you would like more information or know someone in the Omaha area who may be interested in attending.

Congratulations to all of our contest winners and good luck to the first-place winners whose entries advanced to the NFPW competition. Congratulations, too, to the NPW members who won awards in the Associated Press



Great Plains News and Photo Contest.

Tammy Bain and Kamie Stephen of the North Platte Telegraph and Irene North of the Scottsbluff Star-Herald won awards in the competition.

Have a great summer, and I hope to see you Sept. 30 in Osceola.

Sherry

NEBRASKA PRESS WOMEN

Spring 2017

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Nebraska Press Women, Inc., is an affiliate of the National Federation of Press Women, a nationwide organization of professional women and men pursuing careers across the communications spectrum.

Code of Ethics stresses freedom of press, truthfulness

The National Federation of Press Women's code of ethics provides a positive reminder of the importance of a free press. It reads:

As a professional communicator, I recognize my responsibility to the public which has placed its trust and confidence in my work, and will endeavor to do nothing to abuse this obligation.

With truth as my ultimate goal, I will adhere to the highest standards of professional communication, never consciously misleading reader, viewer, or listener; and will avoid any compromise of my objectivity or fairness.

Because I believe that professional communicators must be obligated only to the people's right to know, I affirm that freedom of the press is to be guarded as an inalienable right of the citizens of a free society.

I pledge to use this freedom wisely and to uphold the right of communicators to express unpopular opinions as well as the right to agree with the majority.

Nebraska Press Women is an affiliate of the National Federation of Press Women

Cather, Wirth inducted into Andersen Hall of Fame



CHERYL ALBERTS IRWIN

The induction of ground-breaking journalists Willa Cather and Eileen Wirth into the Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame brings the total membership to 20.

The ceremony took place during NPW's spring convention noon luncheon April 29 at North Platte's Mid-Plains Community College.

Accepting the awards were Tracy Tucker, education director for the Willa Cather Foundation; and Wirth, Creighton University professor emerita and author.

Wirth "broke down barriers" to women as an *Omaha World-Herald* reporter, in Union Pacific Public Relations and in higher education. Her 25-year tenure at Creighton University (1991-2016) included chairing the

Department of Journalism, Media and Computing that she created through mergers. It was a rare feat for a woman to achieve the rank of full professor, and even rarer to chair the department. Wirth's ethics-based, history-laden approach to teaching provided solid grounding and perspective for hundreds of students.

In accepting her award, Wirth said the communications field is needed more now than at any time in history, both for truth tellers and story tellers.

"Our profession is not dying – it's changing. You can create opportunities or shut them off for other women," Wirth said. "You can do anything if you have to do it."

The Nebraska City native authored "From Society Page to Front Page: Nebraska Women in Journalism" in 2013.

Continued on page 10

Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame

2011

Bess Furman
Armstrong
Wilma Crumley
Lynne Grasz
Marj Marlette
Beverly Pollock
Deanna Sands

2012

Mildred Brown
Harriet Dakin
MacMurphy
Mary McGrath

2013

Clara Bewick Colby
Maxine Moul

2014

Gwen Lindberg
Leta Powell Drake
Elia Wilkinson
Peattie

2015

Joan Rossiter
Burney
Beverly Deepe
Keever

2016

Mary Ann Koch
Blackledge
Sharron Hollen

2017

Willa Cather
Eileen Wirth

The A-B-C's From Spring Conference 2017

A.
Copy
Editing
101:
*How to stop
making
mistakes*

B.
Work/Life
Balance:
*Managing
time*

C.
Growing a
Digital
Audience:
*Social media
guidelines
worth
following*



Nebraska Press Women from across the state gathered at Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte on Saturday, April 29 for the organization's spring conference. The day-long event offered participants a chance to hone skills, reflect on the effects of work on personal life and use of social media to improve news leverage with readers. Check out these articles and infographics about what members learned during presentations.

A.

Copy Editing 101

Transforming a writing project into a top-notch document that provides clean, concise copy is simple, with the help of tips and tricks copy editors use.

Gerri Berendzen, editorial advisor for the *University Daily Kansan*, told Nebraska Press Women that mistakes in copy happen for multiple reasons.

"The number one reason is carelessness," Berendzen said.

Other reasons can clutter copy.

Focusing on only one element, like numbers, can lead to overlooking basic

mistakes.

Time crunches may lead to sloppiness.

Berendzen suggested getting a head start on fact checking articles. A clip file serves as an effective organizational tool for copy editors.

How reliable are your sources? It might be difficult to make that determination, especially if names are misspelled.

Berendzen said lack of proper use of resources can cause mistakes. She suggested asking a question about the subject of the piece being proofed and

then reading to find if the answer is in the copy.

If you've ever read copy and spied a mistake, but felt too embarrassed to point it out, you're experiencing another reason why mistakes happen.

Berendzen said selfishness results when editors fail to point out a mistake before it is printed or posted for all the world to view.

Hubris may also lead to mistakes in copy.

"Nobody is perfect," Berendzen said. "Even when we think we are."

Recognizing we, as editors, make mistakes will help filter out repeat problems.

Remember, edits happen. Sometimes, the brain skips over a mistake, but a good copy editor will catch and point them out.

Search and correct •

Gerri Berendzen reviews elements writers should check during the editing process at the 2017 spring conference.

Photo by Lori Potter



B.

Striking The Balance

By LuAnn Schindler

All I kept thinking while Melissa Matczak spoke to NPW members was, 'Is she directing this to me?'

In today's on-demand world, it is difficult to find a balance between work and family, seriousness and fun.

Matczak shared prevalent ideas that level the scales that she's put into practice.

As the first female executive editor of the *Omaha World-Herald*, Matczak said she has "been lucky and

blessed" to have a family who supports her career.

Matczak began her journalism career as an Associated Press reporter and eventually found her way to Omaha.

A key to her success: a strong support system.

She said she used "out-of-the-box" ideas, including nanny sharing with fellow OWH employees, to keep family organized and on track.

Matczak said her in-laws also provide help, whether it's picking up their grandchildren from school or offering rides to music lessons.

She also talked about the importance of finding time for oneself.

As a rule, Matczak leaves the office "at a decent time" so her family can eat dinner together.

"Work days can be long," Matczak noted,



Juggling act • Omaha World-Herald executive editor Melissa Matczak explains how she balances work and home. Photo by Lori Potter

but it is important to find time for yourself and your interests."

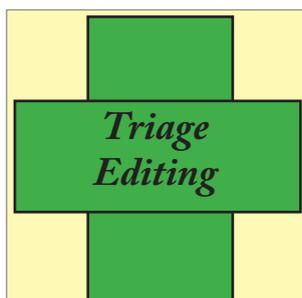
She finds time in her schedules for exercise at the newspaper's gym and for time with friends.

Fridays might be the one night she works late, but she makes an attempt

to leave the office by 7.p.m.

For journalists who struggle to get away from being chained to their desks, computers and technology, who put in 12 to 14-hour days, Matczak's message hit home.

"You have to make time," she said.



What matters most to readers?

Gerri Berendzen posed that question, noting that readers' biggest complaints include misspelled proper and common names, as well as incorrect verb agreement.

The editing pro introduced triage editing, which looks at five elements of copy.

In order, triage editing examines.

1. **Accuracy.** It's simple. Fact check.
2. **Clarity.** Any ambiguity or bridges in logic should be cleared up.
3. **Headlines and display type.** Look at spelling.
4. **Efficiency.** Does the story flow?
5. **Style.** Style = Consistency.

Growing a Digital Audience

C.

How can publications boost their digital audiences?

Omaha World-Herald Executive Editor Melissa Matczak shared how the OWH leverages online readership.

Omaha.com receives 15 million monthly pageviews, with 45 percent coming from mobile devices. The paper's online division has approximately 60,000 email subscribers, 80,000 Facebook fans and 100,000 Twitter followers.

Matczak said the online division analyzes trends and insights to gain an understanding of what works best when pushing content.

She said online news editors have built collections of content and historical collections that can be recycled in different ways at various times since not everyone sees a piece when it first goes live.

Social media use can provide a strong push. The paper publishes a post on Facebook every 30 minutes and sends a tweet every 15 minutes.

Matczak noted that clicks are important, but sometimes, a headline alone can tell the story.

The OWH uses online design to note differences in articles. It sends a signal to readers that the story is important.

Using analytics and data can boost your readership.

Think before posting

What time will the story be published online?

If it's a live event, post within 30 minutes.

Are more frequent updates needed?

Is another reporter needed? What details will reporters tweet?

Will video be shot?

Think visually: mug shots, photos, video.

What extras can be produced?

Timelines, quotes, Q&A, archive material can be added.

Communications Contest Winners



Marianne Beel award winners • Communication contest winners were announced during the spring conference's evening program. Receiving awards were (l-r): Lori Potter, third place; LuAnn Schindler, first place; Erika Pritchard and Kami Stephen, honorable mention. Not present: Carla Chance, second place.

Photo by Barb Batie

Visit <http://www.nebraskapresswomen.org> for a complete list of professional and high school winners!



High School Winners • Nebraska high school journalism students were honored April 29 with awards in the 2017 Nebraska Press Women High School Communications Contest. The contest includes categories for student newspaper, yearbook, broadcasting and online video work.

Photo by LuAnn Schindler

The managing editor of the *Clearwater Record - Ewing News* took home the top sweepstakes award in the 2016 Nebraska Press Women Communications Contest.

LuAnn Schindler earned 12 first-place awards on her way to the top spot. In addition to her duties for the News, she contributes to the *Neligh News & Leader*.

NPW Communications Contest awards were presented in North Platte during the spring convention.

The Beel Sweepstakes awards, the highest awards given in the NPW communications competition, are named after the late Marianne Beel, a longtime NPW member and contest director. The Beel Sweepstakes awards are given to the three entrants who earned the most points. Points are awarded based on an entrant's placement in each category entered, as well as number of entrants in the respective categories.

Carla Chance of Cedar Creek, with eight first-place awards, placed second. She is the marketing and communications director for Video King in Omaha.

Lori Potter, a staff writer, photographer and columnist for the *Kearney Hub*, placed third with nine first-place awards.

Earning honorable mentions in the sweepstakes awards were Kamie Stephen of North Platte and Erika Pritchard of Kearney.

First-place entries in 60 categories advanced to national competition, sponsored by the National Federation of Press Women.

Heart of Dixie

First-timer Grants Available for NFPW Conference

This year's NFPW Communications Conference is Sept. 7 to 9 in Birmingham.

Hosted by Alabama Media Professionals, the conference will include a celebration of NFPW's 80th anniversary, along with workshops on creative non-fiction with Pulitzer-prize winning author Rick Bragg; how to talk about your book on television; copyrights and trademarks; monetizing your blog; tightening your writing for busy readers; the future of community newspapers; changes in the AP Stylebook, and a panel on covering racially-charged events and situations.

If you are an NFPW member who has never attended an annual conference, consider applying for a first-timer grant. The NFPW Education Fund offers grants that can pay for all or part of the registration fees for members attending their first national conference.

A first-timer grant application form is available on the "Education Fund" page of the NFPW website. The application deadline is July 15.

Find out more about the conference sessions, pre-and post-tours, lodging and travel on the conference section of the NFPW website.

STARS FELL ON
Alabama

2017 NFPW
CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 7-9
BIRMINGHAM

Conference Commentary

If you plan to make the journey to Birmingham, plan to take part in the three-day pre-conference tour.

Stops include the U.S. Space and Rocket Center's Adult Space Camp, Fame Record Studio in Muscle Shoals, Helen Keller's birthplace, University of Alabama and soul food and haute cuisine stops.

The tour begins Sunday, September 3 and wraps up Wednesday, Sept. 6.

The NFPW conference, held at the Double Tree Hotel near the University of Alabama, begins Thursday, September 7 and will wrap up, Saturday, September 9.

A post-conference tour is also available, starting Sunday, Sept. 10 until Wednesday, Sept. 13. The literary pilgrimage will include places where Harper Lee, Marik Childress, Fannie Flagg, Martin Luther King, Jr., Hank Williams and F. Scott Fitzgerald lived and worked. The tour winds through the Tensaw Delta and features Gulf Coast stops.

Make a Match Through NPW

By LORI POTTER

A new NPW service for new (or newer) members was launched at the 2017 spring convention in North Platte.

The goal of the Make-a-Match program is to encourage networking between our newer and veteran members at times between conventions. It's a variation on the buddy system.

We hope new members will make use of the match to ask questions about NPW activities such as contest, hall of fame, and state and national conventions; discuss professional topics; or just have conversations with an interesting friend.

Four such matches were made at the spring convention.

If you are a new NPW member who would like to make a match with a veteran member or you are a long-time member willing to be on a match volunteer list, contact me at potterspix@gmail.com.

In both cases, I will send a simple form to fill out that asks for contact information and a description of what you do or have done as a professional communicator.

When there is a pairing, the veteran member will make the initial contact.

Keeping You In The Know

NPW Board Members

President – Sherry Thompson, Omaha

Vice President – Cheryl Alberts Irwin, Lincoln

Treasurer – Lori Potter, Kearney

Secretary – Beverly Wieler, West Point

Communicator of Achievement Award – Barb Batie, Lexington

Communications Contest – Terri Hahn, Osceola

High School Contest – Bette Pore, Grand Island, and LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

Historian – Mary Pat Finn Hoag, Norfolk

Legislative/First Amendment – Jan Knight, Omaha

Member Services – Ruth Brown, Lincoln

Membership – Judy Nelson, Lincoln

Newsletter – LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

Publicity – Glennis Nagel, Kearney

Parliamentarian – Molly Klocksinn, Lincoln

Professional Development – Jill Claffin, Cozad

Scholarships – Tammy Bain, North Platte

Past President – Bette Pore, Grand Island

Save the Date

July 15

NFPW scholarship application deadline

August 14

Fall Newsletter deadline

Sept. 7-9

NFPW Conference, Birmingham, Alabama

Sept. 29

Fall Board Meeting, York

September 30

Fall Convention Osceola

Spring 2018

Spring Conference Omaha

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 Nebraska Press Women 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.



**Like
Nebraska Press
Women
on Facebook**

Thank You Notes

I AM DEEPLY HONORED to join the Hall of Fame and thank Nebraska Press Women for choosing me.

When I wrote my book about Nebraska's women journalists, I was amazed at the number of outstanding women in journalism that our small state has produced.

Telling their stories became a crusade for me and this Hall does that so well. Its location at the NU College of Journalism and Mass Communication exposes our women students to the sisterhood they are joining.

Thank you so much, NPW!

Eileen Wirth

Note: Wirth was nominated by Ruth Brown.

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**ON BEHALF OF THE** Willa Cather Foundation, the Foundation's Board of Governors and our staff, I would like to thank the Nebraska Press Women for their warm welcome as we gathered to celebrate the Marian Andersen Hall of Fame induction of Willa Cather and Eileen Wirth. As we know from Cather's letters and writings, she gave much of the credit for her successful writing career to the crucial, formative leadership of Charles Gere and Will Owen Jones at the *Nebraska State Journal*. Their wisdom and friendship helped make her career — one which took her to great journalistic heights at *McClure's Magazine* before she turned her attention, full-time, to writing fiction. Throughout Cather's illustrious career, she maintained a journalist's dedication to storytelling and truth-telling, calling her personal style "a secondary matter."

We are so grateful to Jan Knight for nominating Ms. Cather for the Hall of Fame and for Barbara Brockman and Daniel Rabbass for their wonderful letters of support.

As we open the National Willa Cather Center in Red Cloud this summer, our thoughts naturally turn to Cather's legacy and her standing across the state and across the nation. It is gratifying to know that her work continues to stand the test of time and draws new readers and fans each day. We are honored that you have chosen to include Willa Cather among the best and brightest of Nebraska's pioneering women of the press.

**Tracy Sanford Tucker**

Education Director and Archivist  
The Willa Cather Foundation



## Nominees sought for Communicator of Achievement

**By Barb Bierman Batie**  
NPW COA Director

Although NPW's packet for 2016 Communicator of Achievement Bette Pore was just submitted for national competition, it is already time to solicit nominees for Nebraska Press Women's 2017 Communicator of Achievement Award.

The Nebraska Communicator of Achievement (COA) is part of a national program to honor communicators who not only display exceptional achievement in the communication field, but also serve the organization and the community.

The state COA is announced annually at the fall convention and she/he serves as NPW's nominee for the national honor if a national member. A previous state COA can be nominated again provided she/he has not been the national COA winner. Only two Nebraska Press Women are ineligible: Joan Rossiter Burney and Lois Lambley.

In addition, NPW does not allow a current state president or a member who serves as National COA Director to be nominated for the state honor. All nominees must be living members in good standing for at least two years in

NPW and in NFPW. Keep in mind the COA scoring is based on professional achievements (60 percent), community service (20 percent) and service to NPW/NFPW (20 percent).

With those criteria in mind we are asking for nominees for the 2017 NPW Communicator of Achievement. Please submit nominations no later than Aug. 20 to NPW COA Chair Barb Bierman Batie at 43590 Rd. 761, Lexington, NE 68850 or email: [barb.batie@gmail.com](mailto:barb.batie@gmail.com).

Nominations are held for two years and if an individual is not selected as COA during that term, she/he must be nominated again. All past nominations have expired so a new slate is needed this year. Final selection is made by a vote of all past Nebraska COAs for whom we have email or mailing addresses.

In addition to the nominee's name, if you can submit a brief note on why you think she/he is deserving of the honor and any biographical information that will help Barb as the nomination process progresses. If you are unsure whether an individual is both an NPW and NFPW member for eligibility, please call Barb at 308-325-2247 and she can confirm their state and national membership.

## Welcome to NPW

Welcome to the following members who joined or returned to NPW in 2016/2017:

Tammy Bain, reporter, *North Platte Telegraph*;

Jennifer Gjerde, public information officer, Nebraska Tourism Commission;

Tina Henderson, vice president of communication strategy, Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation;

Mary Hepburn, columnist, *North Platte Telegraph*;

Marsha Kalkowski, adviser, Marian High School, Omaha

Maunette Loeks, digital editor, *Scottsbluff Star-Herald*;

Carol Lomicky, retired journalism professor, University of Nebraska at

Kearney;

Jill Martin, managing editor, *Seward County Independent*;

Ellen Mortensen, managing editor, *Gothenburg Times*;

Irene North, reporter/photographer, *Scottsbluff Star-Herald*;

Jane Okelabo, agricultural researcher, University of Nebraska-Lincoln;

Erika Pritchard, regional editor, *Kearney Hub*;

Cassie Rief, communications specialist, Nebraska Public Power District

Kamie Stephen, reporter, *North Platte Telegraph*;

and Jan Thompson, senior lecture in English, University of Nebraska at Kearney.

Feel free to reach out to



**First-time spring conference attendees** • Eight NPW members attended their first conference in North Platte, including (l-r): Irene North, Jan Knight, Kamie Stephen, Erika Pritchard, Heather Riggelman and Tammy Bain. Inset: Jenn Gjerde. Not pictured: Mary Hepburn and Maunette Loeks.

Photo by LuAnn Schindler

these newer NPW members. A membership list with contact information

for NPW/NFPW members is to be distributed later this year.

## Continued: Hall of Fame Inductees

The book describes women who, like Wirth, paved the way for other women to enter the field of journalism. Her book on the history of the Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium is coming out in 2017. Wirth also is on the board of the Nebraska State Historical Society and works with Lutheran Family Service's refugee program. She also has long served groups such as the Omaha libraries, Omaha Press Club and multiple schools.

When former NPW President Ruth Brown approached Harold and Marian Andersen about supporting the Hall of Fame that now bears Marian Andersen's name, Wirth endorsed the concept, sealing its fate.

Tucker, also a certified archivist, accepted Cather's award and read a letter written by Cather in June

1927 to her friend Will Owen Jones. Jones was city editor and later managing editor of the *Nebraska State Journal*. The occasion was the newspaper's 60th anniversary, with Cather reflecting on her first article published in that newspaper. It was an essay about Thomas Carlyle.

Wrote Cather: "It was a splendid example of the kind of writing I most dislike; very florid and full of high-flown figures of speech, and, if I recall aright, not a single 'personal characteristic' of the gentleman was mentioned!"

Another early column was a series of vignettes built from observations Cather gathered while walking around Lincoln. The newspaper paid \$1 for each of Cather's two weekly columns.

Cather said the experience of seeing her name in

print changed her course of study from science to literature. She also recalled the patience, kindness and character of her first journalism editor, Charles Gere.

Noted Tucker: "We owe a debt of gratitude to Charles Gere and Will Owen Jones for their work in helping shape Cather's career." Cather went on to write for *The Lincoln Courier*, *The Home Monthly* magazine in Pittsburgh, and was editor for the *Pittsburgh Leader* before penning novels such as the Pulitzer Prize-winning *One of Ours* and other works.

Born in Virginia, Cather moved to Red Cloud in 1883 at age 9. At the University of Nebraska (1880-1895), Cather edited the student newspaper and taught journalism. Her journalistic works are

being catalogued through the Willa Cather Archive/Cather Journalism project at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Portraits of the HOF honorees hang in the second floor of Andersen Hall, home to the College of Journalism and Mass Communications. Established in 2011, the HOF is named for Marian Andersen, a UNL journalism alumna and Phi Beta Kappa member recognized for extensive community service. Her late husband Harold was retired CEO and CEO of the Omaha World Herald Company. The hall recognizes women journalists for their talent, initiative, intelligence and stamina, making a difference for their profession, their communities and those who follow. Nominations for 2018 will be sought later this year.

# ICYMI: Convention Highlights

