

Summer 2018



NEBRASKA PRESS WOMEN

THE
EVOLUTION
OF MEDIA

Wi-Fi

SOCIAL
NETWORK

HALL OF
FAME
INDUCTEES

CONVENTION
COVERAGE
INSIDE

START

CONTEST
WINNERS

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online

Lavigne: Make yourself a precious commodity

LUANN SCHINDLER

After taking a high school journalism class, Paula Lavigne felt she'd found where she belonged.

The Gretna native discovered, through writing, she could affect change by the words she placed on a page.

At that moment, she was hooked.

After attending the University of Nebraska's J-school, Lavigne spent time as a reporter at the *Des Moines Register*, *The Dallas Morning News* and *The News-Tribune* in Tacoma.

As a reporter, Lavigne became interested in data journalism, where numerical data gathered from databases and other sources is used to produce a final piece.

Fast forward 17-some years, when sports giant ESPN knocked on Lavigne's door.

"In 2008, I got a call

from a former editor who was now at ESPN," Lavigne told spring conference attendees. "They needed my skill set."

Lavigne had never written a sports story. Never worked in television.

"I had no desire to work in TV," she said.

But ...

"Why the hell not? It was an opportunity I could not pass up."

After 10 years with the media giant, Lavigne shared two lessons learned on the job.

First, learn how to stand out.

"Make yourself a precious commodity."

Lavigne said when she worked at the *Daily Nebraskan*, she enjoyed

everything about it.

"It was an awesome time to be there. I thought there was nothing more noble than being a print journalist."

The internet revolutionized journalism.

Lavigne credited UNL professor Matthew Waite for piquing her interest in data journalism.

She described the field as a combination of data analysis and good old-fashioned storytelling that takes readers beyond the anecdotal aspect.

"It includes information far beyond interviews," Lavigne said.

In Des Moines, Lavigne worked as an education

reporter.

Her first push into data journalism was taking a look at test scores and how scores vary, based on demographics.

By the time she hit Dallas, she'd established herself as a strong writer.

She used demographics information to pull together an article about neighborhoods where residents were pushed into sub-prime loans.

"We told the story before the housing crisis hit."

Then ESPN came calling and Lavigne had "to learn on the fly."

Now, she produces pieces for the station's *Outside the Lines* and *E60*.

"I have great colleagues and incredible

producers. I wouldn't have been able to do it without them," she said.

Switching to a different type of media forced Lavigne to rethink what journalism means.

That's her second piece of advice: "Branch out."

"It (ESPN) forced me not just to learn how to write shorter. It's forced me to write visually, to ask questions in a different way."

She's taken that mentality into her work with ESPN.com.

"I get the interviewee into that moment, to get our sources to speak visually."

Branching out is part of

the job at ESPN.

How will a piece of work be produced?

Is it a digital story? A TV piece that runs 10 to 12 minutes? Is there a segment that can be trimmed for use online?

Perhaps there's a radio interview option or a promo through social media campaigns or a brief for a Snapchat channel.

Lavigne said many times, she crafts 10 or 11 tweets covering main points of a story.

"For a lot of people, that may be the only thing they read about the story."

Lavigne said there's more sense of obligation to promote your own work.

"It's vitally important now. To try to get your story to rise to top, you have to take an active role within the organization to promote it."

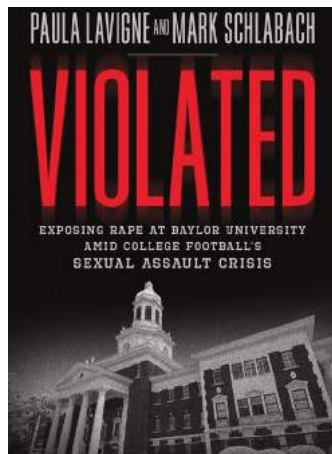
Another way to branch out is to capitalize on a unique skill set or background.

"Take advantage of every opportunity to expand your skill set. You think I'm going to be a journalist, but you need to be able to do everything."

Lavigne, along with ESPN.com senior writer Mark Schlabach, relied on their skill sets to dig through mounds of data and locate sources willing to speak about potential sexual assault cases occurring at Baylor University, located in Waco, Tex.

The duo embarked on a mission to unearth the truth about a single question: How many times have these suspects been named in sexual assault?

They requested police records for every person ever named in sexual as-



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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.



First clip • ESPN journalist Paula Lavigne shows the first assignment she completed as a high school journalist, a treasure she found in her mother's attic. Lavigne, a native of Gretna, encouraged NPW members to branch out and make themselves stand out from the rest of the reporters in the room.

Photo by LuAnn Schindler

sault or violent crimes cases in Waco.

According to Lavigne, they scoured tens of thousands of records and databases.

The result?

"We found a lot of hits that hadn't been reported."

And then, they hit pay

dirt.

"We found her,"

Lavigne said, referring to a case followed through the investigation.

Lavigne's and Schlach's efforts resulted in the book, "Violated: Exposing Rape at Baylor University Amid College Football's

Sexual Assault Crisis."

The process and end result took a lot of time and grit.

And, it relied on a combination of old and new journalism techniques - investigative and data journalism.

One of the strongest messages Lavigne learned from the investigative process relates to culture and important truths that are sometimes shuttered from public view.

"We don't spend enough time teaching young men, 'Don't rape women,'" Lavigne said.

Lavigne said the industry is in a state of flux and it is up to every journalist to take a look at what isn't working and find out what role we play in making journalism better.

"It's never been more important to bulletproof our message, to put out facts," Lavigne said. "I encourage all of you to stand out and branch out."

News Notes

Leta Powell Drake of Lincoln, a longtime television personality who portrays Calamity Kate, will be the featured speaker at the Literary & Grange event at 1:30 p.m., Monday, July 9. Site is the Fire Hall at 101 E. Main in Hadar, located several miles northwest of Norfolk. Another Nebraska Press Women member, **Barb Micek** of Fullerton, will be the main presenter at the September meeting. The editor of the *Nance County Journal* and book author will speak at 1:30 p.m., Monday, Sept. 10, at the Fire Hall. All are welcome!

Fellow NPW member Mary Pat Finn-Hoag of Norfolk spoke on special features she wrote over her more than 40-year career at the *Norfolk Daily News* on May 14. The Literary & Grange Event (formerly known as the Hadar Culture Club) is coordinated by **Charlotte Endorf** of Hadar. She is a new NPW member.

Dorothy Fryer, who had a more than 50-year daily newspaper career, has relocated to her native Norfolk after spending her retirement years in Daventry, Iowa. She was the regional editor of the *Fort Dodge Messenger* for 20 years, followed by a 32-year career as the city editor of the *Norfolk Daily News*. She welcomes cards and visitors. Those who remember Fryer, the 2006 Nebraska Press Women Communicator of Achievement, may contact her at The Meadows, 500 S. 18th St., Room 401, Norfolk NE 68701. She will be honored for her 40-year membership in the NPW and National Federation of Press Women at the national conference in Bethlehem, Pa.

Nominees sought for Communicator of Achievement

Barb Bierman Batie
NPW COA Director

Although 2017 Communicator of Achievement Judy Nelson won't travel to the NFPW convention until September, it is already time to solicit nominees for Nebraska Press Women's 2018 Communicator of Achievement Award.

The Nebraska Communicator of Achievement 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. 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 2018 NPW Communicator of Achievement. Please submit nominations no later than Aug. 15 to NPW COA Chair Barb Bierman Batie at 43590 Rd. 761, Lexington, NE 68850 or email: barb.batie@gmail.com.

In addition to the nominee's name, please submit a brief note on why you think she/he is deserving of the honor.

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.



Backpack program provides bootcamp experience for Creighton students

In the field • (left) Creighton University professor Carol Zuegner explains how tools for field reporters have evolved through the years. The school's immersive backpack program takes students to all parts of the world. *Photo by Lori Potter*

IRENE NORTH

In Vietnam, journalists brought weighty typewriters so they could write and edit in the field before sending their stories off to their editors.

If they wanted to film something, it was another set of heavy accessories. They could forget using a telephone.

In five decades since then, communications for journalists have gotten smaller and better.

Backpack journalism allows journalists to use new media tools and relatively inexpensive video equipment to produce documentaries. The tools of the trade can fit in a backpack and is changing the way journalism is being made, particularly in remote areas.

Carol Zuegner, a professor at Creighton University, spoke to attendees at spring conference about how these tools are changing how journalism is done and provided tips on how to produce video content, regardless of the organization.

At Creighton, the College of Arts and Sciences' Departments of Theology and Journalism, Media and Computing have been collaborating on award-winning documentaries about people in developing countries and marginalized societies.

Theologian-documenta-

ry filmmaker John O'Keefe, visual artist-filmmaker Tim Guthrie and Zuegner work with students in a five-week summer immersion course to produce minidocumentaries, blogs and other multimedia content. They have filmed in Uganda, the Dominican Republic, rural southwestern Alaska and on the border between the United States and Mexico in Nogales, Arizona. The group returned to Uganda on May 31.

According to O'Keefe, "the goal of these trips is not to help or change life for the people we encounter so much as it's about changing yourself, of coming to an awareness of one's own experience and life and impact, and taking that forward for the rest of your life."

The five-week program consists of two weeks on location, a week of "bootcamp" to learn about photography, video, writing blogs and what the story will be, and two weeks editing the rough cut.

Zuegner works in the Creighton Backpack Journalism program as the story coordinator. She helps edit the video to translate the storytelling to film.

"The hardest thing for me is you can't make any noise," she said. "As a print reporter, I'm always making noise. It was the hardest thing for me to learn."

The class is an unusual

combination, but Zuegner said it has been the best experience of her professional and personal life.

"It's changed my life completely," she said.

Her experiences have led her to Northern Uganda and working with Catholic relief services to focus on a school where teachers are sheltering young women in danger of being kidnapped and taken back to South Sudan to be used as child brides. She has also worked along the U.S.-Mexican border with the Kino Border Initiative, a group of six united Catholic organizations who provide direct assistance, education, research and advocacy to people, while attempting to foster bi-national solidarity on migration.

"We choose these locations based on where we have connections for the story," she said. "We are trying to go to safe places in the developing world."

O'Keefe travels ahead on scouting trips to find people to interview. Even then, sometimes people don't show up for interviews.

While Creighton waives tuition fees for students to participate, it is not a vacation. The group works long hours.

Zuegner hopes to plan a trip to Eastern Europe soon. One of the donors to the program would like to

see stories from there, particularly from the Balkans, she said.

Zuegner has come a long way from learning how to type on a typewriter. She firmly believes it is never too late to learn something new.

"The tools are available and most are relatively easy to use," she said. "Just try it and see what happens."

Some of her best tips for shooting video are to always use a tripod, make sure you have space for editing, use the rule of thirds and be quiet when the camera is rolling.

"Sound matters more than almost anything, even when shooting video," she said.

Zuegner encourages everyone to learn from their mistakes. It's the only way to get better.

"We are so afraid of failure, but say yes to something that scares you," she said. "I had no idea what it was going to be like and it changed my life."

Through the challenge of backpack journalism, Zuegner has become more active in human rights issues and can now say yes to just about anything.

"This really opened my eyes to social justices and ideas I needed to pay attention to," she said. "And if I can bring 20 adults to Uganda to tell a story, I can do anything."

Cut the clutter of social media to boost engagement

In the field • (l-r) Joan Lukas and Leanne Morman provide practice PR tips and social media strategies during a spring conference session.

Photo by LuAnn Schindler



LUANN SCHINDLER

The average individual spends 12 hours and seven minutes consuming some type of media each day.

In any given month, a single consumer reaches for a smart phone or tablet and uses 30 different applications. That translates to nine apps a day.

How do you guarantee you're reaching and connecting with an audience?

According to Joan Lukas and Leanne Morman of Lukas Partners, an Omaha public relations firm, the first step to cutting through the clutter is to identify your key audience.

"Start from inside your organization to understand your key audiences and determine who you are reaching and who you want to reach," Morman said.

What's the best way to gauge engagement?

Utilize web and social media analytics.

Lukas said it is imperative to find out who views your website and social media feeds.

"Are these people you want to further engage?" Lukas asked.

Once you've established audience information, organizations need to consider engagement.

Is your social media social or is it an aggregator of content?

Public relations firms,

like Lukas Partners, assist with linking businesses with influencers.

Think about the influencer effect and how it boosts business.

The PR pros shared examples of how one client links with local influencers - primarily bloggers - to generate business buzz.

According to Lukas, 92 percent of consumers trust user-generated content and word-of-mouth more than traditional advertising.

Utilizing an influencer marketing campaign can drive 16 times more engagement than paid or owned media.

Another tip to cut clutter - especially social media posts that only include text - is to add a visual element.

"Think visual," Morman said. "Market products visually."

Examples shared included talking to local home stores or home decorating bloggers to share trends or photos of how they implement decor or to speak with grocery store owners to find hot foodie trends.

Show, don't tell, always makes an impact, both experts agreed.

"People trust journalists more than social platforms, according to the Edelman Trust Barometer," Morman said.

Media outlets can establish influencers by highlighting reporters,

photographers, publishers or editors.

Promoting key players, in and away from the office, builds key audiences.

Lukas said it is important to ensure that influencers post engaging content that reflects the goals of the organization.

Another way to cut clutter is to have media outlets of different genres join forces.

It's a good way to promote what is in the upcoming paper.

Live video is another strategy to attract engagement.

"People watch live videos three times longer than non-live video," Lukas said.

Morman said Twitter reports that video on the platform is six times as likely to be retweeted as a photo.

Live ideas include area events, behind-the-scenes segments, story updates, interviews and stories of the day.

One of the most important ideas behind posting content is to keep the message consistent.

"Not everyone who follows you sees your post on social media," Morman said.

Finally don't be afraid to embrace something new.

"Explore other digital mediums that make sense for your organization," Lukas said.

Connect

PAULA LAVIGNE

•Facebook page for Violated book:
www.facebook.com/ViolatedBook/
•Follow Paula on Twitter:
<https://twitter.com/pinepaula>

CAROL ZUEGNER

•Find out more about the Backpack Journalism Program at Creighton University, read blog posts and view the films at
<https://ccas.creighton.edu/current-students/backpack-journalism>

JOAN LUKAS and LEANNE MORMAN

•Check out the Lukas Partners' blog at <http://www.lukaspartners.com/lukas-partners-blog/>
•Follow Lukas Partners on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/LukasPartners>
•Several of you asked for their presentation from the conference, *Cutting Through the Clutter: Reaching Your Audience in a Digital World* and they have generously shared it with us.
Contact Pres. Sherry Thompson if you would like a copy.

GRETCHEN GARRISON

•Odyssey through Nebraska blog
<https://odysseythroughnebraska.com/>

Nebraska travels result in book

LUANN SCHINDLER

A natural curiosity about Nebraska's people and places took Gretchen Garrison on a detour.

While homeschooling her children, Garrison searched for stories about the state and what she found was limited.

So the teacher embarked on a journey to bring the past and present to life via her blog, *Odyssey Through Nebraska*.

Since July 1, 2013, Garrison has told stories about Nebraska's unique and storied sites and individuals on the popular site.

Success with the blog led to a book deal with Arcadia Publishing.

Detour Nebraska: Historic Destinations & Natural Wonders is the product of her travels and research.

Garrison said when many people think of Nebraska, they consider the view while traveling along I-80.

That limited view does not include the rich landscape of the Pine Ridge region or the rolling hills

along the Missouri River in northeast Nebraska.

With her husband's blessing, Garrison set off on a whirlwind tour to wrap up details and research for sites in the book.

She said she learned several lessons through her adventures.

Talking to people at sites and museums, Garrison realized a sense of pride about her home state and what it has to offer.

She suggested striking up conversations with museum personnel to gain the story behind the stories.

Another lesson learned while traveling is that with the state split between two time zones, it's always best to call ahead of time to guarantee a site will be open.

Perhaps, most importantly, Garrison said she realized it's important to take a map and keep the tank filled since distances between towns, especially in the panhandle, result in long, isolated stretches of road.

Garrison included



Travelogue • Author Gretchen Garrison shared a few of her favorite stories contained in her book, *Detour Nebraska*, as well as a few of the glitches she encountered on her whirlwind trip to wrap up a few of the entries. Garrison spoke to NPW members during the awards banquet.
Photo by Lori Potter

humorous examples about her travels to research sites for the book.

During a family trip to Minnesota, Garrison and company detoured onto Highway 12, in search of the Ionia volcano, "a detour that lasted longer than the drive to Minnesota," Garrison joked.

And then there was the one time she couldn't find a site near Guide Rock and

ended up on a muddy minimum maintenance road.

But, the end result was worth it, Garrison said.

While the book includes well-known stops, like Joslyn Museum in Omaha and Carhenge near Alliance, it also focuses on lesser-known historic sites, including a fur trade museum near Chadron and the 100th Meridian Museum in Cozad.

Stay connected via social media and discussion

- **NPW Facebook page**
- **Member-only NPW group**
 - **LinkedIn**
 - **PD Digest**

Linked in



Rutledge, Shannon, Honored Before a Full House

CHERYL ALBERTS IRWIN

More than 100 people welcomed the two new members of the Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame.

Kathleen Rutledge, former editor-in-chief of the *Lincoln Journal Star*, and Rose Ann Shannon, former news director at KETV in Omaha, were the 21st and 22nd inductees. The May 5 event was at Omaha's Regency Lodge during Nebraska Press Women's noon luncheon.

HOF members in the audience were Deanna Sands (2011), Maxine Moul (2013), Leta Powell Drake (2014), Joan Rossiter Burney (2015) and Eileen Wirth (2017).

Rutledge was the first woman executive editor of a Nebraska metropolitan daily newspaper. The English major had taken some journalism classes, then became death and weather clerk at the *Lincoln Journal*. When she applied for the statehouse reporting position, one of the managers suggested they ask Rutledge's husband, Ted Kooser, if it would be all right to offer her the job. Another manager stepped in, saying that would be unnecessary. Rutledge spent the next 12 years covering the Nebraska Legislature and state government. When the *Lincoln Journal Star* was formed from the city's two dailies in 1995, Rutledge was named the new city editor. She was editor-in-chief until her 2007 retirement.

Among her challenges was facing outrage at publicizing a story about a Husker football coach being ousted before it was officially announced. Rutledge defended her staff and the paper by telling the truth.

In October 2014, Rutledge was inducted into the Nebraska Journalism Hall of Fame in recognition of her 30 years of working for Lincoln's daily newspapers.

Shannon's name was synonymous with broadcast journalism for 45 years. She was KMTV's first full-time female reporter and during her dozen years there, did nearly

every newsroom job. Her stories include the 1975 Omaha tornado, an award-winning series of stories by Omahans devastated by enormous medical bills, and an acclaimed documentary, "Harvest of Frustration," that chronicled the farm crisis of the early 1980s.

After joining KETV, by 1993 Shannon was promoted to news director, a position she held for more than 24 years. Shannon and her husband, retired *Omaha World-Herald* photographer Phil Johnson, were both in news; however she once found out he was going to the Middle East only because he was looking for his passport.

In addition to her decades in broadcast journalism, Shannon has been extensively involved in journalism education, free press issues, cameras in the courtroom, the Omaha Press Club and mentoring young journalists. An inductee of the Omaha Press Club Hall of Fame in 2012, Shannon retired in February, 2018.

The two honorees stated that the truth will survive, even though it is harder to discern in today's world.

This hall is named for Marian Andersen of Omaha, a graduate of what is now the COJMC in Andersen Hall at the University of



Honorees • (above) Kathleen Rutledge and (below) Rose Ann Shannon were inducted into the Marian Andersen Nebraska Women Journalists Hall of Fame, May 5. Both spoke about what piqued their interest in journalism and how it shaped their quest for truth in reporting.

Photos by Lori Potter



Nebraska-Lincoln, where member portraits are located. The Hall recognizes women journalists who through talent, initiative, intelligence and stamina, have made a difference for their profession, their communities and those who follow.

Candidates must have a Nebraska background by birth or work experience, having spent a significant amount of their professional career in Nebraska; and must have attained a position of prominence in their fields. Judging is on contributions to the profession, achievements within the profession and service to communities.

Nominations will be accepted from the public in early 2019, with details to be released later.

Communications Contest Award Winners

Writing

1A - News story - Newspaper

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
 2. Irene North, Scottsbluff
 3. Tammy Bain, North Platte
- HM. Erika Pritchard, Kearney

1B - News story - Magazine

1. Cindy Murphy McMahon, Omaha
2. Barb Batie, Lexington

2 - Continuing coverage

1. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
 2. Irene North, Scottsbluff
 3. Mary Hollopeter, Wood Lake
- HM. Delores Meister, West Point

4 - Enterprise reporting

1. Irene North, Scottsbluff
2. Lori Potter, Kearney

5 - Special series

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

7A - Editorial/Opinion - Newspaper

1. Bette Pore, Grand Island
- HM. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

7B - Editorial/Opinion - Magazine or newsletter

1. Irene North, Scottsbluff

8A - Feature story - Newspaper

1. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney
 2. Irene North, Scottsbluff
 3. Lori Potter, Kearney
- HM. Tammy Bain, North Platte

8B - Feature story - Magazine or newsletter

1. Cassie Rief, Columbus
 2. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek
 3. Erika Pritchard, Kearney
- HM. Joni Ransom, Grand Island

9A - Personality profile - 500 words or fewer

1. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

9B - Personality profile - more than 500 words

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
 2. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney
 3. Barb Batie, Lexington
- HM: Tammy Bain, North Platte

10B - Agriculture articles

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
 2. Barb Batie, Lexington
 3. Kerry Hoffschneider, York
- HM. Delores Meister, West Point

10C - A&E articles

1. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
2. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek
3. Delores Meister, West Point

10D - Business articles

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
 2. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney
 3. Barb Batie, Lexington
- HM. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
Erika Pritchard, Kearney
Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

10E - Education articles

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
2. Heather Johnson, North Platte
3. Barb Batie, Lexington

10F - Fashion articles

1. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

10G - Food articles

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
 2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
 3. Barb Batie, Lexington
- HM. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney
Erika Pritchard, Kearney

★ CONGRATULATIONS! ★

10H - Government or political articles

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
2. Erika Pritchard, Kearney
3. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

10I - Environmental articles

1. Erika Pritchard, Kearney
2. Lori Potter, Kearney
3. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

10J - History articles

1. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney
 2. Erika Pritchard, Kearney
 3. Lori Potter, Kearney
- HM. Irene North, Scottsbluff

10K - Hobby or craft articles

1. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
2. Delores Meister, West Point

10L - Home articles

1. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney

10M - Health & fitness articles

2. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney

10N - Religion articles

1. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney
 3. Erika Pritchard, Kearney
- HM. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

10P - Science or technology articles

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
2. Barb Batie, Lexington
3. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

10Q - Social issues articles

1. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney
2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

10R - Sports articles

1. Heather Johnson, North Platte
2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

10R - Travel articles

3. Erika Pritchard, Kearney

11A - Columns - Humorous

1. Lori Clinch, North Platte
2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
3. Barb Batie, Lexington

11B - Columns - General

1. Barb Batie, Lexington
 2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
 3. Jill Martin, Seward
- HM. Mary Hollopeter, Wood Lake

11C - Columns - Informational

1. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
2. Barb Batie, Lexington

11D - Columns - Personal Opinion

1. Mary Jane Skala, Kearney
 2. Irene North, Scottsbluff
 3. Lori Potter, Kearney
- HM. Kerry Hoffschneider, York

12 - Headlines

1. Bette Pore, Grand Island
2. Terri Hahn, Osceola
3. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

Editing & Page Design

13A - Single page or section editing - Newspaper

1. Terri Hahn, Osceola
2. Bette Pore, Grand Island
3. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

14A - Sections or supplements infrequent - Newspaper

1. Terri Hahn, Osceola

14B - Sections or supplements infrequent - Magazine

1. Joni Ransom, Grand Island

Communications Contest Award Winners

15A - Publication editing - Newspaper

2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

15B - Publication editing - Magazine

1. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek
2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

16A - Page design - Newspaper

1. Bette Pore, Grand Island
2. Terri Hahn, Osceola
3. Jill Martin, Seward

HM. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

16B - Page design - Magazine

1. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek
2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

Photography & Graphics

17A - News or feature photo

1. Jill Martin, Seward
 2. Lori Potter, Kearney
 3. Irene North, Scottsbluff
- HM. Delores Meister, West Point
Heather Johnson, North Platte
LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
Tammy Bain, North Platte

17B - Sports photo

1. Heather Johnson, North Platte
- HM. Lori Potter, Kearney
LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

17C - General photo

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
 2. Erika Pritchard, Kearney
 3. Joni Ransom, Grand Island
- HM. Heather Johnson, North Platte
LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
Jill Martin, Seward

18 - Photo essay

1. Lori Potter, Kearney
2. Erika Pritchard, Kearney

19 - Photographer-writer

1. Irene North, Scottsbluff
 2. Lori Potter, Kearney
 3. Erika Pritchard, Kearney
- HM. Jill Martin, Seward
LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

20A - Graphics

1. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek
2. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

20B - Infographics

1. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

Web & Social Media

28B - Website editing - Corporate

1. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater
- HM. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

30A - Blogs - Nonprofit

1. Molly Klocksinn, Lincoln

30C - Blogs - Personal

1. Tammy Bain, North Platte

31A - Social Media Campaign - Nonprofit

1. Sherry Thompson, Omaha
2. Heather Johnson, North Platte

31B - Social Media Campaign - Corporate or for-profit

1. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

32B - Videos for Website - Corporate or for-profit

- HM. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

Advertising

33 - Single advertisements for print or electronic publication

3. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek
- HM. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

34 - Advertising campaigns

1. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek



**35 - Advertising posters,
billboards, and banners**
HM. LuAnn Schindler, Clearwater

Public Relations

40 - Audiovisuals

1. Jennifer Gjerde, Lincoln

41 - Reports

2. Sherry Thompson, Omaha

42 - Magazines

1. Heather Johnson, North Platte

44A - Newsletters - Nonprofit

1. Sherry Thompson, Omaha

44B - Newsletters - Corporate

1. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

45B - Brochures - Corporate

1. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

46 - Catalogs or manuals

1. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

47 - Direct-mail marketing

HM. Carla Chance, Cedar Creek

48 - News or feature release

1. Jennifer Gjerde, Lincoln
2. Heather Johnson, North Platte

49 - News or feature releases

1. Heather Johnson, North Platte

Speeches

51 - Speeches

3. Mary Hollopeter, Wood Lake

Books & Creative Writing

57B - Nonfiction books

2. Barb Batie, Lexington

Nebraska Press Women

2017 Communications Contest

**May 5, 2018
Omaha, Nebraska**

Marianne Beel Sweepstakes Awards

Lori Potter, first

LuAnn Schindler, second

Mary Jane Skala, third





Bringing home the hardware!

(above): Eighteen winners in the professional communications contest celebrate their awards. Individuals who earned first place and are members of the National Federation of Press Women will have their work judged in the national contest. Those awards will be presented in Bethlehem, PA., during the national convention.

Photo by Mary Pat Finn-Hoag

(below): Sixteen high school students received awards during the noon luncheon at the spring convention. Omaha Westside won the sweepstakes award.

Photo by LuAnn Schindler





One Two Three

(l-r): Top winners in the Marianne Beel Communications contest were Lori Potter, *Kearney Hub*, first place; LuAnn Schindler, *Clearwater Record-Ewing News*, second place, and Mary Jane Skala, *Kearney Hub*, third place.

Photo by
Mary Pat Finn-Hoag



NFPW Conference

"Where Your Story Begins" is the theme for the Sept. 6-8 NFPW Communications Conference in Bethlehem, Penn.

If you have never attended an NFPW conference, consider applying for a first-timer grant that covers a portion of the registration fee. A link to download the application form is available at <https://www.nfpw.org/educationFund.php>. The deadline to apply is July 16.

And if you have attended a conference, you know how much fun they are. The upcoming conference features a great lineup of keynote speakers and sessions.

NPW treasurer Lori Potter will present "Fighting Back against 'Fake News'" as one of the sessions. With "fake news" undermining confidence in the media, Potter will talk about how Nebraska Press Women chose to fight back. Attendees will view NPW's awareness campaign created by Jill Clafin and discuss this important issue.

Remembering Ruth

BARB BATIE

Feisty, witty, energetic and full of spunk, these were the words Ruth Raymond Thone's peers used to describe her when contacted early in 2015 for her entry in the NFPW Communicator of Achievement competition.

The 86-year-old freelance writer, author, radio commentator, community activist and former First Lady of Nebraska died May 3, less than two months after her husband, former Gov. Charley Thone. A long-time NPW and NFPW member, she was named Nebraska's COA in the fall of 2014.

A native of Scottsbluff, Thone began work in a print shop during high school. After graduation, she pursued a degree in journalism at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, returning in the summers to work on her hometown paper.

The first inklings of her feisty nature came during her stint as editor of the *Daily Nebraskan*, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln collegiate newspaper. It was 1952, the height of the McCarthy era, and it came to her attention that a committee of the Lincoln American Legion was investigating a well-respected professor.

Thone took them on in fiery words, "Sen. Joe McCarthy may be in Wisconsin, but the residents of Lincoln have (his) equivalent in the Lincoln American Legion Post 3. *The Nebraskan* will not stop or slow down in its efforts to rid our citizenry of this

current fear of thinking, of disputing, or speaking truthfully."

Publicly criticized by the Legion Committee chairman, Thone, the *Daily Nebraskan's* first woman editor, stood her ground. Her writing caught the attention of a deputy attorney general named Charles Thone who had also been serving on the Legion committee. He not only quit the committee, but also ended up asking her out on a date. Within three months they were engaged and on Aug. 16, 1953, they were married.

The next 17 years saw the arrival of daughters Anna, Marie and Amy and all the while Ruth continued to hone her writing skills. Her experiences included writing a column for the *Omaha World-Herald* from 1953-55, serving as advertising manager and writer for the Nebraska State Education Association publication, "Nebraska Education News," and writing articles for the *World Herald's* "Magazine of the Midlands."

In 1971 Charley was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives representing Nebraska's First District. Ruth and the girls followed him to Washington, D.C. In typical fashion she didn't stay idle for long. While in D.C. she worked in the publications office of the U.S. Department of Education and was involved in a host of committees and groups. She also wrote contributions to the *Washington Post Sunday* magazine and the *Christian Science Monitor*.

After eight years living in Virginia, Charley ran for and was elected Governor back home. Her spunky nature led her to defy societal expectations of what a First Lady of the state should do and be. She famously slid down the swooping staircase in the Governor's Mansion during an interview, and the resulting photograph made the front page of every major paper in the state.

She continued to tackle controversial issues, such as the plight of dispossessed Palestinians. She joined Common Cause, a governmental watchdog group and advocated against the state's death penalty.

One of her greatest passions was joining four friends in founding "The Gather Place" in 1982 near Lincoln's downtown business district. The house offers classes and lectures and is also a soup kitchen that serves 30,000 meals a year.

Then the writer did what every journalist claims they want to do. She wrote a book, in fact three books. They included "Women and Aging, Celebrating Ourselves," "FAT: A Fate Worse Than Death, Women, Weight and Appearances," and "Being Home," a collection of 68 essays written for the *Lincoln Star* between 1982-86.

She battled alcoholism, journeying back to sobriety at age 45. That life lesson led her to serve on the



board of Houses of Hope, which administer halfway houses serving people recovering from alcohol and drug dependencies.

Later she gave up smoking; something she noted was harder than giving up alcohol. She survived an aneurysm and a series of mini-strokes in the past decade and through it all continued to write. At the time of her COA award in 2014 she was still writing a twice-monthly column for "The Neighborhood Extra," a Saturday supplement to the *s*.

While her life as a politician's wife kept her from serving as an NPW officer or on a committee, she helped out over the years as a communications contest judge and as a convention speaker. She was also a consistent winner in both the NPW and NFPW communications contests.

When interviewed for her COA packet, Thone continued to share her wit and wisdom by dishing out gems on growing older. One of her friends had asked her, "You mean your memory comes and goes?"

A pause and then Ruth quipped, "No, mostly goes."

"Old age is a bewildering time," she said, "but I'm happy I didn't miss it."

Thone satisfies curiosity with journalism career

By Terri Hahn

For former Nebraska first lady Ruth Thone, journalism was the only career choice — there were no other options.

"It's all I ever wanted to do," she said, reflecting back on her long career. "I guess it was a way to justify my innate curiosity. I like to ask people questions and this was a way to do it."

Thone had worked for the Scottsbluff Star-Herald while attending high school back in the late 1940s. She said it was not difficult at all for her, breaking into a profession that, at the time, seemed to be dominated by men.

"I always considered journalism one of the equal professions," she said, "because there were almost as many women as men. But maybe, though, that was because of the 'women's sections' that were a big part of newspapers at the time."

It was a big part of the newspaper, perhaps, but not one that interested Thone, always a freethinker.

"Of course, I always wanted to be with the guys," she said of her start in a newspaper career. So that's where she was, while working at both the Star-Herald and the Lincoln Star, where she worked after graduating from the University of Nebraska School of Journalism in 1953.

Thone has continued her writing career through the years, writing a weekly newspaper column for four years, writing articles for magazines and providing commentary for Nebraska Public Radio. She also has published several books, including "Women and Aging: Celebrating Ourselves," and a collection of essays, "Being Home." She is currently working on a manuscript, "Fat, Women, Weight and Appearance," and would like to publish commentaries in a book.



Ruth Thone

"I'm just a writer at heart," she said. Thone said she likes the "strong women" who are currently writing syndicated columns, including Ellen Goodman and Molly Ivins.

When asked about the changes she has seen during her years as a working journalist, she replied that, in the 1990s, advertising seems to be driving the news, a trend she really doesn't approve of.

"We used to spit on advertising in the newsroom," she said. "We felt in the newsroom that we were independent and free."

Now, Thone said, advertisers have more influence, something she attributes to newspapers being driven by the bottom line.

Thone also said that while advertising and public relations professions have expanded for women, women in television are still judged by the way they look, not by what they have to offer the viewers.

"When I look at the next 50 years in the journalism profession," she said, "I don't have a clue (what will happen), but I don't think it will comfort me."

When looking toward the future, Thone said she is sad to see that some materials (such as newspapers, magazines and books) may be available only on the Internet.

"I like the printed word," she said. "Cuddling up with a cup of tea and your computer screen just isn't as appealing as curling up with a good book."

Thone also said that modern journalism isn't as deep or thoughtful as in the past and that many times the attitude is just "take the press release and write it up."

Again, she attributes that attitude to a "bottom line" mentality that is pushed by the relatively few chains that own an increasing percentage of daily newspapers in the United States.

When asked to give advice for young women entering a journalism career today, she replied, "Work to be financially independent, and explore all your options."

Words of advice Thone has clearly taken to heart. ☛

From "50 Years of Nebraska Press Women" published in 1996



A group of journalists from Cameroon were in the U.S. in early May as part of an international visitor leadership program conducted by the Office of International Visitors, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and U.S. Department of State. Locally, the Lincoln Council for International Visitors and the Mayor's Committee for International Friendship invited Cheryl Alberts Irwin, vice president of Nebraska Press Women, to discuss "Empowering Female Journalists" with the Cameroonians. They were interested in NPW's structure, its functions and programs and moral support. Journalists also met with faculty from the College of Journalism and Mass Communications, and visited the offices of Secretary of State, Election Commissioner and Nebraska Educational Telecommunications.

Courtesy photo

Successful conference, successful members

SHERRY THOMPSON

What an inspiring conference! Thank you to everyone who attended and especially to those who played a role in putting together the many pieces of the event.

It was exciting to have more than half of NPW's members attend at least one part of the conference. Many were there for the full day, and other members joined us for lunch or dinner. I hope that everyone was able to make the most of the opportunity to network with other communications, learn from great speakers, connect with old friends and meet new ones, and celebrate accomplishments in our profession.

We were honored to have a full house for the luncheon recognizing the high school communi-

cations contest winners, scholarship recipients and Hall of Fame inductees. It's encouraging to see the high school students' enthusiasm, as several of them attended conference sessions.

NPW's profile in our communities is increasing, thanks to outreach efforts by our members. Jill Claffin was a presenter for Nebraska Press Association's conference, where she talked about fake news. Several of those in attendance asked for a copy of the presentation to share in their communities. Additionally, NPW members manned a booth at the conference, sharing information on NPW with attendees. Cheryl Alberts Irwin recently spoke with journalists from Cameroon who were visiting Lincoln

as part of the International Visitor Leadership Program.

While NPW is moving forward, there is more to do. I invite you to share your talents. Maybe you can help with membership or social media, or perhaps you could provide input for NPW's visibility plan. Elections will be held at the fall conference for president, vice president, treasurer and secretary, and candidates are needed for all offices. Board of director members will be appointed in the fall as well. If you are interested in learning more about these opportunities or volunteering to help,



please let me know. It takes all of us working together to continue the momentum.

This issue of the NPW newsletter is full of great information about the conference and other recent activities. Please take time to read through it and keep up to date with NPW.

Enjoy the summer!
Sherry



*To our 2018 spring conference sponsors, we express our thanks.
Their support assists with programming and student attendance.*

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