Public officials won't be able to shield their personal e-mail addresses if they use the accounts for government business, a state appellate court ruled last month. Government watchers hailed the decision as a win for government transparency and said the precedent could set a national trend for additional states and the federal government to require disclosure of public officials' personal e-mail addresses.

"This is a significant win for the people's right to know," said Richard Pickett, director of Public Citizen's Congress Watch. "This decision can set a precedent for states around the nation and the federal government to have to release public officials' personal e-mail addresses in order to shield the personal, non-governmental correspondence that is far too common in Washington." The attorney general's office ordered the district to release details of the out-of-court settlement despite efforts by Chesapeake to keep it private through a confidentiality agreement signed when the company's strategy.

The Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce has released its comprehensive, hyper-local 2016 Greater Fort Worth Media Directory, a 60-page guide to print media in Tarrant, Johnson, Parker and Hood counties, area television stations and cable operators, radio stations, and other print and online publications. The guide's mission is to "link potential employers with job seekers in public relations, media affairs, advertising/sales, event planning, graphic design, marketing, and corporate and employee relations. Employers who are members of the participating organizations may post a job for $75; cost for non-members is $200. For more information about the directory, contact Angela Rogers, APR, and Margaret Ritsch at warepr.com.

The Fort Worth school district settled its lawsuit with Chesapeake Energy over natural gas royalties for $1 million, a lawsuit that began in 2010. The district accused Chesapeake of峡包making misleading representations峡包about royalty rates for gas it produced and sold on behalf of the district from lands it leases. The district was represented by Dallas and Fort Worth attorneys, including Daniel Z. Freifeld and Jennifer Wysocki of Freifeld Glovsky & Pyle.

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Laura Van Hoosier
IABC local update: The 2016 Quill Awards will be announced at the IABC Dallas luncheon Thursday, May 26, at the Charles W. Eisemann Center in Richardson.

Register by May 6
Place: City Club of Fort Worth, 301 Commerce St. (map)
Cost: chamber members $20; students $20; walk-ups add $5

Streight Stuff

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The Day Americans Tried to Fight Homelessness

Sometimes you just have to take matters into your own hands—and someone else’s. That’s what happened Sunday, May 25, 1986, as millions of people created Hands Across America, a noble but complicated attempt to help 4,100-mile chain across the nation. He hoped to raise in the neighborhood of $50 million, which is a pretty nice neighborhood, even if you’re not homeless.

Such an ambitious event would require ambitious publicity, which meant enlisting more superstars. Again, Kragen delivered: Michael Jackson, Barbra Streisand, Bill Cosby, Oprah, Robert Schuller, Gregory Hines, Tony Dorsett, Bob Seger, Prince, Ken Kragen, David Copperfield, Tip O’Neill, Brooke Shields, and Bill Lawrence, a music promoter and activist who produced “We Are the World.”

Executive producers had been enthusiastic about the project. The idea was to create awareness and encourage people to help their neighbors. The event would let the world know that there were problems to be solved. Kragen hoped the attention would force the government to act. It was a noble endeavor to highlight and solve the problem of hunger, especially in the U.S. The event would help raise money and get the government to act. The effort received more than $10 million in free media coverage, and 10,000 volunteers proved their knowledge of public relations.

President Ronald Reagan also participated, despite a week before, declaring that the only reason for hunger in the U.S. was people “not knowing where or how to get this help.” That stirred a certain backlash, and two days before the event, several people decided not to participate and that they had wanted to all along but had been concerned about security. Whatever the reason, there they were in the chain, along with aides and Secret Service agents, who must have been terribly uncomfortable not having a free hand.

Joining the A-listers was a remarkably diverse crowd, from Hell’s Angels to hospital. In Maryland, where authorities had prohibited use of a major bridge, participants used boats, rafts and scuba divers to extend the chain. In California, New Jersey inmates joined hands in a prison yard. Mickey Mouse and Goofy were in the chain, as were Chewbacca, the Star Wars droids and the Pittsburgh Pirates’ parrot mascot. Illinois had 50 Abraham Lincoln impersonators, while 54 Elvises joined hands in Fort Worth and Decatur, but complaints came in from regions that were not. Sen. Edward Kennedy lodged a formal protest, and Sen. Tip O’Neill helped organize a counter-event.

Ultimately, Hands Across America missed its goal both in participants and money. Only about six million people joined hands (10 million people had been expected), and at Cleveland’s Sea World, seals and whales joined, uh, fins. The Gallery

$36,500 in scholarships. You couldn’t help but smile. It’s all here photos posted, coming soon). The SPJ honors banquet in April distributed 24 awards for — Kay Pirtle photos (and watch that page for more — Jessamy Brown photos — Gigi Westerman — Bill Lawrence; — Kay Pirtle photos

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Columbia Journalism Review: "There is no greater antidote to the "information void" than the American press. It is not a self-appointed movement of "liberal activists". It is a set of institutions, processes, and individuals that are devoted to the nation's public welfare. The press is the true guardian of the public interest. It is the press's responsibility to hold public officials accountable, to provide a forum for the public to express its views, and to offer a balanced and accurate reporting of public affairs."

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Miss the chance to learn vital career skills, network with professionals, reunite with old friends, and party like a journalist in the Big Easy. More information on the Worthy Awards and other awards programs, but why is it so important?

The Texas Tribune: The LaRocque Family catalog ...

The Onion: "One of the accomplishments I'm most proud of is that I've never missed a deadline."

Daily Kos: "Why did you join PRSA?

Greater Fort Worth PrSA Member Spotlight

May 2016

Rachel Makutuya

GFW PRSA position: occasional sender of tweets during luncheons

First PR job

GFW PRSA chapter: member

What were your initial expectations of your first PR job?

What are your current responsibilities at your PRSA Chapter?

What's a project you've worked on that you're most proud of?

What are the biggest challenges you've faced in your career?

What is the single most important lesson you've learned in your career?

What advice do you have for those starting out in PR?

Citing how not to ETFs... "It really is a scandal, and I think most of the press coverage has been quite

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