In these times when journalists are disrespected, condemned, ridiculed, assaulted and constantly faced with layoffs, pay cuts and worse, let it be known that we honor and support journalists and their work. Keep on. It is important to the people and essential to democracy itself. — Roger Simons
Deadlines are coming, so pay attention. SPJ is holding a reduced-dues push in August in advance of the Excellence in Journalism national convention in San Antonio, Sept. 5-7. The drive is timed to entice new, renewing or rejoining members to attend EIJ19 at the member registration rate and save $200 off the nonmember price. Online registration ends Aug. 12; any registrations after that will have to be done on-site in San Antonio.

*Abbott should have blamed lawmakers for a disaster, but instead he blamed Hurricane Harvey.*

**POWER TO THE PEOPLE**

DMN Watchdog Dave Lieber was named this year’s first-place winner for general interest columns in large publications by the National Society of Newspaper Columnists. He wrote the two winning columns in 2018 — one about a single mother who fought for restitution from a used car dealer in northwest Dallas and another about Marie Tippit, whose husband, Dallas police officer J.D. Tippit, was fatally shot by Lee Harvey Oswald minutes before his capture in 1963. Now back to real time:

- Abbott should have blamed lawmakers for a disaster, but instead he blamed Hurricane Harvey.
- How to protect your identity with a free lifetime credit freeze.
- One year after its merger, AT&T keeps raising its fees.
- This is how Texas lawmakers avoided true property tax reform.
- If your driver’s license lacks a star, you might need to spend hours at the license center.
- Google is not your friend, and with its Chrome browser and Maps, it could be your enemy.
- He didn’t like his appraisal district, but unlike the rest of us, he did something about it.

**PEOPLE & PLACES**

Published in June: “The Best American Newspaper Narratives,” Volume 6, a collection of the 11 winners of the 2018 Best American Newspaper Narrative Writing Contest at the Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Conference, hosted by the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism at the University of North Texas. Fort Worth SPJ finance VP Gayle Reaves, a member of the team that won the 1994 Pulitzer Prize in International Reporting, edited the anthology. More here.
Do you really need a reason to chill with friends on a hot summer day? DFW Hispanic Communicators and Fort Worth SPJ threw a mixer and a pool party, respectively, for members and colleagues in July. Next month: scenes from SPJ.

Shaw to Tennessee law enforcement. He fought deportation to his native El Salvador and was released after an immigration judge ordered his removal.

In the Maldives, MIT experiment fights rising sea levels with nature. In the Indian Ocean, the Great Barrier Reef is under threat from climate change, but efforts are being made to protect it. A $3 million grant from the National Science Foundation supports the effort.

In an attempt to learn more about a June 29 officer-involved shooting, the Denton Record-Chronicle filed a request for information under the Texas Public Information Act on July 2. The newspaper requested body-camera video, the offense report, 911 call audio, dash camera video, audio of calls for service and more. On July 17 a paralegal working with the sheriff’s office told the reporter that the request had been appealed to Paxton, who has roughly eight weeks to make a decision. “When police end up in a confrontation that results in a citizen’s death, that is certainly of very high legitimate interest to the public,” said Jim Hemphill, an attorney with the Texas Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas.

OVER & OUT | John Dycus

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WASHINGTON, DC — “There is no greater agony than carrying untold stories.” — Maya Angelou