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Next at Fort Worth SPJ ... Zoom union discussion Wednesday, Nov. 18 | watch the [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page for details and Z-link

Journalists at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram plan to form a union, and management agreed Nov. 2 to recognize the effort, averting the need for a vote. More than 80% of non-management employees signed union authorization cards, the organizing committee said in a letter seeking recognition. Star-Telegram president and editor **Steve Coffman** said voluntary recognition is the right path. "We share overarching goals to preserve local journalism and produce work that is essential to the lives of people in our community," he said. "I look forward to our continued efforts on those fronts and more." Meanwhile, journalists with The Dallas Morning News and its sister publication, Al Día Dallas, voted to unionize by a margin exceeding 75% (84-28). Both unions would be units of The NewsGuild-Communication Workers of America. More [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#).

QUICK HITS

- Arlington Conservation Council remote monthly program, "Soil Health: The World Beneath Your Feet," with native plant consultant/entrepreneur **Randy Johnson** ("Organic Randy") — 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4. [Info.](#)
- BRIT — it's all happening at the speed of Zoom. [Info.](#)
- GFW PRSA complimentary webinar, "Best of Show Worthy Awards Showcase" — 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4. [Info.](#)
- Dow Jones News Fund — deadline Nov. 9 for college juniors, seniors and graduate students to apply for paid summer 2021 internships in data journalism, digital media, business reporting and multiplatform editing. [Info.](#)
- Meetups: [hosting an online event](#) Fort Worth Chapter – Nonfiction Authors Association ... [Trinity Arts Writers Workshop](#) ... [20BooksTo50k](#) - Michael Anderle ... [Fort Worth Area Journalists Meetup](#) ... [The DFW Bloggers Classroom](#)

IN THE WORKPLACE: GET A JOB *Listings in journalismjobs.com and dfwcommunicators.com appear in this report.* Latino Leaders magazine in Dallas has an immediate opening for an associate editor. [Info.](#) ... Be a breaking news writer for The Dallas Morning News. [Info.](#) ... The Lockhart Post-Register, a rare locally owned and operated community newspaper — in the Barbecue Capital of Texas! — has an opening at editor. [Info.](#) ... The Bryan-College Station Eagle seeks a full-time photographer to be part of a two-person photo team using Nikon equipment to cover news, features and sports, including Texas A&M University athletics. [Info.](#) ... The Austin Business Journal seeks a reporter to cover real estate in one of the hottest markets in the country. [Info.](#) ... WFAA-TV seeks an experienced journalist, someone who understands the art of storytelling and nuance, to take over a weekend evening anchor and enterprise reporting role. [Info.](#)

[more eChaser on p. 2](#)

In these times when journalists are disrespected, condemned, ridiculed, assaulted and constantly face layoffs, pay cuts and worse, let it be known that we honor and support journalists and journalism. Keep at it. Your work is important to the people and essential to democracy itself. - Roger Summers

* In the days of hot type, a chaser was a late edition of the newspaper for which the presses were not stopped until the plates were ready. Those pages were said to be "chasing" a running press.

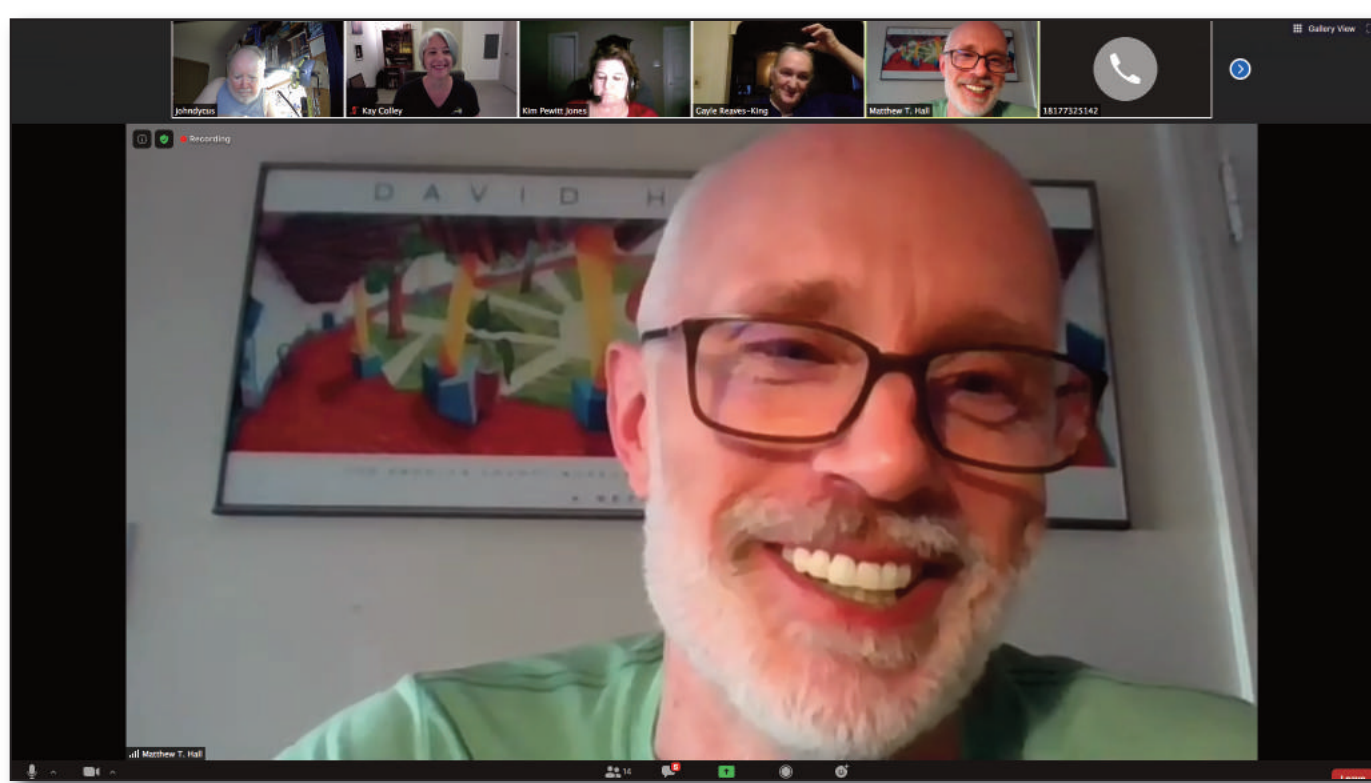
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“What is good journalism?”



When the president drops by to chat

Matt Hall, the 104th SPJ president and the first to be inaugurated in a virtual ceremony, alternately waxed philosophical, fiery and funny with Fort Worth SPJ in an hour-long town hall-style meeting Oct. 14.

“SPJ is the Swiss Army knife of journalism,” he said via Zoom. Strategic plans revolve around what he calls the Core Four: Champions for Journalists, Fighters for the First Amendment, Stewards of Ethical Journalism, and Producers of Journalism’s Future.

Among his agenda items — diversity, supporting working journalists, strategic planning — he emphasized the first as vital for healthy newsrooms and appropriate content. He encourages news outlets to take the matter seriously and share demographic data with their consumers. “I don’t want us to just talk about it,” he said, “I want to do it.”



Matt Hall in his “libel” suit at EIJ2016 in New Orleans. He paid \$200 for it at the Legal Defense Fund auction. SPJ Region 3 coordinator Michael Koretzky had walked in wearing it, then donated it to be auctioned off.

As for his second point, he cited SPJ’s Legal Defense Fund, which provides legal or direct financial assistance, and the First Amendment Forever Fund, a permanent endowment with a more proactive stance. Fort Worth SPJ contributed \$400 to the LDF at this year’s national convention.

Studies and stories have emerged on journalists feeling job insecurity, extreme stress, fatigue and maybe a little fear driven by the pandemic, a collapsed economy and relentless White House attacks. Hall addressed the mental health issue. Between the isolation, the furloughs and the uncertainty of a contentious election year, he acknowledged that he struggles, too. He said: “It’s okay not to be okay.”

Fort Worth board member Madelyn Edwards noted how the Dallas Morning News and Fort Worth Star-Telegram newsrooms intend to unionize, and she asked Hall if SPJ will make a statement. “It’s a tough issue,” he said. “SPJ represents all journalists, including management.”

Hall’s term as president will affect his presence at The San Diego Union-Tribune, where he’s editorial and opinion director. He predicted for SPJ an “important, busy year, made a little more difficult by covid.” But he added that things actually are easier on the budget because nobody’s traveling. He joked that this year might put national SPJ firmly in the black.

His visit reflected two traditions, that the new president make his first public appearance at Fort Worth SPJ and that the chapter give big-deal presenters a miniature branding iron. Former chapter president John Dycus presented the hardware, which he described as “suitable for a large piece of steak.”

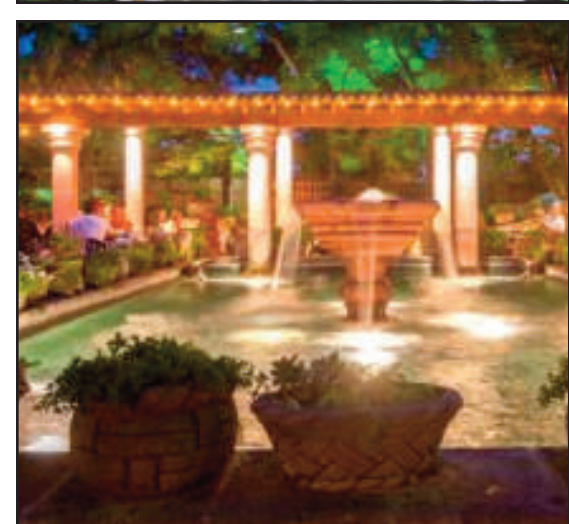
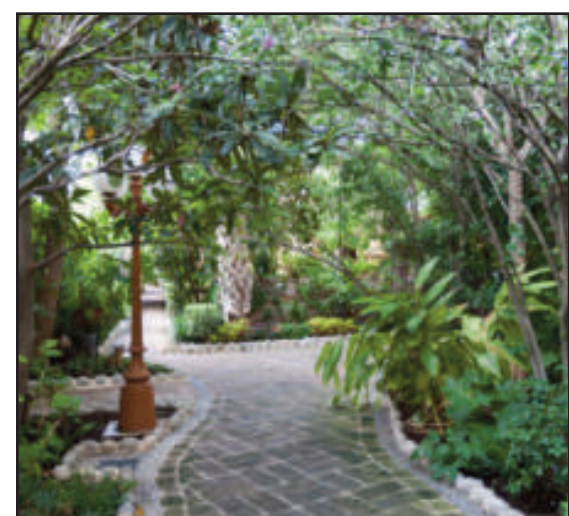
Reach Hall at @sduncovered, mhall@spj.org or 619-987-7786.

– Laurie Barker James

PEOPLE & PLACES Laud, laud! The Associated Collegiate Press in late October awarded a Pacemaker — the Pulitzer Prize of college journalism — to The Collegian at Tarrant County College and The Shorthorn at UT Arlington (UTA in both newspaper and online). Shorthorn adviser Laurie Fox: “Our student journalists are working harder than ever right now. So proud of former student EICs Reese Oxner and Brian Lopez and current EIC Shay Douglas Cohen along with all The Shorthorn and Student Pubs students. It’s a great team!” TCC’s Chris Whitley: “Last year’s editors-in-chief, Juan Ibarra and Jill Bold, as well as current editor-in-chief Mike Wayne and their staffs spent late nights and worked via Zoom to put out digital issues when they couldn’t print the paper. Jocelyn Foster Tatum and Stacy D Luecker deserve tremendous credit for the work they put in every day to guide our students.” ... Tarrant County j-grad (TCCC, UTA) Shelly Conlon, who covers education for the Sioux Falls Argus Leader, won first place in her division for the 2020 Katherine Schneider Journalism Award for Excellence in Reporting on Disability. The award is affiliated with the National Center on Disability in Journalism at Arizona State’s Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and recognizes Conlon’s work on a seven-part series detailing all of the ways South Dakota has failed deaf children for generations. “I’m still wrapping my mind around such an incredible honor,” she said.

more eChaser on p. 3

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F.O.I.F.T. UPDATE: [Even during a pandemic, government must be open with easy access.](#) ... The Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas continues to hear from Texans who have encountered barriers to obtaining public information amid the pandemic. The FOIFT is tracking these problems as it works on solutions for how the Texas Public Information Act and the Texas Open Meetings Act should function during such an unprecedented emergency. [Details.](#) ... The kind of violence **Imani Nembhard** experienced in April 2019 became increasingly common in Williamson County after Sheriff **Robert Chody** invited the camera crews of "Live PD" to feature his department. An Austin American-Statesman analysis of 124 use-of-force reports shows that violent encounters between sheriff's deputies and civilians nearly doubled from 43 in 2017 — the year before "Live PD" joined the department — to 82 in 2019. [Details.](#) ... A visiting state district judge has denied the city of Odessa's request to dismiss a lawsuit by the Odessa American to force the city to comply with public information laws. It took only a few days for Judge **Rodney Satterwhite** to review arguments and rule that the OA's lawsuit should be allowed to proceed. [Details.](#)

OVER & OUT | [John Dycus](#), Fort Worth SPJ

SPJ [denounces in the strongest terms the changes proposed by the Department of Homeland Security to the visa process for foreign journalists wishing to work in the United States.](#) The move is seen as an effort to limit the number of foreign journalists being allowed in the U.S. and a way to intimidate those journalists who are already here. • Five suspended officials at the U.S. Agency for Global Media [are suing the agency](#), its new CEO, **Michael Pack**, and several of his most senior aides, [alleging they are breaking the law](#) in pursuing a pro-**Trump** agenda for Voice of America. • On Oct. 17, Connecticut Sen. **Chris Murphy**, a Democrat, announced legislation to protect journalists from political targeting. This came after reports that **Trump** appointees launched a politically motivated investigation into Voice of America White House reporter **Steve Herman**.

SPJ factoids: Major news outlets are sharing their plans to cover the 2020 election and its results. [The New York Times stationed 20 reporters](#) on the ground in battleground states and 35 photographers across the country with candidates. The Washington Post says [it won't predict the election outcome](#), and the Associated Press says it's ["covering all of these stories the best way we know how": with cold, hard facts.](#)" ...

All but four people on [staff at the student newspaper Washington Square News](#) resigned as a result of tensions building after the paper got a new editorial adviser. According to the students' announcement, issues began when the paper's editor-in-chief was "fired without warning." Washington Square News has been a journalistic training ground for New York University undergraduates since 1973. ...

The Daily Gamecock, the University of South Carolina's student publication, announced that it [would not produce content of any kind](#) for a week. In an editorial, the staff shared that it "made a promise to prioritize mental health not only in our coverage, but in our newsroom — in ourselves." • [Recent studies](#) show that journalists' jobs are affecting their mental health. **Marcella Raymond**, a longtime fixture on WGN-TV in Chicago, [speaks out publicly](#) about post-traumatic stress disorder, which she suffers from as a result of covering violence. It has also been shown that [social media can affect journalists' mental health.](#) ...

Shepard Smith returned to television Oct. 5 for the start of his new general interest nightly newscast on CNBC. The launch comes nearly a year after he abruptly quit Fox News. "We're going to have newsmakers and experts ... but no pundits," he told the Associated Press. "We're going to leave the opinion to others."

Caught my eye: [Clean energy economy: Business and education lead the way.](#) ... [Opinion: Geoengineering is the only solution to climate calamities.](#) ... [How big oil misled the public into believing plastic would be recycled.](#)

Closing words [with gratitude to **Garrison Keillor** and Prairie Home Productions]: "If it sounds like writing, rewrite it." — novelist **Elmore Leonard**

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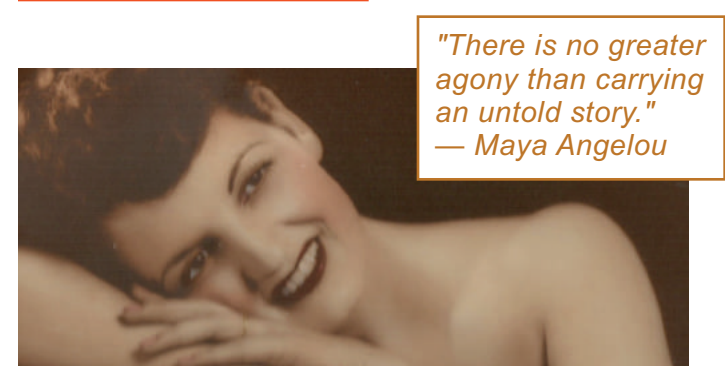
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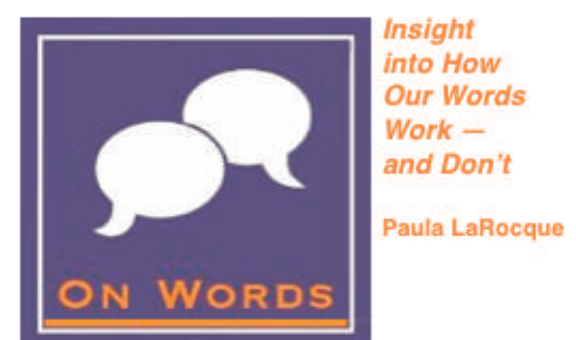
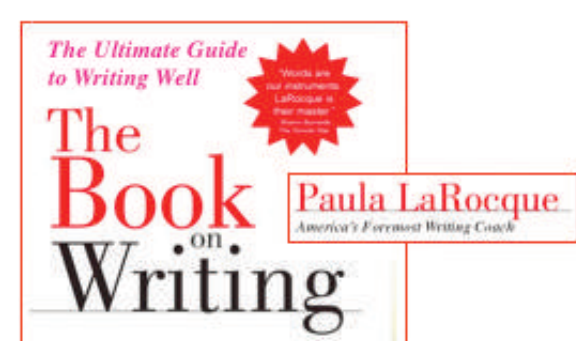
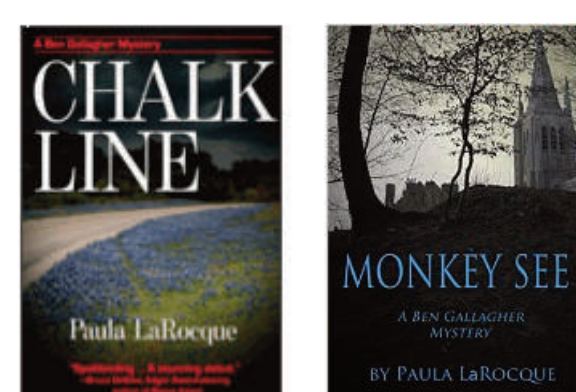


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