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Next at Fort Worth SPJ ...



We can't eat barbecue with you, but we still want to help with your gift list!

For a plethora of pandemic reasons, Fort Worth SPJ can't hold its usual holiday party this year. We will miss **Dave Lieber's** wit and wisdom on journalism and the latest news of his play about **Amon Carter**. We will miss the barbecue and the chance to visit with old friends. But we don't have to miss the raffle. Or the boots! Or the chance to help the JPS Hospital readers library. [Read all about it on the jump.](#)

QUICK HITS

- Arlington Conservation Council — recent programs preserved on YouTube. [Info.](#)
- BRIT — it's all happening at the speed of Zoom. [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](#)

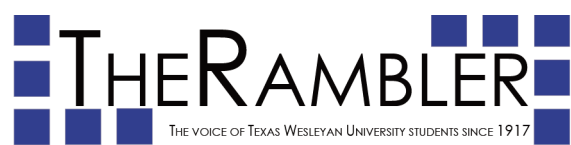
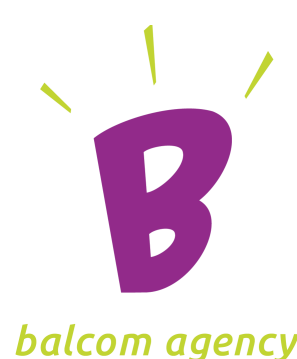
IN THE WORKPLACE: GET A JOB [Listings in journalismjobs.com and dfwcommunicators.com](#) appear in this report. ... The Fort Worth Report, a newly formed nonprofit, seeks experience in a publisher/CEO to spearhead a digital nonprofit news platform in 2021. Seed funding for launch and 501(c)(3) IRS status has been secured. Apply by Dec. 9. [Info.](#) ... The Texas Observer seeks a full-time digital editor. The Observer is a 66-year-old award-winning Texas institution that specializes in investigative longform looks at mass incarceration and civil rights, indigenous affairs, the environment, public health, immigration and politics. Requirements include a minimum of three years experience in daily online journalism. [Info.](#) ... The Waco Tribune-Herald has an immediate opening for a full-time reporter. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree in journalism or related field, with experience on a daily newspaper, and show a proficiency in social media. [Info.](#) ... [FairWarning](#), an 11-year-old nonprofit investigative news outlet based in Southern California, seeks an editor/reporter to join a small, hard-working team focused on public health, consumer, labor and environmental issues, and related topics of government and business accountability. Applicants should have eight years minimum in professional journalism, including newsroom experience. Candidates who can relocate may get preference. Apply by Dec. 18. [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.

BIG-TIME SUPPORTER



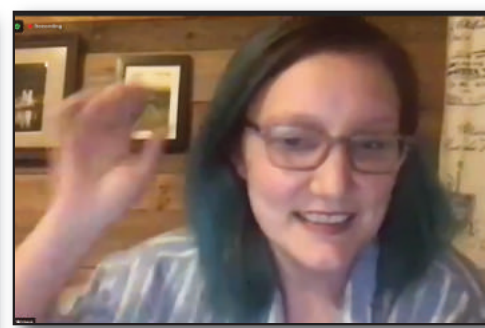
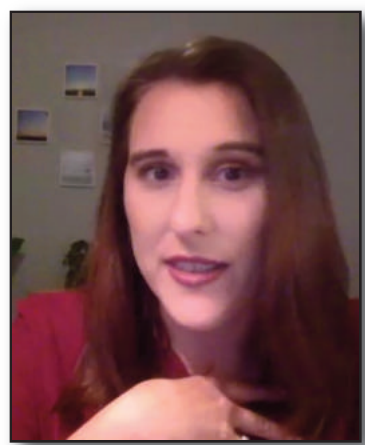
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7 POINTS OF PANDEMIC SURVIVAL | Updates with Dr. John Campbell Q&A on coronaviruses from the World Health Organization Where to worry about catching covid-19, and where not to

“What is good journalism?”

PEOPLE & PLACES: “AMON!” VIRTUAL, COVID-19 FIRSTHAND Dave Lieber will dig deep into Amon G. Carter’s legendary war with Dallas in a Zoom session at 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5, sponsored by the Dallas Public Library. Info. Carter was Dallas’ most colorfully assertive critic for half a century, and Lieber wrote a play — “AMON! The Ultimate Texan” — that an estimated 7,000 people have seen since it opened last year. He also wrote a companion book that includes 100 historical photos. Carter owned the Star-Telegram, radio station WBAP and Channel 5. ... SPJ Region 8 coordinator Kathryn Jones had the virus for about a month. Let her tell the story: “I’m over it, but I decided to use my skills as a journalist to inform and educate people. I posted a 21-day daily journal documenting my symptoms on my Facebook page. I wrote a column for the Texas Center for Community Journalism that was picked up by the Victoria, Gainesville and Hamilton newspapers/websites, and I wrote this essay for Texas Monthly. I’ve never received so much hate mail. It has been an enlightening experience.”

F.O.I.F.T. UPDATE The University of Houston athletic department avoided any serious outbreaks of covid-19 once it temporarily halted voluntary summer workouts in June, test results provided to the Houston Chronicle show. During a nearly three-month span — July 30-Oct. 22 — the athletic department reported 26 positive cases out of 5,453 tests administered for 14 varsity sports, according to data obtained through an open records request. That’s a positivity rate of .005 percent. Details.



Making the case for unionization

When The Dallas Morning News staff returned from the holidays in January 2019, an ominous e-mail awaited, warning that jobs were going away. Within days, 40 DMN journalists were out of work. “It was really horrible ... a very heartbreaking experience,” Morning News multiplatform editor Leah Waters told a Fort Worth SPJ virtual audience Nov. 18.

from left: Kaley Johnson, moderator Gayle Reaves, Leah Waters, Nolan Rosenkrans

The newsroom had already been disrupted by outsourcing the copy desk in 2017. The fresh cuts propelled an internal movement to organize the newsroom as a labor union. Waters now chairs the Dallas News Guild, a unit of Communications Workers of America.

“We wanted a voice at the table,” she said. “We didn’t want to operate in a position of fear anymore.”

At the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, purchased during bankruptcy proceedings by Chatham Asset Management, a New Jersey hedge fund that owns Canada’s largest news chain and the National Enquirer, the labor movement began in earnest in December 2019 amid staff concerns over changes that had negatively impacted employees and readers.

“It seemed like a logical step, because McClatchy had been doing a lot of layoffs, cuts and buyouts everywhere for years, and the Star-Telegram had changed ownership many times,” noted panelist and S-T reporter Kaley Johnson, communications co-chair for the new Fort Worth NewsGuild. “A lot of those longtime reporters knew that song and dance and wanted to have something consistent, no matter who owned us.” The NewsGuild announced its formation Oct. 14, and Star-Telegram management recognized it Nov. 2.

A third panelist, Nolan Rosenkrans, a reporter for the Toledo Blade and president of the Toledo Newspaper Guild-CWA, said that, industry wide, ownership turnover the last 25 years has resulted in business decisions that “pay dividends instead of investing in the product ... we all see what’s going on, and we all realize a sense of unfairness.” Rosenkrans advised the Metroplex journalists in forming their guilds.

The “galvanizing moment” came when the Los Angeles Times organized in 2018. The paper, a self-described “bastion of anti-unionization,” agreed to significant pay raises, job protections, severance pay and parental leave. Rosenkrans saw a domino effect. “Over a couple of years, nearly every newsroom in the Tribune chain organized with the news guild.”

The Blade, with its more seasoned union, has three times the staff of the Star-Telegram. “If you think you can’t organize in a right-to-work state, you’re wrong,” he said. “What you have to do is take the first step. Instead of waiting for cuts to come, you should do it now.”

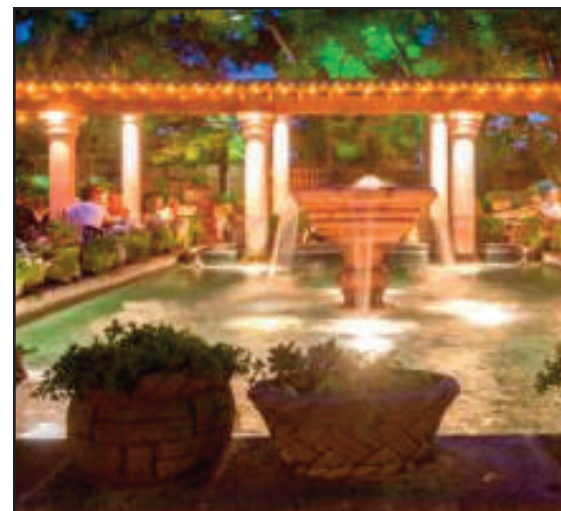
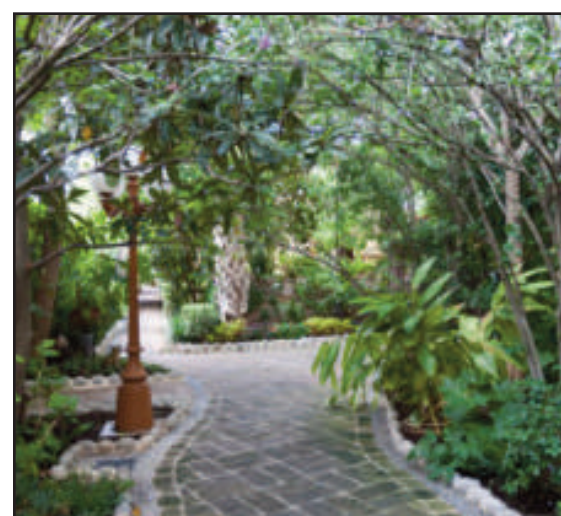
Positive local signs have arrived early. While the DMN’s refusal to recognize forced the news staff to vote on union membership, the paper also subsequently announced a \$1.1 million severance increase for employees who have been laid off, retroactive to the 2019 job cuts.

Ultimately, any success of unionization will rest on “winning hearts and minds” of the newsroom and management, Waters said. “You have to frame what is happening through the lens of hope. Things are always changing, and most of the time they’re terrible. We’re asking for a positive change, one in which stability and workers’ protections are put first. That is hopeful.”

— Robert Bohler

more eChaser on p. 3

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Lariat ropes an EPPY

clockwise from front left:

Darby Good, digital managing editor

Madalyn Watson, editor-in-chief

Matthew Soderberg, news editor

on the television: The Lariat staff via Zoom

Editor & Publisher named The Baylor Lariat the nation's best campus news site, bestowing the coveted EPPY Award on [baylorlariat.com](#). The Lariat approach features stories, slideshows, podcasts, broadcast news, play-by-play sports and live social media updates. Those who want coverage straight to their inbox can subscribe to the daily e-newsletter, The Morning Buzz. There also is a print edition, but it has been sharply curtailed.

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

Tap into [this guy's podcasts](#). He inspires but resists going saccharine on you, uplifts with facts and not "feelings" alone, teaches without getting preachy. I met **John O'Leary** years ago when he spoke at a fundraising dinner, then reported back to a somewhat cynical (like I) pal who was there, "He's not your ordinary burned guy." Amazing story, still playing out. I see you over in the covid-19 corner, all hung down, brung down, needing *something* to jumpstart your holidays. Spend some time with John O'Leary, a persevering, no-fingers piano-playing, gloriously alive optimist.

SPJ factoids: According to data NewsWhip provided Axios, [online interest in covid-19 has never been lower](#), even as U.S. cases have never been higher. Articles about the pandemic generated 75 million interactions on social media over a recent two weeks — the lowest since early March. ...

While the whirlwind of the last four years has [lifted ad sales at Fox News, CNN and MSNBC](#), what happens when **Donald Trump** is no longer president? **Jay Rosen** writes for PressThink that the American press has [two paths forward](#). ...

Esquire writer-at-large **Kate Storey** spoke to more than a dozen CNN anchors, reporters and producers about [how they pulled off the longest and most dramatic election week](#) in recent memory. ...

Information continues to come out about the benefits of untraditional media, including [offering articles in an audible format](#) and [eight reasons why e-mail newsletters are a game-changer for local news](#). ...

Many news outlets are [establishing podcasts and magazines with a youth focus](#). Axios [reports](#) that "parents juggling work-from-home schedules with at-home learning are willing to pay for news products for their kids." ...

The Brown Institute's Local News Lab is developing "[smart paywalls](#)" for small- and medium-sized newsrooms that should help these organizations use machine learning to deepen engagement and boost subscriptions.

Caught my eye: [6 reasons to be optimistic ... Leaked documents reveal Exxon's plan for surging carbon emissions ... 'World's fastest electrodes' triple density of lithium batteries ... Tiny sponge converts dirty cooking oil into biodiesel. ... World first: Dutch brewery burns iron as a clean, recyclable fuel ... Next-gen solar material excels at harvesting energy from indoor light](#)

Closing words [with gratitude to **Garrison Keillor** and Prairie Home Productions]: "I couldn't wait for success, so I went ahead without it." — comedian **Jonathan Winters**

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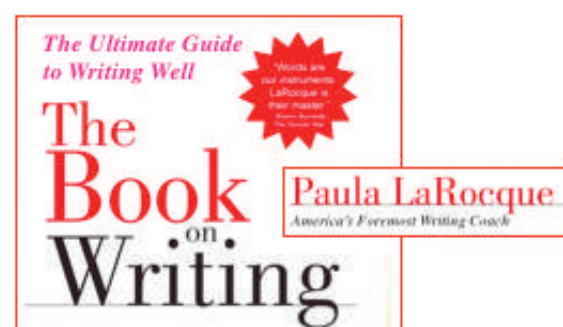
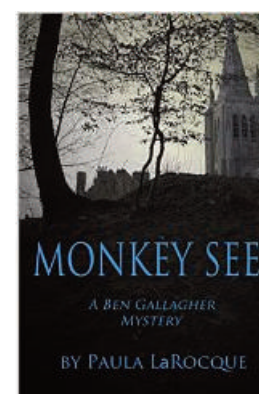
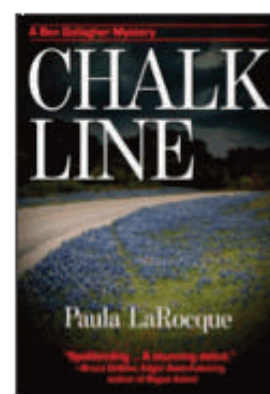
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