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

The return of fun

In the chapter's 75th year, the Cool Yule party returns to the schedule, and you just might win two nights for two in Las Vegas. Bring books for the JPS readers' library and extra spending capacity for the gift drawing/auction ... 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 1, Joe T. Garcia's La Puertita (repurposed little church south of the main building) ... enchilada buffet, cash bar, $30 ... join in the fun! - Dave Lieber, publisher, Fort Worth Black News. Watch for the link.
**What is good journalism?**

SPJ president vows grassroots efforts to strengthen, expand chapters

SPJ is launching grassroots initiatives aimed at revitalizing local chapters and recruiting student journalists on college campuses. SPJ national president Rebecca Aguilar told Fort Worth SPJ members and guests in a September Zoom event.

“Local chapters need more attention from the national board. You do great things, but I often wonder, ‘Is anyone listening?’” said Aguilar, the national organization’s first Latina president, a former Fort Worth chapter board member and one of five national presidents from Fort Worth (Phil Record being the most recent in 1983-84).

She cited the work by local chapters in providing ongoing professional education, mentoring student journalists and providing networking opportunities and available jobs as the core of SPJ’s commitment to the profession.

For the next 12 months, she said, the national board will focus on strengthening ties between the national office and the chapters to make sure chapters have “what they need to grow and succeed.” That effort will be promoted under the #SPJChapterStrong banner.

In the SPJ president’s first public appearance since taking office — traditionally it’s with the Fort Worth chapter — Aguilar said she has asked national committee chairs to plan events that include local chapters in Zoom panels or new initiatives. “We have to collaborate to become a powerhouse organization,” she said.

She said SPJ should be the go-to organization among the many journalism groups formed over the years.

“We’re all parts of other organizations, but we should wake up and say, ‘What am I missing out on? Why am I not in SPJ?’ That’s what they should be saying.”

To develop continuity for the initiatives, Aguilar intends to share her agenda with president-elect Claire Regan, arts and education reporter for the Staten Island Advance, and engage with Adam Sennott, the national board membership chair and New England chapter president, on a “college outreach initiative” to increase student journalists’ awareness of the educational and professional benefits SPJ can offer through membership in student or professional chapters.

— Robert Bohler
VITAL READS: Near and Far

Where I Live: Hemphill

When it comes to people, mercy killing is against the law. Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita was denied access to a press conference because he was not “credentialed” by the media. Democrats who discovered a vulnerability that left the Social Security numbers of thousands of public school teachers exposed. Mike Parson, Missouri Gov., called for a criminal investigation into a data breach. Over 100 prominent figures in academia and the arts signed a public letter against the appointment of Abdul-Hakim Shabazz as chief of Novaya Gazeta, won the Nobel Peace Prize. Also: The Pandora Papers.


FORT WORTH BUSINESS PRESS

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