

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

JANUARY 2023 • Back Issues

INFORMING THE NORTH TEXAS JOURNALISM / COMMUNICATOR WORKFORCE





75+2 FWSPJ to subscribe or to submit items, e-
john@xdycus.com

* 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.

[IT'S SCHOLARSHIPS SEASON! DEADLINE FEB. 3](#)

[FIRST AMENDMENT AWARDS DEADLINE JAN. 31](#)

- As Jan. 6 hearings conclude, what does a 'criminal referral' mean?
 Rethinking Twitter in a time of chaos | Mastodon: No turning point yet
 SpaceX, Boring Company take over rural Texas area
Musk suspends reporter who has investigated him for years
 The case against fossil-fuel advertising
 Prediction: News media will re-emerge in 2023
 Why the US is primed for radicalization
 Is Facebook quitting the news business?
 The struggle for water in East Texas
 After the buses: Meet the migrants at center of Texas crisis
 Climate coverage just warming up: News publishing industry invests more in data, reporters, partnerships
 Yes, this viral **Keanu Reeves** TikTok account is a deepfake
 Street Sense Media: Guide boosts fair, accurate homelessness reporting
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5:30-8 p.m. Jan. 19
 Enchiladas Ole Forest Park
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GRAB DINNER OR A DRINK | MEET FTW SPJ

Strike's off, but issues remain



More [here](#), [here](#)

After almost a month on strike, 21 union journalists from the Fort Worth NewsGuild returned to work at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram just before Christmas. Guild unit chair **Kaley Johnson** said McClatchy, the paper's parent company, has gradually raised its pay offer from a proposed \$45,000 annual minimum.

The union has repeatedly asked McClatchy to increase salaries. Previous negotiation attempts failed on multiple issues, including wages. The 24-day unfair labor practice action ended Dec. 22, but negotiations are ongoing. No final deal was in place as of Dec. 26.

When the strike began, the newspaper canceled the strikers' insurance and posted their jobs. Employees protesting unfair labor practices are entitled to have their jobs back following a strike, according to federal labor law, "even if employees hired to do their work have to be discharged."

GO Banking Rates, a personal finance website, puts 2022 median income to live comfortably in Fort Worth (50 percent of salary going to essentials) at \$84,461.69 for renters and \$87,581.69 for homeowners. Average Star-Telegram annual base pay, all experience levels, was \$55,861, according to glassdoor.com, with new journalists making under \$50,000.

- Erin Ratigan

QUICK HITS

- Arlington Conservation Council annual membership meeting (Zoom, recorded) — 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 18. [Info](#) (Zoom i.d. 813 6609 3834)
- GFW PRSA — [events](#)
- FWBG | BRIT — no January calendar; closed the week of Jan. 9 for seasonal maintenance

IN THE WORKPLACE: GET A JOB *Listings in [journalismjobs.com](#) appear in this report.* ... Report for America has announced dozens of new reporting and photojournalism corps positions across the United States and Puerto Rico. Apply by Jan. 30. [Info](#). ... Share your knowledge and expertise in San Angelo. Angelo State University has an opening for a communication assistant professor or communication instructor. [Info](#). ... The Denton Record-Chronicle seeks an aggressive, entrepreneurial, digitally savvy journalist to cover the cities and towns of Denton County with "impactful content" throughout the day. [Info](#). ... The San Antonio Business Journal is looking for a managing editor with a "particular passion for digital excellence" to serve as the newsroom's chief operating officer. [Info](#). ... Report for America continues to work its way into Texas. The semiweekly [Uvalde Leader-News](#) seeks an education, safety and crime reporter, while the family-owned [Tyler Morning Telegraph](#) needs a reporter to cover health challenges in Northeast Texas.

[more eChaser on p. 2](#)

COMPLAINT LINES: Public Utility Commission 888-782-8477 | Texas Attorney General 800-621-0508 | Federal Trade Commission 877-382-4357
CREDIT BUREAUS: TransUnion 888-909-8872 | Innovis 800-540-2505 | Equifax 800-349-9960 | Experian 888-397-3742

["What is good journalism?"](#)

Mission Possible: How hyperlocal news can thrive in a media mass market

It's tough enough for journalism entrepreneurs in a densely populated media landscape to launch a hyperlocal news organization to address unmet needs in a community. It's another thing entirely to attract the financial backing for a sustainable business model. Throw the uncertainties of a pandemic into the mix, and you have your work cut out.



Anjie and Shevoyd Hamilton

Here's how you do it. Have the discipline to focus on a core mission. In a Nov. 30 SPJ Zoomer, Anjie and Shevoyd Hamilton, founders of The Metro Report, and Fort Worth Report publisher Chris Cobler said that's the most critical factor with fledgling news operations.



Chris Cobler

The Hamiltons launched The Metro Report in October 2019 with a focus on women and minority business leaders and entrepreneurs. Anjie said she and her husband thought this population was underrepresented in most area media. "So we stepped out on faith and decided to start a publication where we could feature C-level managers as well as small business owners who sometimes you don't even know they exist," she said.

Anjie said that once committed, it took six months to get the all-digital publication going, starting with the website. Shevoyd said it was a blessing the groundwork took that long.

"I must admit, I was pretty anxious to get it started sooner," he said. "But I figured out that the fact it didn't happen sooner was better. I would have been rushing, making mistakes. ... I'm not sure how solid the content would have been if we had launched in two months."

Anjie Hamilton is a former sales director for the Fort Worth Business Press. Shevoyd Hamilton has experience there and at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

The digital, nonprofit Fort Worth Report, which focuses on civic journalism and engagement, began on a much larger scale with help from major philanthropies and individual donors. A \$1.25 million budget supported a reporting staff of six, said Cobler, who also serves on Fort Worth SPJ's board of directors.

"That sounds like a lot, but when you actually put pencil to paper, (you) realize that if that doesn't work out, our money is going to run out in a couple of years," he said. "We had to put together a business plan that would extend that runway." He said that plan has generated an additional \$2 million and covers a reporting staff of 17.

As for following their original concept, Shevoyd said TMR has stayed away from stories on minority-related social issues. "We didn't want to turn the publication into something we did not envision it to be," he said. "We want to make sure we're doing the best we can for our current readers in Fort Worth and Tarrant County first. Then we can slowly move into other areas."

Another key to success for hyperlocal news orgs is expanding their reach, and Cobler pointed to collaborations with PBS-affiliate KERA that have expanded Fort Worth Report's storytelling while providing Dallas-based KERA more exposure in Fort Worth. He also noted the possibility of partnerships with The Metro Report and the nonprofits KERA and its recently purchased Denton Record-Chronicle, where he was a former managing editor.

"When the 'daily newspaper' was all things to all people, it was the internet of its time. I don't see that coming back," Cobler said. "As we grow, we keep that in mind with all of our decisions. It's really easy to start looking at every new shiny object and going after that, but that's not going to win the day."

While The Metro Report will maintain its focus on minority and female business leadership, newsworthy ideas that don't align with its mission can be funneled to other outlets if they're a better fit, Shevoyd said.

"There are enough readers and opportunities for us all to be successful," he said. "There may be some story ideas that come to us that really will not fit but would fit well with Fort Worth Report."

– Robert Bohler

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Texas DPS Director **Steven McCraw** should resign

Can the PUC promise a reliable grid? Not without these fixes, report says

For local mask company, the struggle to survive continues

What to do when your appraisal district asks what you paid for your house

Are police association charities on the level? Or are they a scam?

Are insurance companies starting to raise deductibles on home policies?

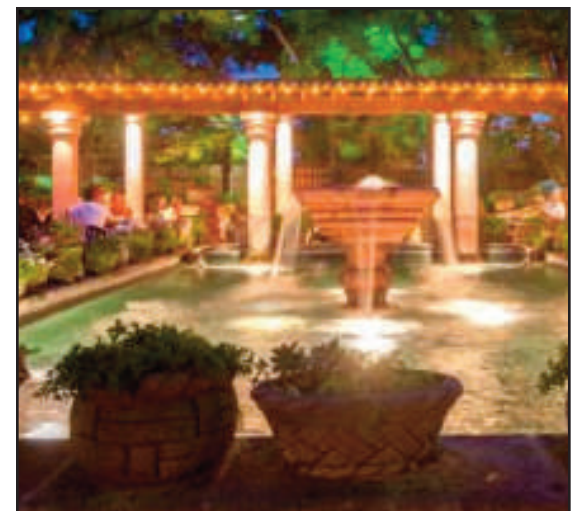
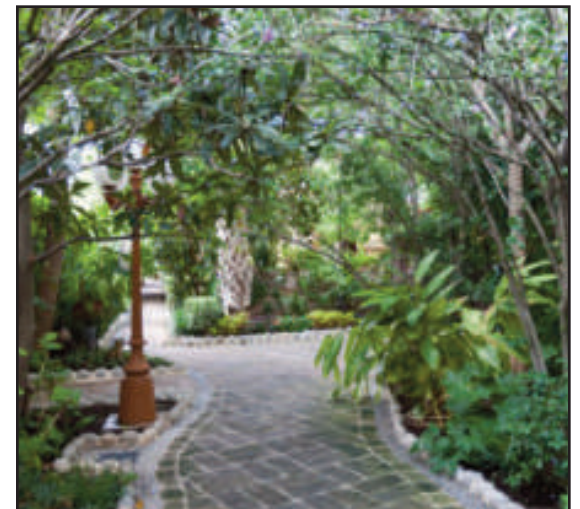
You'll pay back \$6 billion in storm-related bonds. Good luck finding details

Worried about crypto miners straining the grid? Some US senators are

John Wayne lost his fortune twice, both times in a way you could, too

F.O.I.F.T. UPDATE More than six months after the mass shooting in Uvalde, grieving families and the public are continuing a fierce fight for investigative records, including videos and officer statements. But six Texas lawmakers have quietly obtained such information through written agreements with the Texas Department of Public Safety, according to the Austin American-Statesman. Details.

[more eChaser on p. 3](#)



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VITAL READS: Near and National



PANTS ON FIRE!

What a one-seat advantage really means for Senate Democrats || What is independent state legislature theory, and could it create election chaos? || Unmasking scare tactics in anti-vaccine film 'Died Suddenly' || Putin's lies about Ukraine named 2022 Lie of the Year

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Will travelers ever trust Southwest Airlines again after its cancellations disaster? || 'I forgive this man': Athena Strand's grandfather's heart-wrenching Facebook post

Fort Worth Report

Why is Fort Worth ISD updating its sex ed curriculum? Some parents want more answers || Black fraternity chapter to buy abandoned, historic Vickery school || 'A very dysfunctional, toxic environment': Fort Worth librarians who face assault, harassment on the job feel unsupported by library administration || What you need to know about school vouchers, savings accounts and tax credits

FORT WORTH BUSINESS PRESS ★ THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

The good news, and the bad: Texas has a million jobs to fill || Tarrant County had 'quality, transparent' election in 2020, state audit finds || Power grid holds amid record winter demand, but test isn't over



Hope or Hate for Hanukkah? Pervasive anti-Semitism is less about Ye and black Hebrews and more about Christian nationalism || Doing Good: Fort Worth abuzz with novel ideas on how to best support those in need || It's a Wonderful Lie: Not much has changed since an escort was murdered with a semiautomatic weapon nearly 15 years ago

TEXAS OBSERVER

Texas is becoming a bitcoin-mining capital. Can the grid handle it? || Texas wants to save community colleges from sinking || Unions fight to make good jobs out of Texas' solar boom || How to prevent the next water crisis || Former top lawmaker on grid reforms becomes power company lobbyist || A bad trip with the toad shaman



Texas, California rush to install batteries to meet power demands || Military suicides less common but still 'massive problem' || Needing workers to fill jobs, Texas ranches and farms look abroad || Texas Senate report on preventing school shootings has little to say on guns

OVER & OUT | John Dycus, Fort Worth SPJ

They say surround yourself with supportive people and people smarter than you to seize every opportunity possible. • What a wild ride that's been. I've learned how to lead from the best, and what not to do from some of the worst. Now, I get to take those lessons and build a fantastic, energetic, compassionate team with fire and fight. • As of today, I start my new role as the head of the Argus Leader, the largest newsroom in South Dakota. I am the second woman and possibly the youngest news director to ever lead this great 100+year-old institution. • Here's to history. Here's to change. Here's to finding opportunities through accountability and public service journalism with an incredible team in 2023. — TCC/UTA Shorthorn ex Shelly Conlon, Facebook Dec. 20. Based on this, I'd promote her, too. ...



Good. Lawsuit ends with Collin County professor reinstated after being fired for union advocacy, supporting removal of Confederate monuments.

SPJ factoids: Layoffs! here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here, here

Radio and television workforces are becoming more diverse but are not keeping up with racial demographics reflecting U.S. population. here

New Jersey could become the first state in the U.S. to require public schools to teach media literacy, beginning at kindergarten, in an attempt to combat disinformation. here

Newspaper editors and publishers have called on the U.S. government to stop its prosecution of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. here, here, here

Media managers are finding it hard to get staff back in the office, according to research by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. here

A group of senior publishers and journalists at the Apple Daily, a pro-democracy tabloid in Hong Kong, pleaded guilty to foreign collusion Nov. 22. Apple Daily owner Jimmy Lai is set to stand trial soon. In this landmark case, the China-imposed national security law is being used against a news organization and its staff. here, here, here

Sixty-seven journalists and media staffers were killed in 2022 (as of early December), according to the International Federation of Journalists — an increase from 47 deaths last year. here, here, here

The Journalism Competition and Preservation Act was removed from the National Defense Authorization Act shortly after Meta, Facebook's parent company, announced it would remove news content from Facebook should the bill pass. here, here

Union employees at The New York Times staged a one-day walkout, principally over wages. Employees have been working without a contract since March 2021. here, here

Caught my eye: MIT tech could keep items cool without using any electricity ... Scientists discover Arctic waters are rapidly becoming acidic in dire climate warning ... It's all about the white paint

Closing words [with gratitude to Garrison Keillor and Prairie Home Productions]: "Art is the means we have of undoing the damage of haste. It's what everything else isn't." — poet Theodore Roethke

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"There is no greater agony than carrying an untold story." — Maya Angelou

UNSUNG: REMEMBERING JEWELL HOUSE



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