

INFORMING THE NORTH TEXAS JOURNALISM / COMMUNICATOR WORKFORCE





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**FWSPJ**

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.

Congratulations, **EDDYE GALLAGHER**, inducted into TIPA Hall of Fame SPJ Region 8 Conference, March 31-April 1

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BIG-TIME SUPPORTER



## 20th Annual First Amendment Awards and Scholarship Banquet

celebrating Fort Worth SPJ's 2023 scholarship recipients and First Amendment Award winners

 Open Doors Award winner  
**Sylvia Komatsu** KERA News  
 keynote address  
**Cynthia Izaguirre** WFAA-TV  
 emcee  
**Jay Warren** City of Arlington

**Friday, April 21, 2023**  
 cash bar 6 p.m., dinner 6:30  
Texas Rangers Golf Club  
 701 Brown Blvd.  
 Arlington, Texas 76011  
 \$50 per person  
 table for eight \$500  
 reservations are required

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### The banquet at 20: Past glory, future promise

- [write-ups](#)
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Gary Hardee, left, and Bud Kennedy, 2005; Byron Harris, Tasha Tsiaperas, Robert Wilonsky, Kay Pirtle, and Mike and Sondra Cochran, from left, Sheraton Arlington Hotel, 2019

QUICK HITS

- Arlington Conservation Council monthly Zoomer (recorded), "Bee City and More: Arlington Pollinator Programs," with **Melissa Walker**, Arlington storm water education specialist — 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 5. [Z-link](#).
- GFW PRSA professional development meeting, "Enhance Your Education to Advance Your Career," with Dr. **Kay Colley**, APR — 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Wednesday, April 5, Ridglea Country Club. [Info](#).



• FWBG | BRIT

GET A JOB. Listings in [journalismjobs.com](#) may add to this report. ... The Trinity Metro marketing department seeks a transit design coordinator. [Info](#).



# S-T strikers make gains, prep for future talks



Kaley Johnson, left, and Emily Brindley

Two leaders of the strike that caused Fort Worth Star-Telegram staffers to picket their own paper say journalists face a stout national trend — the business practices of newspaper owners themselves. Slashes in staffing and a stagnant salary structure limit journalists’ ability to cover their communities or even afford to live in them, **Emily Brindley** and **Kaley Johnson** told a Fort Worth SPJ Zoom gathering Feb. 22.



in their own words

Investigative reporter Brindley, president of the Fort Worth NewsGuild, and guild VP Johnson (now with the Texas Observer) said the negotiated three-year contract, including a 15% increase in starting pay to \$52,000 and broadened parental and bereavement leave, will enable the paper to better serve its readers.

“It’s difficult to make a corporation understand we need higher wages and that it’s a benefit to the newsroom in the long run,” said Brindley, a former reporter with the Hartford Courant, the nation’s oldest newspaper. “We want to have the resources to cover communities better ... (but) people need to be able to see a future for themselves to stay in a newsroom.”

Star-Telegram president and editor **Steve Coffman** declined to participate in the program. The open-ended strike by approximately 20 guild members, the first of its kind for a Texas newsroom, ended Dec. 22 after 24 days.

Chatham Asset Management owns McClatchy, one of the nation’s three largest chains, which in turn owns the Star-Telegram. Hedge funds and similar entities control approximately half of American newspapers. As those chains seek to maintain profit levels, newsroom staffs nationwide have shrunk through attrition, layoffs, buyouts and sometimes closures.

Inside newsrooms, Johnson said, the cumulative loss of veteran journalists to serve as mentors, coupled with low starting salaries, has put double-barreled pressure on entry-level journalists.

“Losing all that institutional knowledge is something that’s completely unacceptable,” said Johnson, who published a diary of the strike in the Texas Observer. “An increasing number of journalists are leaving because of stress and financial instability. Unionizing helps newsrooms take back some of that power from corporations ... and we’re better able to prioritize our newsrooms.”

In towns where the quality, quantity and scope of reporting have significantly diminished, the term “ghost newspapers” has arisen to reflect the decline in coverage. Studies of communities where newsrooms have been shuttered, leaving their communities in “news deserts.” have found a correlation with reduced voter turnout and civic obligation, increased misinformation and polarization, and higher community rates for credit.

Brindley said journalists at cross purposes with corporate ownership increasingly see organizing as a way to find a balance. She cited the ongoing strike at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and recent one-day work stoppages at The New York Times and The Desert Sun in Palm Springs, Calif. “We’re seeing more and more strikes in journalism, which hadn’t been happening in about 20 years,” she said. “You’re starting to see a wave of strikes or work stoppages.”

Brindley said the strike had an unexpected benefit — newsroom bonding for a common cause. “The three and a half weeks we were on strike were some of the most stressful of my life,” she said. “That solidarity is really why the entire thing was successful. It underscored the importance of people.”

Next up locally, Johnson said, is to work with other guilds in the McClatchy chain and to prepare for negotiating the next contract. “Our role is to make sure we’re already prepping to make the next contract stronger and to watch out for our current members,” she said. “The future of journalism rests on newsrooms organizing to create better conditions for themselves.”

“We got into journalism because we believe in it strongly,” Brindley added. “But the reality is that if you want to do that impactful work, you also have to be able to pay rent.”

Additional reading on news deserts and ghost newspapers: “The Fight for the Future of America’s Local Newspapers.” Financial Times; “Fears for Future of American Journalism as Hedge Funds Flex Power.” The Guardian; “How We End News Deserts.” Poynter Institute

– Robert Bohler

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

My 89-year-old mother-in-law is invited to the “Secret Society.” What is it?

From a driver’s license hack to a convicted clergyman — updates

The question about their wealth was impolite, and SMU students flunked it

The big battle happening right now over Texas property taxes

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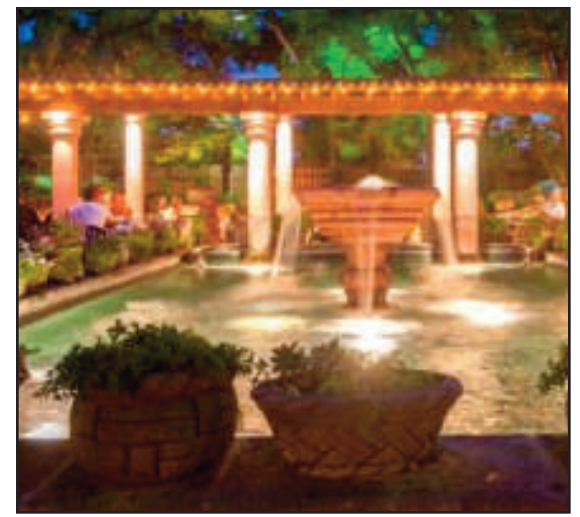
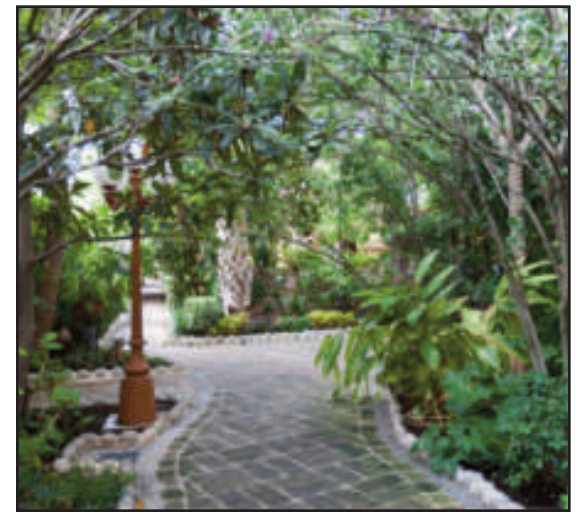
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**F.O.I.F.T. UPDATE** Case study: Getting public records is getting harder in Texas. ... A long-standing contention by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas that government immunity shields it from lawsuits came under legal attack during arguments before the state Supreme Court in two cases with far-reaching implications for the entity that manages the power grid. Details. ... A Waco judge vacated a far-reaching gag order in the **Marian Fraser** murder case after KWTX attorneys convinced him that his attempt to restrict media coverage of her upcoming retrial is unconstitutional. Details. ... More than a year after Axios asked UT Austin for a contract with a firm that offers advice on handling student-athletes and sponsorship money, the attorney general’s office forced university officials to present an unredacted copy. Administrators took no stance on the full release of the contract, but they acknowledged they defer to business interests that want information kept under wraps. Details.

more eChaser on p. 3

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# VITAL READS: Near and National



Fact-checking **Ron DeSantis'** book: What 'The Courage to Be Free' glosses over about his record || How 'clean' is natural gas? Separating spin from science || How **Tucker Carlson** used new Jan. 6 footage to rehash conspiracy theories

## Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Fort Worth violent crime down 13%, homicides fall 24.5%. City credits police initiative || Lawmakers must ask: Why should taxpayers bail AG **Ken Paxton** out on this screw-up? || Fact Check: How much election fraud has Tarrant County seen since 2020? || This Texas lawsuit could halt access to an abortion drug nationwide

## Fort Worth Report

Resisting arrest, bankruptcy and a restraining order: A look at Fort Worth's mayoral candidates' past legal issues || Fort Worth's firefighters have a rich history, but not a museum. It's a matter of money || Job cuts in Fort Worth ISD could include campus staffs, according to audio of closed meeting || Top EPA official tours pollution hot spots in Midlothian, Arlington. 'I hear the frustration' || One selfie at a time: Euleless state representative making himself known in the Legislature

## FORT WORTH BUSINESS PRESS ★ THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

**Abbott** vows to exclude renewable energy from any revived economic incentive program || AllianceTexas continues to soar as economic powerhouse || A storied Texas newspaper halts publication after 130 years || Texas business interests, family values collide as lawmakers debate legalizing gambling



The Longest Period: As whistleblower **Joe Palazzolo** fights for his old FWISD job, he holds fast to his faith and military training || Critical Race Leery: Newly discovered eyewitness testimony confirms many aspects of the 1910 Slocum Massacre; we've come a long way since then, but we're now lurching backward

## TEXAS OBSERVER

Two executions, many questions about mental health and innocence || 'Border security' is a financial black hole that will consume us all || Can Texas' public universities use diversity initiatives to hire staff? **Abbott** says no || This burned out Texas teacher unseated his school board president || Houston ISD takeover a Trojan horse for privatization



What's in, and out, of Texas House committee's budget proposal? || Bills at the Capitol could make it easier to prosecute librarians over 'obscene' books || As pandemic-era rental assistance programs lapse, will lawmakers take action? || Texas 'washing hands' of runaway and missing foster kids

## OVER & OUT | John Dycus, Fort Worth SPJ

The Texas Intercollegiate Press Association should have inducted wonderful person **Eddy Gallagher** in its TIPA Hall of Fame years ago, but I'll take it now. A heralded educator with razor-sharp reflexes and a caring soul, she embodies the best in the teaching business. She set the bar for



Eddy Gallagher, far left, Cacharel 2009

junior college journalism program directors (Tarrant County College) and for SPJ regional coordinators. In 2009, her second of four terms as chapter president, Fort Worth SPJ hosted the splendid and altogether remarkable Region 8 Conference (**Kay Pirtle**, director, center above in blue). The newspaper purges had just begun, but that conference beat the odds: Attendance was strong and participation robust, and it made a profit. **Rebecca Bosquez** compiled a [memory lane photo tribute](#) of Eddy's first two terms. It's wall to wall smiling faces, money being raised for scholarships, vital info being exchanged. When Eddy's in charge, good things happen. I think that's called leadership. Rebecca found a number of pictures from the awards dinners. Hard to believe we've done 20 years of banquets. That's 20 years of funding exceptional students, 20 years of honoring the First Amendment reporting of exceptional journalists. Join us Friday, April 21, for something that never gets old. Details on p. 1. You'll leave feeling good about yourself and your profession and thinking, hey, things are going to be right after all.

**SPJ factoids:** The Supreme Court heard two cases the last week in March that could "upend the entire internet." [here](#), [here](#), [here](#)

**Jonathan Capehart** quit The Washington Post editorial board Dec. 6, leaving it with no people of color. He left after a disagreement over an editorial about the runoff between Sen. **Raphael Warnock**, D-Ga., and **Herschel Walker**. [here](#), [here](#), [here](#)

The Associated Press reports that Florida Gov. **Ron DeSantis** "is pursuing a home-state agenda that could make it harder for people to learn what public officials are doing or to speak out against them." He has also claimed an executive right to keep government records a secret. [here](#), [here](#), [here](#)

**Caught my eye:** [Turn your backyard into a biodiversity hotspot](#)

**Closing words** [with gratitude to **Garrison Keillor** and Prairie Home Productions]: "Commerce with all nations, alliance with none, should be our motto." — **Thomas Jefferson**

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## RESOURCES

- AP headlines
- Journalist Express
- The Washington Post
- Denver Post
- The New York Times
- Chicago Tribune
- San Francisco Chronicle
- USA Today
- Los Angeles Times
- Financial Times
- Time
- The Wall Street Journal
- BBC
- The Nation
- The Christian Science Monitor
- Newsweek
- The Sydney Morning Herald
- Bloomberg
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- ABC News
- CBS News
- CBS 11
- WFAA-TV
- CNN
- NBC 5
- ABC News: The Note
- Daily Kos
- Star-Telegram
- The Dallas Morning News
- Fort Worth Weekly
- Fort Worth, Texas
- Fort Worth Business Press
- Texas Monthly
- Dallas Observer
- The Hill
- Drudge Report
- The Texas Observer
- The Village Voice
- FrontBurner (D Magazine)
- Salon
- Burnt Orange Report
- The New Republic
- The American Conservative
- Center for American Progress
- Fort Worth Report
- The Texas Tribune

- the industry / tools of the trade
- 11 Rules of Writing, Grammar and Punctuation
- writers.com
- wilbers.com
- Ethics AdviceLine for Journalists
- THE SLOT: A Spot for Copy Editors
- Center for Public Integrity
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- Coalition of Journalists for Open Government
- National Institute for
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- Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press
- Poynter Online
- Pew Research Center
- Columbia Journalism Review
- Texas Legislature
- FOI Foundation of Texas
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- NewsLink
- Wikipedia

- organizations
- Asian American Journalists Association
- DFW Network of Hispanic Communicators
- National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association
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