

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

OCTOBER 2023 • Back Issues

INFORMING THE NORTH TEXAS JOURNALISM / COMMUNICATOR WORKFORCE





**75+2** to subscribe or to submit items, e-  
**FWSPJ** [john@xdycus.com](mailto: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.

**The date that must be saved: Cool Yule, Dec. 6**

**OPEN FOR BUSINESS: FIRST AMENDMENT AWARDS**

- [Is Murdoch sticking around or bowing out? Yes](#)
- [Mitch McConnell and the discourse of old age](#)
- [Netanyahu wants to overhaul Israel's judicial system. Its media, too](#)
- [Borrell forecasts 'healthy' 4.4% growth in 2024 local advertising](#)
- [ReNews Project revives student university presses, particularly at HBCUs](#)
- [Biden coverage and the \*But her emails!\* trap](#)
- [Good news in the news about covid](#)
- [Justice Department puts Google on the defensive](#)
- [Where Chuck Todd failed](#)
- [Dangerous threats to local press freedom](#)
- [The political machine behind the war on academic freedom](#)
- [Climate: Extreme heat edition](#)

Next at Fort Worth SPJ ... updates on the [homepage](#) and [Facebook page](#)



Nearly two dozen young Fort Worth journalists and Dallas-based colleagues caught up with the chapter at the fall kickoff mixer Sept. 13 at Funky Picnic Brewery and Cafe on Fort Worth's Near Southside. Fort Worth SPJ reserved a handful of tables in the back room but by night's end had commandeered the better part of the bar. • Chapter board members exchanged local insights with journalists from the digital nonprofit Fort Worth Report and reporters and editors with the NPR-affiliate KERA News. The gathering launched a season of programming centered around supporting journalists at all experience levels and helping the larger community understand the necessity of a robust press corps. • You can help us plan events you'd like to attend by filling out a [short survey](#). The questionnaire is perfect for people who are regulars at SPJ programs or who have yet to stop by. Please help us, help you. (Responses will be used only for program planning.) • Next meeting: Oct. 4 with national president **Ashanti Blaize-Hopkins**. Details inside. — Kailey Broussard



**QUICK HITS**

- Texas Author Book Club, third-Thursday discussion, **Larry McMurtry's** "Horseman, Pass By" — 6:30 p.m. Oct. 19, Fielder Museum in Arlington, 1616 W. Abram. [Info](#).
- Arlington Conservation Council monthly Zoomer (recorded), "Weathering the Climate Change Storm," with senior meteorologist **Jeff Ray**, CBS News Texas — 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 4 ([Z-link](#)).
- GFW PRSA professional development seminar, "Empowering the Modern PR Leader," with multi-acclaimed **Mark Mohammadpour**, APR, Fellow PRSA — 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 4, Ridglea Country Club. [Register](#).
- FWBG | BRIT — *With an astonishing 80 percent newly designed displays, this year's reimagined event promises an even more immersive and magical experience for visitors of all ages.* [Info](#).



[more eChaser on p. 2](#)

**BIG-TIME SUPPORTER**



**BALCOM AGENCY**



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?”

## New transparency laws clear 88th Legislature

Two new state laws impacting the Public Information Act took effect Sept. 1. The legislation had bipartisan support in the spring session.

House Bill 30 by Rep. **Joe Moody**, D-El Paso, closes a loophole some police departments used to withhold information when someone dies in law enforcement custody. The measure was the result of years of work and compromises that were negotiated until the final days of the 2023 session. Gov. **Greg Abbott** allowed the bill to become law without his signature.



House Bill 3033 by Rep. **Brooks Landgraf**, R-Odessa, contained several updates to the TPIA, including a notable provision that benefits information requesters by defining “business day.” This is intended to prevent governments from deciding on their own when to open and close their offices to information requests, aside from catastrophic events like hurricanes and snowstorms that require short-term closures. During the pandemic, many government agencies said they were closed for the TPIA and remained closed for long stretches, even though their staffs were still working in person or remotely. Abbott signed this measure into law.

— Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas

Each logo in the ad rail links to the sponsor's website!



*Join our*  
**Virtual Q&A**

A virtual Q&A panel about Ashanti Blaize-Hopkins' career, work with SPJ and vision for the organization. SPJ Fort Worth Pro has a long-standing history of being the first chapter the incoming president visits.

Ashanti Blaize-Hopkins is a tenured journalism professor at Santa Monica College in Santa Monica, CA, and an Emmy Award-winning journalist, producer, public relations expert and author.



**ASHANTI BLAIZE-HOPKINS**  
SPJ NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Oct 4, 2023

06:30 p.m.

Virtual meeting



www.spjfw.org

GOOD WORK. ON TIME.

**John DYCUS**

Editing of a robust nature.  
Verbs activated.  
Syntax syncopated.  
Nuance nurtured.  
Prepositions expunged.  
Books.  
Manuscripts.  
Magazines.  
Wherever text is vexed.  
Experience? 50+ years.  
References? Of course.  
john@xdycus.com  
817.264.3106

ZOOM LINK

**PEOPLE & PLACES** Last summer, a single day of historic rainfall turned a super dry Tarrant County August into one of the wettest on record. With more intense flooding coming from climate change, what are leaders doing to prepare for the future decades of development? And what can residents learn about flood risks near their neighborhoods? Expect answers at a Fort Worth Report panel from 7:30 to 9 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 18, in the Nick and Lou Martin University Center, Texas Wesleyan University, 3165 E. Rosedale St. Moderator **Haley Samsel** will lead the conversation with **Jennifer Dyke**, assistant director of Fort Worth's transportation and public works department; UTA civil engineering associate professor **Nick Fang**; and **Rachel Ickert**, chief water resources officer for the Tarrant Regional Water District. This is a free community event with free parking. Breakfast will be served at 7:30, and the program, with a Q&A, will begin at 8.



Nick and Lou Martin University Center

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

- [How much is too much? Prosper ISD planning second football stadium](#)
- [Plano woman goes month without A/C; home warranty company to blame](#)
- [Gay dads face hate in Aurora, then help uncover embezzlement scheme](#)
- [They didn't like his book on Texas Rangers, so they tried to smear his name](#)
- [Extended auto warranty scam callers drive off a cliff — a big fine, closure](#)
- [Changing face of scam victims: Youths rise as senior victims hold ground](#)
- [Close to unanimous: Nobody likes Watchdog's UFO updates](#)
- [Screwy paperwork: I won my property protest but couldn't tell by how much](#)
- ['Death Star' law blocks Texas cities, counties from 'doing their own thing'](#)

GET A JOB. *Listings in [journalismjobs.com](http://journalismjobs.com) may add to this report. ...* The Fort Worth Star-Telegram news site, star-telegram.com, seeks a service journalist “to answer reader-submitted questions, dig into local curiosities and issues” and use tools like Google Trends to identify topics with high interest. [Info.](#) ... Sign on as an assistant professor of practice in journalism and advise the award-winning student newspaper at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville. [Info.](#) ... They're hiring at the Beaumont Enterprise — a [business/government reporter](#) and an [assistant editor](#). ... A collaboration of El Paso news organizations seeks a part-time coordinator for a project that explores solutions to regional food insecurity. Contract, \$20,000/year, approximately eight hours worked per week. [Info.](#)

more [eChaser](#) on p. 3

# VITAL READS: Near and National



Why are there gaps in the border wall? || Can the 14th Amendment keep Trump off the ballot? Some 'conservative legal scholars' say maybe || McCarthy's Full Flop on opening Biden impeachment inquiry with a House vote || Covid-19 lockdowns returning? Public health experts say not likely || What do House records show about foreign payments to Biden 'associates' and kin?

## Fort Worth Star-Telegram

A forgotten chapter of Fort Worth history: When Chevrolets were built in Cowtown || Bedford mayor resigns, says job is done: 'Get in, figure it out, fix it, move on' || Fort Worth-area Republican explains his vote to sustain AG Paxton's impeachment || 'You're playing with our kids like lab rats.' Mother pulls son from Fort Worth clinic || Marvin Nichols Reservoir would threaten a way of life along Sulphur River

## Fort Worth Report

National experts question \$22M tax break to move luxury car dealership to Clearfork shopping center || 'It's very frustrating': Drug shortages leave some pharmacies searching for solutions || 'Community crisis': Almost half the students in Fort Worth schools can't read at grade level || Downtown FW buildings are deadly for migrating birds. Researchers are keeping track || Paxton supporters go on attack against Sen. Hancock for his vote

## FORT WORTH BUSINESS PRESS THE TEXAS TRIBUNE

'It was not a mutiny': Senior staff had no choice but to report Paxton to the FBI, whistleblower testifies || New chapter in Carmelites' battle with bishop: Nuns welcome visitors to monastery || Paxton critics pile on, calling impeachment trial rigged



Christian Nationalists' Slow Invasion of the Near Southside Continues || Fort Worth in Focus: A new Tarrant County College-led partnership is set to prepare the next generation of filmmakers in Texas || Learning Local: Overthrowing the Demagogue Pimps and Propagandists Through Reading, Writing, and Thinking



Angela Paxton's ties to a shell company || Community-based caregivers are starving || Heat wave caused thousands of leaks, millions in damages to pipes || Paxton, acquitted || Short-term rentals cause a long-term mess || For firefighters, a long and very hot summer || 'It will take the breath out of you': Prisoners describe extreme nighttime heat in Texas units



The strangest, most eye-opening moments from Paxton's impeachment trial || Why trees can't be 'saved' from fungal diseases like the one killing Barton Springs' iconic pecan || On death row, Dungeons & Dragons offers a chance for new role || As brutal heat tests Texas' power grid, batteries play a small but growing role in keeping the lights on || North Texas' Carroll ISD, Keller ISD among the school districts fighting recapture



Cool Yule 2022, but a taste. Here's the whole stack.

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

If you entered our First Amendment Awards before, you need to again, and tell your colleagues. And put a fat drop of pico on your desk calendar for Wednesday, Dec. 6, and Cool Yule at Joe T. Garcia's. Details to come. ...

Ever'body's doin' it, doin' it, doin' it, everybody's impeaching somebody now. Vigilant reader Rita Vinson alerts us to the impeachment trial of Texas A&M student body president Hudson Kraus, who apparently misused his office to benefit his younger brother, then apologized but got rung up anyway. Political observers worry that its overuse may diminish impeachment as a deterrent to excessive malfeasance. Maybe there's a ton of evidence, maybe there's not, but really all that's required is a majority of one's enemies. You figure House Republicans were plotting their attack on Joe Biden before Amanda Gorman had finished reciting her poem. ...

Note this thoughtful piece from Kathleen McElroy. Impressive woman. ...

Our 2023 banquet summary just reminds how meaningful, how enjoyable, how wonderful is this night. If you missed the banquet, or if you've never been, your next chance comes in April. I promise you will leave feeling better about the profession and its future. ...

This is one of the most inspiring stories you will read this year. Nature can save us, perhaps, but first we must get out of its (and our own) way. Tiny Forests With Big Benefits. Meanwhile, from the University of California, Merced comes a study that says covering the state's 6,437 kilometers of canals with solar panels would conserve an estimated 63 billion gallons of water while producing 13 gigatons of power — enough to power all of Los Angeles from January to early October. Or you can be like Texas and expand lignite mining.

Caught my eye: How these farmers are teaming up to solve a Middle East water crisis

Closing words [with gratitude to Garrison Keillor and Prairie Home Productions]: "Life is just a short walk from the cradle to the grave, and it sure behooves us to be kind to one another along the way." — playwright Alice Childress

Each logo in the ad rail links to the sponsor's website!



All about the community of model railroading and rail enthusiasm in the Midwest and Southwest



UNSUNG: REMEMBERING JEWELL HOUSE



### 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
International Herald Tribune Cato Institute
U.S. News & World Report 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 Editor & Publisher
Investigative Reporters and Editors
Coalition of Journalists for Open Government
National Institute for
Computer-Assisted Reporting
Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press
Poynter Online Pew Research Center
Columbia Journalism Review
Texas Legislature FOI Foundation of Texas
Merriam-Webster Encyclopedia Britannica
NewsLink Wikipedia

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

antidote
The Onion

send additions for the list to:
john@xdycus.com