

The Cal Press

Cal Press future to be decided at Winter Meeting

The Dec. 7 California Press Association Winter Meeting in San Francisco is an important event for the organization. A special board meeting will be held to discuss the future of Cal Press.

At the luncheon program there will be a panel discussion on "The Chauncey Bailey Project," led by Robert Rosenthal, former San Francisco Chronicle managing editor and leader of the project. This discussion will give the inside story of the Chauncey Bailey Project and how Cal Press can help.

For the project, a coalition of local media has banded together to investigate the murder of Oakland Post journalist Chauncey Bailey. The media



partners include San Francisco Bay Guardian, the Bay Area Black Journalists Association, Bay Area News Group, Center for Investigative Reporting and many others.

Sandy Close is confirmed to speak at dinner about "The Chauncey Bailey Project and the Future of Media," says Cal Press Acting-President and San Francisco Bay Guardian Publisher Bruce Brugmann. "Sandy was the journalist who brought everyone together, the participating institutions and talent, probably the only person in the Bay Area who could do it, to form the joint project," Brugmann said. Close is currently the executive director for the Pacific News Service in San Francisco.



Close

Attendees will also take a look into the history of some early California newspapers. There will be a display of these papers including the front pages from historic publications such as the Alta Californian, Pictorial Union, California Police Gazette and the Daily Dramatic Chronicle.

The papers are part of a file secured by Philip McCombs, late Secretary of Cal Press from the California State Library for display at the 100th annual meeting of the Association, which was held at the Palace Hotel in 1978. The papers have been preserved as part of the historic files maintained by Cal Press longtime Hall of Fame Committee Chairman Fred Weybret.

Cal Press honors Wilson, Levine, Riggs

California Newspaper Hall of Fame

The California Newspaper Hall of Fame honors deceased newspapermen and women whose outstanding devotion to their responsibilities resulted in substantial contributions to their regions and to the development of California.

Stanley T. Wilson

Former Bay Area publisher (1911-2004)

As a newspaper publisher in both Mill Valley and Turlock, Stanley Wilson was truly a community leader who worked to make those cities better places to live. In addition, he was at the forefront in the fight to require government agencies in California – at both the local and state levels – to conduct their business in meetings that



Wilson

were open to the public and the media.

Wilson was born Feb. 1, 1911, in Los Angeles and moved with his family to

Arizona at an early age. He started his newspaper career at the age of 12 as a "printers devil" for the Casa Grande Bulletin, where he learned to set type.

He worked for several California newspapers, including the Orange Daily News, where he spent seven years covering police and city hall. After that, he moved to the San Rafael Independent as circulation manager. He was president of the California Circulation Managers Association in 1944.

In 1945, he bought his first newspaper, the Mill Valley Record. In addition to his duties as publisher, Wilson covered the Mill Valley City Council. He complained frequently in editorials that members of the council would meet for dinner before their meetings and then routinely pass items with little or no discussion. This experience was the beginning of his life-long crusade for open meetings, which resulted in much of the open meeting and FOI legislation in place today.

In 1953, Wilson sold The Record and purchased the Turlock Daily Journal. It was during his years in Turlock that he had the largest impact on the community.

Hamilton learns not all internships are alike

The Cal Press internships are provided by the McCombs and Rouse funds, augmented by direct contributions to the CNPA Foundation from Cal Press members. For more information contact Joe Wirt, CNPA Foundation secretary-treasurer, at (916) 288-6021 or joe@cnpa.com.

By Ian Hamilton

My internship this summer at The Orange County Register was not my first.

I was an intern at The Bakersfield Californian in 2006. In that internship I was given equal experience in news, feature and multimedia

reporting with plenty of clips to show for each endeavor. It was what most college students look for in an internship.

I leave The Register with few clips in hand and a very different experience. I got to see first-hand the effect of

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Awards from Page 1

In 1957, Governor Goodwin J. Knight signed legislation authorizing a new college to be located in Stanislaus County. Citizens of Turlock felt that the new college would be a benefit to their community, and created a special committee to win the election. They knew they faced an uphill battle against the neighboring city of Modesto, which also wanted the college. They appointed Wilson to head the committee.

Modesto was filled with citizens of influence, who made their desire known in high

places in Sacramento. What they didn't realize, and which was perhaps the deciding factor in the final selection, was that Wilson had established a strong friendship with Governor Knight.

After several years and many lengthy trips to Sacramento, the final decision came in December 1959 and Turlock was selected as the home of the new Stanislaus State College.

At a Chamber of Commerce dinner a few weeks later, Wilson received a standing ovation and was credited with being "the man most responsible for bringing the state college to Turlock."

In 1952, Wilson became president of the California Newspaper Publishers Association where he continued to push his agenda for open meeting laws. It was in the year following his presidency that the Ralph M. Brown Act was approved by the Legislature. Ralph Brown was Wilson's Assemblyman, and they had developed a close friendship while Wilson sought to convince Brown of the need for open meeting laws. While this act applied only to city and county government, the Bagley-Keane Act later required open meetings of state agencies.

The co-author of this later legislation, former Assemblyman William T. Bagley of Marin County, established a long friendship with Wilson while he was publisher of The Record. In 2005, Bagley wrote that Wilson "was my inspiration. It was this issue, new to me at the young age of 30 when first elected, that was the very genesis for my interest and action on behalf of FOI."

The Philip N. McCombs Achievement Award

The Philip N. McCombs Achievement Award honors distinguished publishers who are no longer fully active in the industry but who have served their communities well for an extended period and have made lasting contributions to the newspaper industry.

Mort Levine

Longtime Silicon Valley publisher

Mort Levine's involvement with newspapers goes back over 60 years. After editing his college daily at the University of Wisconsin, he began his professional career reporting for the Waukesha, Wisc. Daily Freeman. In the early 1950s, he and his wife, Elaine, set out for California with a goal of starting a different kind of weekly using off-set printing — a rarity in those days.

That dream became reality in 1954 when they founded the Milpitas Post and then clustered it with 15 other adjacent sub-



Levine

urban weeklies in an area which would become known as Silicon Valley. This group was sold and a new group centered on the Country Almanac in Menlo Park was put together in the 1980s.

In the 1990s, Levine started a group once more based in

Milpitas but also serving Alameda County. With retirement beckoning, this last group was sold in 2000 to MediaNews Group.

Through the years, Levine's newspapers were frequent award winners in CNPA and National Newspaper Association contests. His papers were among the first in Northern California to utilize cold type and offset technology to capture a graphic look different from conventional products. His newspapers featured a strong emphasis on local editorial content, investigative stories and dramatic graphics and photos.

Early on in his California career, Levine became active in CNPA and ultimately served as president in 1992. Along with a small group of concerned publishers, he provided leadership resulting in a complete change of mission and culture of the association under a new staff headed by experienced newspaper people. Levine was also a pioneer in national suburban newspaper organizations and one of the founders of the California First Amendment Coalition.

In retirement, Levine continues his involvement in the industry as a consultant and adviser to several Northern California newspaper groups.

Throughout his long career, Levine has devoted continuing effort to community causes. In San Jose, he was one of the founders of what is now a thriving opera company. He joined to save that city's art museum from closing. He was a longtime county parks commissioner and a civil service commissioner. He also headed a blue-ribbon citizens commission to devise ways to curb rogue police activity, resulting in totally new policies on the use of lethal force and a new, forward-looking police chief.

An interest in preserving local historic places led to the Levines restoring and opening to the public the home of famed turn-of-the-century crusading newspaper editor Fremont Older. Fremont Older was named to the California Press Association's Hall of Fame in 1963.

Of his life's work, Levine says it "shows how a newspaper career totally enmeshed with the community's other institutions provides a path to service which enables significant and lasting achievements."

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THE MISSION of the California Press Association is to be the guardian of the history and traditions of California journalism, to recognize and honor contemporary achievements, to assure the future of California journalism through encouragement of education and to provide a social and educational forum for its members.

The Cal Press

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Interns from Page 1

revenue losses on the business of newspapers. During the final month of my internship, The Register was forced to lay off a number of employees and cut back the page count in the actual newspaper.

Moving past the tense atmosphere I felt in the newsroom during those final weeks, I

come away with an incredibly deep understanding of the challenges facing newspapers as well as a clear vision of the opportunities for a professional journalist entering the field in the next five years.



Hamilton

Virtually untouched by the layoffs was the investigations unit, the team to which I was attached. This is a team of watchdog journalists of the truest kind who are given months to work on one story simply because an injustice is being done. These reporters need people to help tell their stories online, and I believe those who can tell them in the most dynamic, interesting and user-friendly ways are the ones who will be most sought after in the upcoming years.

So I leave The Register with few clips, but the front row seat I had to the transformation of a newspaper into a news organization perfectly rounds out my learning experience and prepares me for what is ahead.

I also had the opportunity to observe and work with some of the finest investigative reporters in the business and I learned so much about how they do their jobs just by shadowing and observing. After sitting in on interviews with

the mayor and police chief of Tijuana, I found myself running with police down a dried-up waterway underneath the city of Tijuana with a video camera in my hand. You can't beat that.

Ian Hamilton is the executive editor of the Daily Titan for California State University, Fullerton. He received the California Press Association's Lillian McPherson Rouse Fund Scholarship and interned at The Orange County Register.

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The Justus F. Craemer Newspaper Executive of the Year

Newspaper Executive of the Year recipients are publishers, editors-in-chief or equivalents who have involved themselves in the directions of the editorial and news side of their newspapers by showing exceptional editorial achievement. Their newspapers have made impacts on their community or influenced local, state or national concerns as a result of their journalistic effort. The award was established in honor of Justus F. Craemer (1888-1966), who served as president of the California Press Association for 20 years.

George E. Riggs

President and CEO of the California Newspapers Partnership and publisher of the San Jose Mercury News

In a time of great challenge for the core newspaper business in California and elsewhere, it is fitting to honor George Riggs, who has both a keen appreciation for newspapers' historic roles and a strategic vision for the transformation newspaper companies must make to thrive in the future.

Riggs now serves as president and CEO of the California Newspapers Partnership and as publisher of the San Jose Mercury News. The partnership publishes 91 newspapers, including 35 dailies, with a combined circulation of more than 1 million and approximately \$1 billion in annual revenues.

Riggs launched his newspaper career in 1969 in advertising sales in his hometown of Hattiesburg, Miss., at the Hattiesburg American, while at the same time earning BS and MBA degrees (1972 and 1974) from the University of Southern Mississippi. He worked full time in sales for the newspaper while attending evening classes at Southern, graduating in the top tier of his class. At the American, after only three years he was promoted to retail manager, at the time the youngest in the company's history.

Riggs came to California in 1975 as the publisher (and often reporter/photographer/editor) of the Fontana Herald News, a small, struggling daily located in the growing suburbs east of Los Angeles. As an executive of the independently owned Buckner News Alliance, Riggs expanded the group, located in the San Bernardino/Riverside area, to include the Corona Independent and several weeklies.

From the beginning, Riggs saw that fair and balanced local news coverage and deep involvement in the community were the keystones to building a sound newspaper franchise, and his acknowledged leadership on those fronts earned him numerous community honors and recognitions.

In 1985, Riggs moved to Northern California and joined Leshar Communications as director of its daily newspaper division, with responsibility for its four smaller daily newspapers. Two years later, he was promoted to general manager of the company's flagship paper, the Contra Costa Times, and



Scholtes

Jennifer Scholtes, from California State University, Chico, was the recipient of the California Press

Association's Philip N. McCombs Fund scholarship. She interned at The Oakland Tribune. Scholtes is now a reporter at Congressional Quarterly.

In Memoriam

Norma Hage

Norma Hage, a co-publisher of weekly newspapers in California and Minnesota, died May 4 in Rochester, Minn. She was 87. Hage was born in 1920 in Madison, Minn., and grew up in Fairfax, Minn., where she worked as a legal secretary until she married Glenn Hage in 1942. Norma worked in the Blue Earth State Bank while Glenn was editor of the Blue Earth Post and Faribault County Register. He later worked at the Olivia (Minn.) Times Journal. During World War II, the Hages lived in San Francisco working for the Office of War Information. They bought their first weekly newspaper in partnership with Tom Licklikder and published the Renville

(Minn.) Star Farmer from 1948 until 1950 when they bought the Kanabec County Times, also in Minnesota. In 1968 they purchased the Sanger Herald in Fresno County; two years later they bought the Reedley Exponent. They retired from the newspaper business in 1977 for health reasons, but they eventually joined a group of Reedley investors and purchased the California papers again, serving as vice presidents and consultants on the board of directors. The Hages traveled on study missions with the National Newspaper Association. Norma was preceded in death by her parents, six older brothers and two sisters. Her husband preceded her in death in 1998.

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in 1989 he was again promoted, this time to vice president with responsibility for all daily operations.

In 1991 he was appointed president and chief operating officer. Two years later, following the death of company founder Dean Leshner, he became publisher and chief executive officer of Leshner Communications.

Riggs worked tirelessly to improve the editorial quality of the Contra Costa Times, the professionalism of its sales organization and the company's community involvement.

His leadership paid dividends. In a 12-year period the Contra Costa Times won the General Excellence Award of the California Newspaper Publishers Association seven times, an unprecedented run in its circulation category.

Additionally, under Riggs's leadership The Times won a national Freedom of Information Award from Associated Press Managing Editors (2005), the James Madison Award of the Northern California Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (2004) and the FOI Award of the California Newspaper Publishers Association (2005) for its work uncovering

the lack of public records compliance by public agencies.

In 2004, The Times sued the City of Oakland after the city refused to release public salary information requested by the newspaper. The Times won sweeping victories at the trial and appellate levels. The case, which could set an important positive precedent in the public records arena, was argued before the California Supreme Court in May 2007. A decision was to be announced by the high court within 90 days of the hearing. During this costly legal battle, Riggs never waned in his support of the principles for which the paper fought.

On another front, Riggs demonstrated his organizational leadership skills in 1995 by carefully guiding nervous employees at the Contra Costa Times through an ownership transition from Leshner Communications to Knight Ridder.

In 2004, he became president and publisher of the Mercury News while continuing to oversee the Times. To culminate his first full year as publisher of the Mercury News, the newspaper won the CNPA's General Excellence Award.

In 2007, Riggs once again had to marshal his leadership skills to navigate through not one but two ownership changes, from Knight Ridder to the McClatchy



Riggs

Company and, two months later, from McClatchy to MediaNews Group, the managing partner of the California Newspapers Partnership.

Along with other newspaper company executives, Riggs now finds himself

faced with the challenges presented by the Internet, declining newspaper readership and advertiser consolidations and experimentation with other media.

Always one to take the offensive, Riggs is implementing a plan for the California Newspapers Partnership that embraces newspapers' historic roles but goes beyond that, transforming newspaper companies into portfolio companies, building on traditional print products with franchises on the Internet and in targeted publications and services.

Riggs has served the industry well in the past – he is a former director and president of the California Newspaper Publishers Association – and he will serve it well again by demonstrating how newspaper companies can once again become media leaders.

Riggs and his wife Elise live in Danville.

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