

**MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
**February 22, 2010**  
**Myron Belkind, Secretary**

Board Chair Theresa Werner called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. Present were President Alan Bjerga, Secretary Myron Belkind, Treasurer Keith Hill, Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, Governors Shawn Bullard, Mike Soraghan, John Donnelly, Mark Wjono, Jennifer Sergent, Theresa Werner, John Hughes, Rodrigo Valderrama, Jessica Brady, and Donna Leinwand (ex-officio). Not attending: Mark Hamrick, Ed Barks. Staff present: Executive Director Bill McCarren, Director of Membership Sarahanne Driggs

The Minutes from the Jan. 15, 2010 meeting were unanimously approved.

**Membership Report**

On the recommendation of Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane, the Board unanimously approved the application of 32 members (see list at end of Minutes), retired status for 13 members and a six-month hardship dues waiver for 2 members. The number of new members so far this year is 51, compared to 120 for the same period last year. Total members as of the Membership Report to the February Board meeting were 3,447, compared to 3,652 last year. Separately, it was confirmed that Harvard Club members do qualify for retired status membership as other NPC members do.

The Board then went into executive session to consider an appeal of a decision by the Ethics Committee in December 2009 to revoke the membership of a member. After hearing the appeal, the Board returned to open session and voted unanimously to uphold the decision of the Ethics Committee.

**Committee Liaison Reports**

**Book and Author:**

The Book and Author committee held its first 2010 meeting in February under the leadership of new chair and veteran committee member John Clark. Currently scheduled book raps include a joint luncheon event with the Speakers Committee featuring Mitt Romney on March 5. In addition, Lynne Olson will discuss her new book, *Citizens of London: The Americans Who Stood with Britain in its Darkest, Finest Hour*, on March 23. The committee also discussed potential invitees for future book raps through the month of June, and assigned committee members to approach the targeted authors.

**Book Fair:**

The Book Fair Committee has a new chair, Barbara Bird, who has long worked on both the Book Fair and on the Book and Author Committee.

The Book Fair Committee members in liaison with Julie Schoo, Library Director, and her staff are well underway in identifying notable and award-winning authors to appear with their most recent books at the 2010 Book Fair scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 9. A broad range of interests includes politics, memoirs, history, food, sports, pop culture, mystery, children's literature, biographies and more.

Sponsorship opportunities will be available. Sponsorship offers a high-profile promotional opportunity for sponsors and support for the library's scholarship funds for minority and financially deserving journalism students, as well as research services and training to journalists worldwide. Individuals, businesses and associations are being contacted and offered a choice of levels of sponsorship participation.

Alma Powell was our Honorary Chairwoman last year and the selection process has begun for this year's Honorary Chair. We plan to renew our partnership with the SEED Foundation, which helps prepare underserved students for college success. Alma Powell and the SEED Foundation figured prominently in our publicity, media coverage and sponsorship last year.

**Communications and Marketing:**

New committee chair Tom McMahon convened this committee's first meeting with a discussion of how the committee can best carry out the agenda of President Bjerga to the benefit of club members. He divided these priorities into three main areas:

1. Offer strategy and guidance to other committees that have public relations and media relations needs.
2. Develop efforts designed to encourage communication and understanding between reporters and public relations practitioners.
3. Promote NPC's mission to support journalism and to recruit and retain NPC members.

He has also been reaching out to other committee chairs to better gauge what types of service Communications and Marketing can provide, and has met with Sylvia Smith to determine how committee members can help with *The Wire*.

Committee members Martha Lockwood and Marjorie Tharp will remain as vice chairs, lending a sense of continuity to the committee's leadership (McMahon was also a vice chair last year).

**Professional Development:** Upcoming plans include a Journalism Survival Camp in late April/early May; quarterly news schmooze networking happy hours; Web design class/series, and video storytelling/editing.

**Awards Committee:**

Joanne Booze reports that the 2010 awards brochure is online. The deadline for entries is April 1. Jonathan Salant says most judges are in place. Jonathan has a vice chair to help him with the workload this year, Greg Davis . He recommends July 19 or July 26.

**Broadcast Committee:**

Chair Ken Mellgren and Vice Chair Ralph Malvik have agreed to serve again for 2010. With support and assistance from Donna Leinwand and Bill McCarren, NPC has established a relationship with PRX (Public Radio Exchange) to distribute our weekly radio show to public radio stations around the country. We are proposing to expand additional NPC content to be distributed in 2010 as well. Next week, we will meet with President Bjerga to explore options for improving our audio quality for broadcast. Hopefully, this will lead to discussions with the BOC that may also open up new opportunities to market NPC content beyond NPC-produced events. The committee continues to expand its relationships with other NPC committees in an effort to continue to support their activities and develop added value and encourage new membership.

**Photography Committee:** Chair Darlene Shields reports that Noel St. John deserves kudos for the success he is having as the new photo coordinator this year for Club events, leading the expanding group of volunteer member photographers. He also has taken a number of outstanding photos himself. Plans are already under way for the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Members' Photo Exhibit throughout September. The committee held two successful events to start the year: A panel discussion was organized on Jan. 20 with The White House News Photographers' Association featuring award-winning visual journalists who showed their images and discussed their experiences in covering the first year of the Obama Administration. On Feb. 17, Mike Sheras, a representative of Canon, discussed cameras that combined both still and video capabilities.

**Newsmakers:** There were 9 Newsmakers in January and 7 in February.

**International Correspondents' Committee:** There will be an Irish Embassy Night on March 3 and a Haiti Night at the Club on March 25.

**History & Heritage Committee:**

The H&H Committee is concentrating on two significant commemorative dates: The merger of the NPC and the Washington Press Club and the re-dedication of the National Press Building. The events were less than a month apart in 1985 and thus are ripe for 25-year anniversaries. H&H envisions an event where the cornerstones (1929 and 1985) are opened and inventoried down in the lobby and new mementos added. And this would be followed by a reception in the Holeman Lounge. This could be turned into a Library fund raiser and involve Turner Construction, which has been very generous in the past.

In addition, the H&H Committee is continuing its oral history project activities, is becoming more involved in placing historic artifacts in the Library display case and continuing to oversee the weekly historic notes compiled by Elizabeth Smith Brownstein.

And we are beginning early planning for a Kennedy-Nixon Debate event around its 50th anniversary on Sept. 26.

Last, but not least, in an effort to get committees to work with each other, the H&H, Young Members and Photography Committees are exploring the idea of doing a photo exhibition of historic Press Club images hosted at either the National Gallery or National Portrait Gallery. This is a very, very rough idea, as the archivist still has to weigh in. This project could give some local attention to the Club and might be a way in which the Club could drum up more media coverage.

**Membership:**

The Membership retention task force is off the ground. Membership Secretary Angela Greiling Keane and Membership Committee Chair Joel Whittaker will work on reevaluating the membership categories. Joel Whittaker met with New Jersey State Society, which includes journalists, to pitch them on membership when they held an event at the club.

**Young Members Committee:** The next Pub Quiz is 7 p.m. March 11. The next YMs monthly meeting will be March 15. We will be discussing particulars of the many exciting and upcoming events we have on the books, as well as ones yet to be added.

**House and Bar Committee:** Grease traps have been installed in the main kitchen. Reliable Source kitchen renovation is projected for this summer. Other items discussed:

Obama Photograph & Front Page: It was noted that President Obama's photograph is not on the mezzanine's South wall with those of other U.S. Presidents. Agreed that a newspaper offset plate from an Illinois newspaper should be expeditiously obtained, framed and hung.

Pulitzer Prize Photo: Coordination of donation of New York Times' photographer Doug Mills' Pulitzer-Prize winning photo. Work with the Photography Committee regarding framing, site selection and a possible hanging ceremony.

Reliable Source: Follow-up to comments expressed at the Jan. 15 General Membership Meeting. Issue of Saturday closing of the Reliable Source resurrected. Task Force to examine and verify costs, benefits, usage, special occasions, etc.

a) Game room – request that it be opened Saturday.

Fitness Center: Lockers to be cleaned weekly.

**Events Committee:** Plans for the year include:

-- Open Mic Night, to be called "PressFactor." Will be co-sponsored with the Young Members Committee and will be held monthly/quarterly, depending on the Club response.

--Georgian Wine Night.

--Documentary Film Series

--RAPID FIRE IDEAS

- Service Programs designed to aid YMs and Owls to bridge the gap between generations.
- “Affordable Wine Dinners” - Affordable events for members, “we can’t always have \$90.00 dinners”
- Women in Media Symposium - Abeer Abdalla to meet with Professional Development committee
- Family Friendly events to be considered and planned.

**Speakers Committee:** Upcoming speakers:

- Feb. 23: Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack
- Feb. 26: Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D, Director, NIH
- March 5: Mitt Romney, former Governor of Massachusetts
- March 8: Lisa Jackson, Administrator, EPA
- March 9: Ambassador Ron Kirk, U.S. Trade Representative
- March 15: Dick Arney, Chairman, Freedom Works
- April 5: Douglas Shulman, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service
- April 12: Dennis Quaid, actor

**Fourth Estate Award Dinner:**

Jerry Zremski and Donna Leinwand are working on sponsors for the event.

**Freedom of the Press:** The committee is looking to do monthly classes on making requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

**State of the Press Club Monthly Report: February 2010**

The National Press Club is off to a very good start financially and professionally this year.

This assessment was given at the Board of Governors’ first operational meeting of the year on Feb. 22, 2010, when the financial results for January were reviewed and President Alan Bjerga expressed his happiness with the professional programs that have been organized so far and that are being planned for the future.

Maintaining the momentum of strong financial results generated in 2009, with a record year-end profit of just over \$1 million, the January operations yielded a profit of about \$150,000, more than \$100,000 ahead of budget, with revenue at \$1.1 million, about 8 percent more than budgeted.

Executive Director Bill McCarren said the outlook for the period March through June should be strong, but he advised that the February results would be impacted by the blizzard that caused the cancellation of many catering events over a six-day period, when the Club’s restaurants also were closed.

McCarren said much of the business lost during the blizzard should be recouped in the spring, when it is anticipated some canceled catering events will be rebooked.

President Bjerga singled out a professional event held during the blizzard – a press conference by Haitian Ambassador Raymond Joseph on Feb. 11 – as an example of how the Club opened to fulfill a professional commitment when other facilities including the U.S. government were closed. “We showed we were a can-do Club, even in the midst of a major blizzard,” he said.

Bjerga also said that the Club planned to step up its already active professional development programs to provide skills for journalists in their changing profession. He said the NPC Eric Friedheim Library would be leading various initiatives in cooperation with the Professional Development Committee including a new “Journalism Survival Boot Camp” in the spring.

### **Paid Subscriptions for Wire to Non-members Authorized**

The Board unanimously authorized Executive Director Bill McCarren to implement a system of paid subscriptions for the Wire and the “This Week at the NPC” feature for non-members and to report to the Board from time to time on the status of paid subscriptions. The Board adopted the motion on the recommendation of Sylvia Smith, chair of the Publications Committee, who said that the information contained in the Wire is “useful and interesting to NPC members, and it has a potential value to non-members as well.”

### **New Bonus, Compensation Formula Approved**

The Board, meeting as a Committee of the Whole, unanimously approved a new bonus and compensation formula for the professional staff.

The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for March 22, 2010.

The Board adjourned at 9:50 pm.

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### **New Member Applications Approved**

#### **Active**

Silvia Adriana Pisani - La Nacion Newspaper, International Correspondent; Simon Mann - The Age (Melbourne)/The Sydney Morning Herald, U.S. Correspondent; Mickey Thompson - Hill Rag/Social Sightings, Reporter, Photojournalist/Publisher

#### **Active Reinstate**

Patricia Guadalupe - WTOP Radio, Reporter

**Active Non-Resident**

Christopher Gunty, Baltimore, MD - The Catholic Review, Associate Publisher/Editor; Ian Johnson, Berlin, GERMANY - Wall Street Journal, Reporter, China; Joe Lescoulie, Redondo Beach, CA - CTV World Television, CEO/Executive Producer; Jerry Pattengale, Marion, IN - Gannet Media/Indiana Wesleyan University, Author/Writer/Assistant Provost for Scholarship & Public Engagements

**Active Under 35**

Peter Stepanek - Skyhighart Media & Photography, LLC, Photographer

**Active Under 30**

Chris Amico - PBS Newshour, Interactive Editor, Lead Data-driven projects; Nathan Alexander Hurst - The Detroit News, Washington Bureau, Washington Correspondent; Charles Rice - MergerMarket Ltd., Reporter; Luke O. Russert - NBC News/MSNBC, Correspondent

**Affiliate**

Garrison K. Courtney - House of Rock Productions (TMZ), President of Programming and Business Development; Pamela R. Stevens - Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Director, Communications & External Relations; Merle David Kellerhals, Jr. - U.S. State Department, Sr. Writer for [www.america.gov](http://www.america.gov) <<http://www.america.gov>>

**Affiliate Reinstate**

Joyce Patterson - Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives, Public Affairs Specialist; Carolee Walker - U.S. Department of State, Writer/Editor

**Affiliate Under 35**

Madeeha Anwar - Voice of America, News Producer/News Reporter; Leslie Maccracken - Macfadden & Associates, Deputy Project Manager, Information Support Unit; Sara Wazir - Voice of America, Broadcaster/News Producer

**Associate**

Stephen G. Bassett - Paradigm Research Group, Executive Director; Mindy Kay Bricker - World Affairs Journal, Online Managing Editor

**Associate 65+**

John F. Bagley - The Bagley Group, President, Government Relations & Outreach

**Associate Non-Resident**

David P. Keys, Las Cruces, NM - New Mexico State University, Assistant Professor

**Associate Non-Resident Reinstate**

Edward F. Giltenan, Baltimore, MD - T. Rowe Price Group, Director of Corporate Communications

**Associate Under 35**

Kelly Newton - Hill & Knowlton, Sr. Vice President; Emily S. Whitten - Ardelle Associates, Attorney; Warren Robinson - DCI Group  
Public Relations, Tech/Healthcare Groups

**Student**

Anthony Carl Flamer-McClees - Student/Civics 101, Harvard/Moderator; Evan B. Gassman - Washington Examiner via National Journalism Center, Intern with Barbara Hollingsworth/Student; Tamara Michelle Webb - Farm Credit Administration/Georgetown University, Public Affairs Specialist/Student