

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BOARD OF GOVERNORS
June 22, 2009
Myron Belkind, Secretary

Chair Jennifer Sergent called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. Present were President Donna Leinwand, Vice President Alan Bjerga, Secretary Myron Belkind, Treasurer Keith Hill, Membership Secretary Mark Hamrick, Governors Dipka Bhambhani, Shawn Bullard, Gayela Bynum, Jennifer Sergent, Mike Soraghan and former president Sylvia Smith (ex-officio). Also General Manager Bill McCarren, Director of Membership Sarahanne Driggs, Scholarships Committee Chair Mary Clare Jalonick, and Publications Committee Chair Lorna Aldrich and Vice Chair William Miller. Absent were Jessica Brady, John Donnelly, John Hughes, and Theresa Werner.

Board Honors Editors of The Record

President Leinwand said she had just been called to work to cover the Metro crash but first wanted to honor Lorna Aldrich and Bill Miller for their “extraordinary and dedicated services” to the National Press Club in “writing, editing and laying out” the Club’s newsletter, The Record.

President Leinwand described the two editors as “absolute stalwarts who were always cheerful and dedicated” as she introduced a resolution that the Board unanimously adopted at its monthly meeting.

The Board gave a champagne toast to Aldrich and Miller, who expressed their thanks for the support and assistance they had received from NPC presidents and Club members who had worked on the Record staff. The last regular issue of the Record was published on June 1. It has been replaced by the Wire, the online newsletter distributed to Members four times a week. The full resolution said:

“Whereas Lorna Aldrich and Bill Miller have given extraordinary and dedicated services to the National Press Club by writing, editing and laying out the Club’s newsletter, The Record;

“And whereas Lorna and Bill have repeatedly extended their commitment to The Record at the request of the Board of Governors and three presidents,

“The National Press Club commends Lorna and Bill for their outstanding contributions in service to the National Press Club.”

Belkind moved and the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the May 18 meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

On the recommendation of Membership Secretary Mark Hamrick, the Board unanimously approved the application of 39 members (see list at end of Minutes), retired status for 6 members and a six-month dues waiver for 2 members. The number of new members so far this year is 265. Total members as of the Membership Report to the June Board meeting were 3,486 compared to 3,560 last year.

TREASURER'S REPORT: STRONG FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE IN MAY; FOURTH ESTATE GETS TRIPLE BOOST

The Club had its best month for revenue this year in May at \$1,290,419, and with continuing strong profits looks set to reach its goal of having \$1 million in reserves for its rainy day fund by July 1.

And the new all-day Saturday operations in the Fourth Estate Restaurant is having a triple favorable financial impact in terms of better brunch numbers, new revenue from Saturday dinners and new revenue opportunities on Monday evenings, the Board was told.

Treasurer Keith Hill and General Manager Bill McCarren presented the financial results for the first five months of the year to the Board of Governors at its monthly meeting on Monday night.

Aided by cost controls, the May profit was \$246,145, or about \$180,000 better than May 2008. Costs were \$186,000 less than a year ago.

Hill and McCarren said that while the financial outlook for June is good, July and August are "looking like a challenge" and that the Club is intensifying marketing and cost-cutting to bolster the traditionally loss-making summer period.

Saturday brunch in the Fourth Estate is consistently drawing 20 to 40 diners, considerably more than when brunch was served in the Reliable Source.

And the Club is picking up additional financial benefits related to opening the Fourth Estate on a regular basis on Saturday evenings as part of the new all-day operations; closing the restaurant for dinner on Mondays, usually the slowest night for dining, and generating new revenue sources on Monday evenings.

The Fourth Estate can now be available for special events, such as this past Monday when a Club Wine Dinner was sold out, and for private parties, including two that were booked in June, McCarren explained.

These changes, he said, generate additional revenue and profits for an evening that customarily had losses.

FOURTH ESTATE RESTAURANT TO CLOSE FOR PART OF AUGUST

The Board unanimously approved closing The Fourth Estate Restaurant from August 8 through August 22, consistent with similar closures in the past. It will reopen for DC Restaurant Week beginning Monday, August 24.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT APPROVED

Secretary Belkind moved and Vice President Bjerga seconded a motion that the Board unanimously adopted approving the audit report by the Club's independent auditors, Ribis, Jones & Maresca for the year ending Dec. 31, 2008. As stated previously, the auditors gave an "unqualified clear opinion" that the accounts were in order and said the Club is moving in the "right direction in generating profits from operations" and is "on the right track in building up reserves."

APPROVAL OF GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships Committee Chair Mary Clare Jalonick presented---and the Board unanimously approved---the committee's recommendations for the Feldman and Zimmerman Fellowships: Marlena Hartz of Lubbock, Texas, who is headed to the University of Denver (Feldman Fellowship) and Joseph Calamia of New Haven, Connecticut, who is headed to the MIT graduate program in science writing (Zimmerman Fellowship).

DISUCSSION RE. CONSUMER PERIODICALS CATEGORY IN NPC AWARDS

Awards Committee Board Liaison Mike Soraghan reported that one of the judging panels, Consumer Periodicals, had recommended awarding the prize to a non-profit that does not meet the general eligibility requirements, and said this was a matter of club policy to be decided by the board. The judging panel said that despite the lack of eligibility, the stories were of excellent quality. The judging panel also said that journalism is changing, and more journalism is being done by non-profits.

The board engaged in a discussion about about whether the stories had actually been "published" and whether they were balanced and other matters. Past president Smith recommended that the board convey to the Awards Committee a consensus that if the board received a recommendation to give the award to the non-profit, it would not be approved. Members agreed that in the future, the club could look at eligibility guidelines to see if they need to be updated to reflect reality, but we don't want to bend the rules for this circumstance. Soraghan asked if there was any disagreement with this position, and no one disagreed.

Soraghan also indicated that in the category of Press Criticism – Broadcast, the panel recommended against giving an award after receiving only one entry. No one objected to that recommendation.

COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

Travel Committee: The Harpers Ferry trip will be Saturday, July 18.

Awards Committee: The annual NPC Journalism Awards Dinner will be Monday, August 3. Please see separate item on Page 3 of the Minutes regarding the award in the Consumer Periodicals category.

Young Members Committee:

- 1) New Vice Chair -- Evan Sweetman, freelance aviation reporter
- 2) Next Meeting - Thursday, June 25, 2009
- 3) Planning for Fall: events to include, Environmental Journalism Symposium, late fall; Halloween Gala; 5K YM team
- 4) Currently fostering partnerships with: National Journalism Center to mentor and recruit Student Members, Organization of American States (approached us about doing future of young journalists in a Latin and South America event), Young Professionals in Foreign Policy, Southeast Asian Journalists Association, and American News Women's Club.

5K Committee: Members are still working on securing sponsorships and donations for the silent auction. Online registration opened up last week, and after a little back-and-forth, the registration fee was resolved, with registration costing members \$25 and non-members \$35. In the coming weeks, we will be trying to get more silent auction items, begin promoting the race, and recruiting teams to sign up and fundraise. Jessica Brady and Melinda Cooke have discussed doing a sample survey in order to collect information for next year's planning.

History Committee: (from Committee Chair Mark Wojno)

We've got a change in plans. We will need to cancel the Moon panel on July 20th in lieu of a panel honoring Walter Cronkite. Fortunately, Cronkite's executive assistant said reports of his health are not as grave as the media reported, but still, he's 92 and is dealing with the challenges of being 92. Nevertheless, I'm rounding up panelists/close friends of Cronkite, including Marvin Kalb, Dan Schorr and Bob Schieffer, to speak about their friend and colleague. I'd like to do this event in the Ballroom within the month (date TBD), open to the general public. I'm working with Donna and the staff to see if we can book the ballroom, get funding for recording the event and promoting the panel. Also, we've successfully transcribed our oral history interview with Cronkite -- one of our oldest oral history recordings. We're now working on Helen Thomas's interview from 1998.

Newsmakers Committee: There have been 39 Newsmakers so far this year including 7 for June.

Broadcast Committee (from Committee Chair Ken Mellgren):

--Radio Team: Ralph Malvik, our team leader, reports that our first NPC "At the National Press Club" radio program has aired on WFED – 1500 AM. That was the Ford Foundation/Dick Cheney luncheon.

--Regarding our search for additional distribution opportunities, Bill McCarren and I had a lunch meeting with Dana Davis Rehm, Senior VP, Marketing Communications & External Relations and Danielle Deabler, Sir Manager, Media Relations. They explained that NPR could not consider helping with distribution since they have a recent policy of accepting only those programs with substantial revenue generation guaranteed. However, we discussed Public Radio Exchange (PRX), an organization which gathers and distributes a variety of public radio content. Dana said that she would set us up for a meeting to learn more about what PRX might be able to do and what the subscription costs would be.

XM/Sirius has expressed an interest in airing our program again on their POTUS channel. Mark Hamrick is in discussions with them on this possibility.

--Membership: In our meeting with NPR, they expressed a desire to become more involved with NPC including more frequent participation on panels. Bill acknowledged that we generally turn to our members first whenever possible. I promised to create a list of current NPR staffers who are members of NPC. I did that and found that we have only seven NPR members. Bill promised to work on some options to encourage greater NPR membership and therefore more participation. This was of great interest to them. Bill said he and Mark Hamrick would make a proposal to the NPC board.

--History Committee: History Chair Mark Wojno invited our committee's participation in several events they are considering such as a program commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Apollo Moon Landing the week of July 20. We have provided several suggestions and await further word on the plans.

--Professional Development Committee: Betty Plummer has agreed to be a liaison between the two committees to further working together in the future.

Field Trips: We discussed hosting field trips related to radio and television broadcast.

Monique Lyons is trying to arrange a tour of XM/Sirius. Other ideas included the Spy Museum, the Newseum, Discovery Channel, VOA and CNN.

Events Committee: The Events Committee continues to grow in size and activity this year. Recent events include a monthly business breakfast with Peter Bergsten of the Peterson Institute. Tomorrow the committee is having another breakfast with portfolio manager Robert Weidemier. On June 10 the committee co-hosted a screening of the documentary film, Food Inc., two days before its premiere, and last week the committee screened "The Stoning of Soraya," which featured a Q&A with actress Shohreh Aghdashloo and director Cyrus Nowrasteh. The committee has also done two tours of the National Cathedral and a tour of the Air & Space museum. Next month the committee starts one of its major summer projects -- a film series of documentaries made by NPC members are DC-area journalists. Film selections are being made this week, with the first screening scheduled for July 20.

Speakers Committee:

Upcoming luncheon speakers:

June 25: Stan Kasten, president, the Washington Nationals

June 26: Robert Herz, Financial Accounting Standards Board

July 1: Wayne Clough, Secretary, the Smithsonian Institution

July 8: Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff

July 10: Morris Dees, Founder & Chief Trial Counsel, Southern Poverty Law Center

July 21: Gail McGovern, President and CEO, The Red Cross

July 24: Rep. John Conyers, Chair, House Judiciary Committee

July 27: Rep. Barney Frank, Chair, House Financial Services Committee

July 29: Sen. John Kerry, Chair, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Book and Author: The following events have been scheduled:

July 8: Sen. John DeMint, *Saving Freedom: We can Stop America's Slide into Socialism*

July 9: Burt Solomon, *FDR v. The Constitution*

Aug. 5: Donna Andrews, *Swan for the Money*

Saturday Books & Brunch

There was a lively and illuminating discussion of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz, winner of the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for fiction and the National Book Critics Circle Award, on June 20. The next Books & Brunch will be on Saturday, July 25, featuring a discussion of *The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court* by Jeffrey Toobin, a staff writer at The New Yorker magazine and a senior legal analyst for CNN.

Photography Committee: (from Committee Chair Darlene Shields)

--NPC Photography Committee meeting--Wed., July 22, 12:00, McClendon Room: Janet Philips, White House archivist, will be our guest speaker. Janet will show us some outstanding White House photos and give us the background on them. Janet works in the White House Photo Office, along with four Presidential photographers and three editors, so she has many wonderful stories to share with us

--NPC Members' Exhibit Photos are due: Please note that you have only about four weeks to submit your photos for our **10th Annual NPC Members' Photo Exhibit. Photos are due in the Membership Office on Wed., Aug. 5.** You may submit up to four photos, not to exceed 11 x 14" each, including mounting and matting. All information must be placed on the front of the photo or the mat. Rules are attached. We will velcro and hang our photos at our meeting on **Wed., Aug. 26, at noon.** The photos will be on display in the NPC lobby for the entire month of September. This is a fabulous opportunity for you to impress your family, friends, and colleagues with your outstanding photographic talent! We all look forward to seeing your very best shots in our exhibit.

International Correspondents Committee:

Upcoming events:

Aug. 6: Anne Goodard, CEO, ChildFund International, to speak on foreign aid reform with regard to humanitarian efforts (coincides with exhibit in the Lobby during August featuring a collection of photos and artwork made by children from Africa, Asia and the Americas).

Sept. 14: John Maxwell Hamilton, dean of the journalism school at Louisiana State University, discussion of his new book on foreign correspondents and international news coverage that is being published the next day.

Oct. 3: Day trip to Amish Country, Lancaster, Pa.

NEW BUSINESS

There was a discussion regarding funding for NPC Scholarships based on a report from Sylvia Smith. The Board will consider the matter further at its July 20 meeting.

Mark Hamrick discussed internal communications within the Club to ensure prompt feedback to the Board of Governors.

OLD BUSINESS

Keith Hill conveyed a proposal from a member to resume Saturday service in the Reliable Source Bar while continuing to have the Fourth Estate operated with a full food and beverage service, except that the Fourth Estate would utilize the bar in the Reliable Source as the service bar and that members would be made responsible for the upkeep of the Truman Lounge on Saturday. Individual board members said this was an issue that had been discussed at length at the May 8 general membership meeting when a number of speakers said “let’s give a try” to the new all-day Saturday operations in the Fourth Estate Restaurant and President Leinwand said she would report back to the autumn General Membership Meeting in October on the results of the new Saturday services.

The Board approved Monday, July 20, as the date for the next BOG meeting.

The June 22 meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.

NEW MEMBER APPLICATIONS APPROVED

Active

Mary Ann Gomez - National Association of Hispanic Publications, Executive Director;
Dennis Noone – Gannett, Washington Editor; Junji Tachino - Asahi Shimbun,
Correspondent/Bureau Chief; Ann Wog - 630 WMAL (Citadel), Producer - Grandy &
Andy Morning Show; Tetsuro Yamada - The Yomiuri Shimbun, Staff Correspondent

Active Reinstatement

Joyce Winslow – Freelance Journalist

Active Non-Resident

J. Dale Debber, Granite Bay, CA - Providence Publications, Publisher; Harvey J. Kronberg, Austin, TX - Texas Analyst, Inc. dba Quorum Report, Editor; Charles Welsh, New York, NY - Mergermarket Group, Group Editor-in-Chief

Active Under 30

Alexis Glenn - United Press International, Photographer/Photo Desk Editor; Sergio Gor - Washington News Observer, Sr. Producer; Libby Keatinge - VH1 - MTV Networks, Writer, Reporter; Grazia Salvemini - Oliver Productions - The McLaughlin Group, Production Assistant

Affiliate

Patricia Adams Curtis – USAID, Public Affairs Specialist; J.D. Gordon - Office of the Secretary of Defense, Spokesman, Western Hemisphere; Michelle Mahoney -Canadian Embassy, Media Relations Officer; Dorinda White - Congresswoman Diane E. Watson, Communications Director

Affiliate 65+

Davis Barrager – Freelance, Retired

Affiliate Non-Resident 65+

Carl Iwasaki, Denver, CO – Life Magazine/Sports Illustrated, Retired Photographer

Affiliate Under 35

Charlotte Hendrix – TEAM, Coordinating Producer

Associate

Timothy Brown – Alstom, Director, Communications; John F. Bruce - Howrey, LLP/Middlesex Newspaper, Lawyer/Contributing Editor; John Doyle - The Principal Network, President & CEO; Angela Y. Lee - Rite Aid Pharmacy, Pharmacist-in-Charge; Paul Levins – ICANN, V.P. Corporate Affairs; James McCarthy - Snack Food Association, President & CEO

Associate Reinstatement

James E. Burke - Donovan/Burke, Inc., President; Kristin Lee - Department of Homeland Security, TSA Assistant Administrator

Associate Non-Resident

Steve Halasey - Institute for Health Technology Studies, VP for Programs

Associate Non-Resident Reinstatement

Jane Norton, Seal Beach, CA - Women's Breast Care Center, Retired M.D.; Kevin M. Wiggins, Collegeville, PA - Endo Pharmaceuticals, Corporate Communications Leader

Building Tenant

Carter DeWitt - Tax Foundation, Development Director; Reed B. Hitchcock - Kellen Company, Vice President; Scott A. Hodge - Tax Foundation, President

Provisional Under 30

Emma Ashburn - Asahi Shimbun, Staff Reporter; Brian Clampitt - Asahi Shimbun, Staff Reporter; John Krudy - Washington Times, Business Staff Writer

Student

Danielle Kurtzleben - InterPress Service, Intern; Lindsay T. Machak - Michigan State University, Student