

FSPA Today

FLORIDA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION



<http://www.jou.ufl.edu/fspa>

Welcome Back.

Spring convention dates have been set for April 17-19, 2008.

Strong writing skills still needed in today's digital world

This is the summer that was. The longest in Florida history — thanks to the Tallahassee legislators who mandated a later school start date.

And what did I do? Did I save the world? Write the great American novel or solve algebraic equations?

Not on your life. But I did ponder the fate of journalism and how FSPA will need to change to meet the future needs of Florida's journalism students and teachers.

In some ways, journalism itself is under assault. At no other time in our country's history have so many people questioned the integrity and value of the Fourth Estate.

And the medium is changing. No one needs to explain to Florida's journalism teachers the importance of the Internet. How many of our students will return to school with a hidden iPhone in their book bags, giving them the capacity to read news 24/7?

Just last May, I met UCF journalism instructor Rick Brunson at the Panera Bread Company for a cup of coffee and a frank talk about what direction we as an orga-

nization needed to take to help Florida journalism teachers.

In my area of Central Florida, the Orlando Sentinel has just reorganized its entire newspaper, asking some employees to take a buy-out and asking others to reapply for their jobs. The Sentinel is

expanding its online presence and shaving whole sections from the print edition.

"What does it mean for journalism education?" I asked Rick. "Will students still pursue journalism degrees?"

His answer came in story form. Take comfort in it. I did.

Rick took a call from a news producer at one of the major news channels who was interested in hiring a recent

graduate. The producer didn't ask about the applicant's ability to build web pages or use a video camera.

Instead, the producer asked: "Does she have good news sense?" "Can she write?" "Does she have the persistence to stay with a story and follow it through?"

Wow! No matter what brand of journalism you teach—newspaper, yearbook, literary magazine or broadcast—these

are the core practices embedded in your curriculum. Don't stop doing what you are doing. We are relevant!

And as Rick pointed out, there will continue to be a need for journalism education, and as online reporting grows with its almost instant reporting requirement, there must be journalists to do that reporting and teachers to teach them.

Yes, there is no denying that a convergence is taking place. Newspaper reporters are being asked to carry their classical note pad but added to that could be two digital cameras and a video camera, too. The first story must be posted online within 15 minutes of arriving on the scene and a longer one filed at 11 p.m. to run in the morning print edition of the paper.

Broadcast journalists work daily online and on the air. We can retrieve news from our cell phones and instantly view details of a bridge collapse from the other side of the country.

You, the journalism educator, are right smack in the middle of one of the most exciting and challenging times in history. How will you deal with these

See PRESIDENT on the back page



By **DEB JEPSON**
FSPA PRESIDENT
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Join e-mail group for FSPA reminders

By **JANE ROBBINS** - EVALUATIONS COORDINATOR
Jprob212@aol.com

What should you add to your "to do" list for back to school?

Join FSPA.

Review our publication evaluations to see how we can utilize the judges' suggestions.

Submit the newspaper and broadcast tapes for evaluation in January.

Submit our best examples of writing, layout and photography for the individual contests in January.

With a new school year, and opportuni-

ties to improve your skills as journalists and advisers, I welcome you back to FSPA.

Many of you heard from me this summer as I created my FSPA e-mail group. As I add new members, I will "blast" you with reminders of important dates and information about the contests FSPA offers.

If you did not respond to my e-mail, it's not too late. Go ahead. Reply. Here's to "blasting

off" to a great year filled with many successes.



Evaluations coordinator Jane Robbins traveled on a boat from Tallinn, Estonia, to Helsinki, Finland, in 2006.

Evaluation Deadlines

- **Newspaper Evaluations**
Due January 9, 2008
Those received January 10-15 will incur a late fee of \$20.
After January 15, not accepted.
- **Broadcast Evaluations**
Due January 9, 2008
Those received January 10-15 will incur a late fee of \$20.
After January 15, not accepted.
- **Individual Contests**
Due January 23, 2008
Those received January 24-29 will incur a late fee of \$20.
After January 29, not accepted.

Evaluation applications will be placed online near October.

<http://www.jou.ufl.edu/fspa>

Hyperlinking

Welcome to September and welcome to FSPA.

In particular we want to welcome and thank the 40 publications who sent in their memberships for 2007-8 during the summer. Now that is thinking ahead.

I urge all advisers to encourage a neighboring adviser to join FSPA. And be sure to share that as our FSPA President, Deb Jepson says, "The 'F' in FSPA stands for friendly." Let's do our best to spread FSPA throughout the state.

I look forward to hearing exciting reports from the District workshops this year. Be sure to check the workshop dates for your district. You can check the FSPA Web site at <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/fspa> to see the dates for your district.

We do try to keep the FSPA Web site colorful, updated, and increasingly interactive.

With the price of paper and printing increasing FSPA finds it prudent to use the Web site to communicate with you.

To be sure we can communicate with all of our



By **DR. JUDY ROBINSON**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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members we monitor the Web site use. We've noticed that along with our members from Florida we have visitors from Alabama, California, Illinois, Louisiana, and New Mexico. We build the Web site to reach most, if not all, of our

Florida members by watching which browsers are used and the resolution of the computer screens viewers use.

We'd like to receive more content from our advisers and students for the FSPA Web site. If you have uploaded a video to YouTube or have an online publication, send us your link. We'll hyperlink.

Hyperlinking is a good start to networking and increasing the FSPA community.

Hyperlinking is indeed the way I spend most of my day -- do you? A typical day is one hyperlink after the other: from the phone to the e-mail to the Web to the class to the student project to the cell phone to the e-mail and back again. Each link represents a different idea and topic.

Much of a day hyperlinking is spent with e-mail from our FSPA members. I wonder, do you have the same wish about e-mail? Do you wish that subject lines would be written to reflect the content of the e-mail? Please tell me you know what I mean.

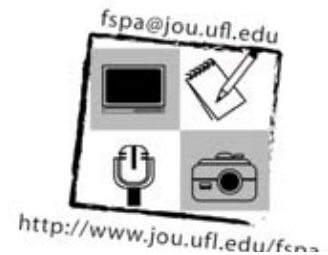
For example, an hour ago I finally found the information I needed in an e-mail with the subject line "Hey."

Yesterday I looked for an e-mail with a promise for FSPA sponsorship with the subject, "Another thing."

I didn't know that the e-mail with the subject line "More stuff" was from someone I didn't know until after I deleted it and received a phone call asking if I'd read it.

You do know what I mean, don't you? So this year we'll resolve to write meaningful subject lines and teach our students as well.

Hyperlinking is a lot of fun and very informative. Who would ever have thought there were strategies for success attached to hyperlinking.



Florida Scholastic Press Association

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FSPA TODAY

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Karla Kennedy is congratulated by her Miami Norland Senior High School students for receiving the Morty Schaap State Journalism Teacher of the Year award at the spring convention's banquet. Photo by Nicolle Cure.

College students dispel myths, give advice for success

By KATIE SANDERS
FSPA Administrative Assistant

Some freshmen come to college not knowing what to expect except those universal college stereotypes perpetuated by TV shows such as ABC Family's "GREEK."

For some, a future of feeding yourself, picking your own classes and finding new friends is daunting – and that's okay.

FSPA has enlisted some experts (well, college students) to share their freshman experiences and advice to help make your transition into college life even smoother.

Diana Diaz is three weeks into her college career in Gainesville and has to yet succumb to one of the major obstacles facing new students living away from home today.

Ramen noodles.

The 18-year-old learned that it was her choice to buy the freeze-dried meal over a healthier alternative, and she is proud of herself for not once eating ramen despite its renowned cheapness.

Although her brother has attended the University of Florida for some years, the Santa Fe Community College freshman has had to learn some lessons of her own along the way.

"I didn't know what to expect," she said. "I thought I would be stressed out all

the time like he [her brother] is."

Diaz hopes to attend the University of Florida in a few years and major in journalism. Then she wants to return to Coconut Creek High School and be the adviser to "The Harbinger" newspaper.

She also wants to volunteer for FSPA during future spring convention while she is in college.

"That weekend in April I'm just like, 'Yes, FSPA!'" she said.

Diaz is the type of student who will wake up early the day before classes and map out not only the normal route she will take to campus but also a back-up in case traffic is bad. You would expect her to locate all of her classes beforehand so she wouldn't be late for one on that first day, too.

So imagine her surprise when, after all her preparation, she arrived to her first class, early of course, and discovered that it was changed to another location.

She also missed the first week of one of her classes — ironically coined "College Success" — because of a scheduling error.

Diaz learned an important lesson -- get to class early for the first day because times and locations change no matter how far in advance you've prepared for your schedule.

"I'm just trying to do the college thing day by day and let it be an experience," she said. "Whatever life throws at me, I'll take it."

Diaz still has more freshman experiences to conquer, but University of Florida sophomore Miles Doran has retired his freshman pair of shower shoes for good. The telecommunications major was the 2005-06 Student Journalist of the Year and knows a thing or two about how to get a good start in the business.

He chose to start school early (summer B) because the town would be "less busy" — but that didn't mean Doran was going to take it easy.

As an ambitious college freshman, he started volunteering and writing stories

for WRUF-AM 850, an on-campus radio station. He earned a job at the station in the spring semester after volunteering for the summer and fall terms.

With the radio position, Doran has interviewed Sen. Bill Nelson during a visit to UF and became accredited through NASA to cover a space shuttle launch at the Kennedy Space Center this summer — as a 19-year-old student.

"Whatever crazy thing is happening, I just want to be a part of it," he said. "Don't let [age] stop you from going after what you want to do."



DIANA DIAZ

Doran said getting as much experience as possible in the field is more important than a perfect GPA once you are in college.

"It's nice to get an A, but you can get a job with a C," he said. "Of course, you should always try for the A."

Doran admits his hatred for math candidly, so he was glad that his days of calculus were over when he arrived to UF.

"You don't have to take the hardest math once you get here," he said.

Doran also knows that networking with professionals goes a long way in this field, and after nailing an internship with CBS WTSP — Tampa Bay's 10 in the summer and going to FSPA conventions, Doran is connected with some prominent journalists.

Doran's summer internship has helped him in more ways than he expected.

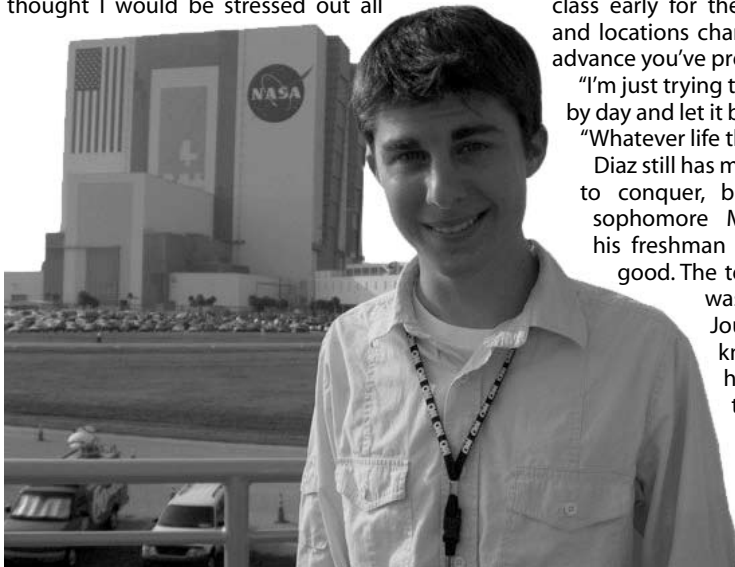
His FSPA interview was interrupted by a phone call from Beau Zimmer, a reporter he worked with in Tampa, who is now a close friend, mentor and recently gave Doran about 20 dress shirts he had outgrown.

The man who "inspired him" at a FSPA convention to seriously pursue broadcasting, CBS News reporter Les Rose, sometimes critiques Doran's work in his spare time.

"The fact that he can set his time aside on the weekend is really something," Doran said.

Doran emphasized that students should not waste any time to start networking, intern or getting involved with on-campus organizations dealing with their major.

"You have to prepare yourself. It's your future — you're only here for four years, so don't waste that time."



2006 FSPA Student Journalist of the Year Miles Doran covered the launch of the NASA space shuttle Endeavour this past summer.



Laura Graham and Amy Iarraobino were the student rep co-chairs for the convention. Photo by Nicolle Cure.



American Heritage High School students were recognized for their success in the On-the-spot Creative Writing contests for fiction and poetry. Photo by Nicolle Cure.

District Workshops

Not sure what workshop you should attend? Go to the FSPA Web site and see to which district your county belongs — then make plans to enhance your staff's journalism skills at your district's workshop!



2007



DISTRICT 1 WORKSHOP

Director - TBD at workshop

Contact - Molly Cobb

Pace High School

(850) 995-3600 ext. 1148

Date: Friday, Oct. 5, 2007

Time: 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at

Location: PJC Milton Campus in Milton, Fla.

DISTRICT 4 WORKSHOP

Director - Donna Smith

smithdonna@pcsb.org

Date: Friday, Sept. 28

Time: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Location: University of South Florida, St. Petersburg, Fla.

Cost: \$11 (Includes lunch)

DISTRICT 2

District 2 may attend a workshop in District 1 or 3.

DISTRICT 3 WORKSHOP

Director - Jeff Moffitt

moffitj@ocps.net

Date: Saturday, Oct. 13

Time: 9 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Location: University of Central Florida

Cost: \$10/ student

DISTRICT 5

Director - Joan Stickles

joans@lee.k12.fl.us

Date: Saturday, Sept. 29, 2007

Location: Cape Coral High School

DISTRICT 6

Director - Mary K. Sullivan

sullivanm@mkhs.dade.k12.fl.us

Date: Saturday, Oct. 13, 2007

DISTRICT 7

Director - Steven Jay Thor

sjtrucker@aol.com

Date: Saturday, Sept. 29, 2007

Location: Deerfield Beach High

Cost: \$10



Florida Scholastic Press Association

2007-2008 Membership Application

<http://www.jou.ufl.edu/fspa>

This membership form is for high school and middle school publications only.

1. Write your contact and publication information clearly in black ink OR download file from FSPA Web site and fill out on a computer using Adobe Reader.

2. If you are an adviser for more than one publication, you may register up to three publications per membership form. Please remember, membership fees are per publication.

3. Keep a copy of the filled-out form for yourself and your accountant. Send a copy to the office.

4. Make checks payable to Florida Scholastic Press Association-Memberships

5. Mail completed form and payment to:

Memberships - FSPA
P.O. Box 118400
College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-8400

- Membership is valid through Nov. 15, 2008.

**Membership fees increase to
\$50 after Nov. 30, 2007.**

CALCULATE FEES (check all that apply)

Mandatory

High School _____ x \$30 = \$ _____
of publications

Middle School _____ x \$10= \$ _____
of publications

Optional

FSPA History Book #__ x \$20= \$ _____

FSPA Foundation Contribution \$ _____

The FSPA Foundation was created to support scholastic media in the state of Florida. Make checks payable to The Community Foundation of Tampa Bay.

TOTAL AMOUNT \$ _____

Adviser name

Adviser e-mail

Adviser phone

Address for FSPA mailings

City

Zip

School phone

School fax

FSPA District (1-7) _____

County

School name

Publication 1 _____

Publication name

Check one.

- Broadcast Magazine Newsmagazine
 Newspaper Yearbook Online media

Publication 2 _____

Publication name

Check one.

- Broadcast Magazine Newsmagazine
 Newspaper Yearbook Online media

Publication 3 _____

Publication name

Check one.

- Broadcast Magazine Newsmagazine
 Newspaper Yearbook Online media

Office use only

Date Processed	Check #	Amount	Initials

PRESIDENT, from page one

changes and maintain core standards as well?

I don't have all the answers. But through the fellowship of FSPA we can actively seek these answers.

How can FSPA help you, the classroom teacher? What are the most important issues facing us? What aspect of FSPA has been the most beneficial to you? The least?

Send me a piece of your mind at Djepson@bellsouth.net. I'll give you a report on what I learn in the next edition of FSPA Today. I wish each one of you a productive, peaceful, fulfilling school year. You deserve it.



Deb Jepson, president, met Dr. John W. Wright, II, interim dean of UF's College of Journalism and Communications, at the 2006 convention.

Excitement for journalism grows with FSPA

"You can't really learn about something until you get a little bit on you." Teachers, and especially journalism advisers, recognize the value in the homespun wisdom of NASA mission specialist Barbara Morgan. Once as an elementary school teacher, she took her students to the charred remains of an area burned by a wildfire so they could study how forests recover.

Likewise, successful advisers know that when staffers "get a little bit on them" and take individual and corporate ownership of their publication or broadcast news production, something special occurs — they generate an excitement and enthusiasm that fosters a commitment to excellence. And when staff members feel their work is valued, and they are making meaningful contributions, the quality of the publication soars.

That idea of individual ownership extends beyond the door of the journalism lab. We see the results in successful businesses and sports programs. And this same dynamic can be applied to your involvement in Florida Scholastic Press Association.

When most of us think of FSPA, the state convention comes to mind. And while that is the high-profile event, our organization aims to be so much more.

Our chief aim is to foster excellence

in student journalism, and to that end, our members cross paths with professional journalists, college professors and Florida's Department of Education. We strive to stay up-to-date with industry trends and developments, and, oh yeah, we also have full-time jobs teaching



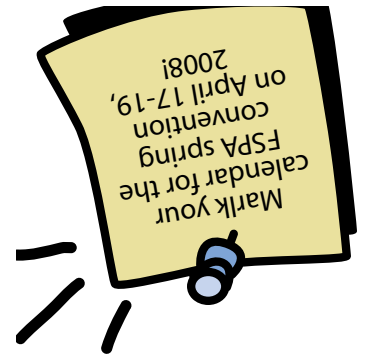
By **MARK SCHLEDORN**
FSPA VICE PRESIDENT
schleride@hotmail.com

school and meeting publication deadlines.

Unlocking FSPA's full potential requires effort from more than a handful of active participants. In the coming weeks we hope to compile a list of member and non-member journalism advisers so that we can touch base in order to provide information and solicit advice. If each of

you would take a few minutes to contact me or your district representative with your school name, publication name and email address, I will be able to start the ball rolling.

It is our hope that we can build enthusiasm for the organization from the ground up. We want each member to feel valued and to take an active part in writing the next chapter in FSPA's rich, 62-year history — and in the process, hope that "you get a little bit on you."



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