

President's Message From Joan Lee Berkman



Joan Lee Berkman
President, St. Louis Press Club

Dear Press Club Members and Friends,

We are extremely grateful for your ongoing support. Your membership truly makes a difference to our mission to raise awareness and funding for student journalism scholarships and enterprise grants to working, independent journalists to spotlight under-reported topics in our region.

A few announcements to kick off the new year: Two exceptional media professionals recently have been honored for their outstanding contributions to Press Club. Our congratulations to President & Founder of Gateway Media Literacy Partners and Board Member **Jessica Brown** who received the Club's highest honor "The Catfish Award" and to KTVI, Channel 2, News Anchor & Reporter and former Board Member **Jasmine Huda** on receiving the President's "Above & Beyond" Award.

Our new slate of 2021-2022 Officers has been announced, and congratulations to: **William Greenblatt**, Immediate Past-President; **Richard Gavatin**, Treasurer; **Kent Martin**, Secretary; **Claudia Burris**, Vice President-Scholarships; **Janet Scott**, Vice President-Programming; **Ellen Nisenson Soule**, Vice President-Membership; **Elisa Couch Tomich**, Vice President-Enterprise Journalism; **Alice Handelman**, Vice President-Nominating; and **Margaret Gillerman**, Vice President-Publicity. Finally, please welcome our newest board members- **Peggy Barnhart**, **Miran Halen**, **Joseph Martineau**, **Kevin Smith** and **Sarah Thompson**. (Their impressive bios are posted on Press Club's website).

We look forward to their leadership as Press Club continues to grapple with the unprecedented challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, racial inequity, and the shocking attack on our nation's capital on January 6th. That said, we will require the steadfast support of the entire Club community as we work to navigate the ongoing pandemic, freedom of the press, the attacks on journalists themselves, and the national outcry for race equity and social justice.

Our team leaders are working on programming to keep the spotlight on these issues, as well as collaborating with media organizations to provide professional development activities to bolster journalistic skills to address the changing needs of the global communications profession and to offer social activities that build a vital media community.

In the meantime, thanks to the dedication and perseverance of our Club staff, Club leadership and our members, who continue to prove the resiliency of the St. Louis Press Club.

Let's make this a happy, productive new year,
Joan



2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Immediate Past-President
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Secretary
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- Janet Scott
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- Pamela Niehaus
- Charlotte Ottley
- Barbara Langsam Shuman
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- Kedra Tolson
- Aja Williams
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- Laura Schnarr**
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2021 Spring Intern

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Press Club's Mission Statement

The St. Louis Press Club is for those who make, cover and influence the news. Its mission is to raise awareness and funding for student journalism scholarships and for enterprise grants to working, independent journalists to spotlight under-reported topics in our region. It serves its members through professional development activities to bolster their skills to address the changing needs of the global communications profession and to offer social activities that build a vital media community.

Meet our Press Club Spring Intern



Tirzah Williams, is entering her senior year at Webster University, where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in media communications with a minor in Africana Studies. Williams serves as Creative Arts Assistant at her local church, where she is responsible for social media management, administrative work, as well as verbal communications lead. Her skill set includes social media marketing strategy, creative writing, and producing. Williams has relevant experience as a Mission Resource Intern at the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Missouri & Kansas where she assisted with fundraising efforts, event planning, and donations. Her long-term goals include becoming a social media marketing manager for a corporation, and a radio/podcast personality.

Reminders

2021 Scholarship Application April 1st

-To see all the criteria for many Press Club scholarships, go to the scholarship link at stlpressclub.org for application and all instructions.

Support our Enterprise Journalist Grants

-By purchasing a St. Louis Press Club "Freedom of the Press... now more than ever T-shirt" for \$25 by credit card at our website: stlpressclub.org or by mailing a check to St. Louis Press Club, PO Box 410522, St. Louis, MO 63141.

Are your 2021 Dues due?

-If you haven't paid your 2021 Press Club membership dues yet, you can do it easily at our credit card membership payment page. Go to the membership link at our website, stlpressclub.org or mail your check to PO Box 410522, St. Louis, MO 63141



Meet Our New Board Members



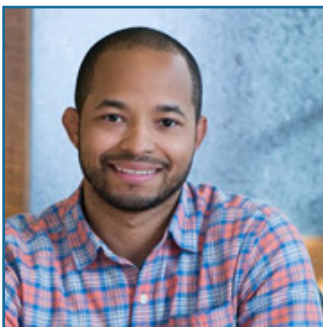
Peggy Barnhart is a strategic communications professional and a current commissioner on St. Louis County Board of Election, she is responsible for election oversight, including County ballot issues, voter registration and education, and election reporting, budget and efficiency. Previously, Barnhart served as a director of communications and government relations for the American Red Cross. Other career highlights include working for Peabody Energy as community relations manager. Barnhart is a proud graduate of Northwestern University, one of the nation's top ranked journalism schools, with a Master of Science in Journalism.



Miran Halen spearheads fundraising activities by providing innovative and collaborative volunteer leadership for a diverse and vibrant range of non-profit organizations that promote performing arts throughout the St. Louis region. Proven success in creating, directing, managing, and executing media relations plans that include photography and videography production. She is a versatile soprano of opera, symphony, chamber and recital music.



Joseph E. Martineau focuses his practice on media and communications law as well as intellectual property law, health law litigation, and complex commercial litigation. Joe has tried cases in both state and federal courts in Missouri and Illinois, and he has argued cases in the appellate and Supreme Courts in each state. Martineau also writes articles and publications in the fields of defamation and invasion of privacy law, the First Amendment, and media law in general. An adjunct professor at Washington University for 20 years, he teaches a course on communications law. Joe was selected by his peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America 2005-2021.



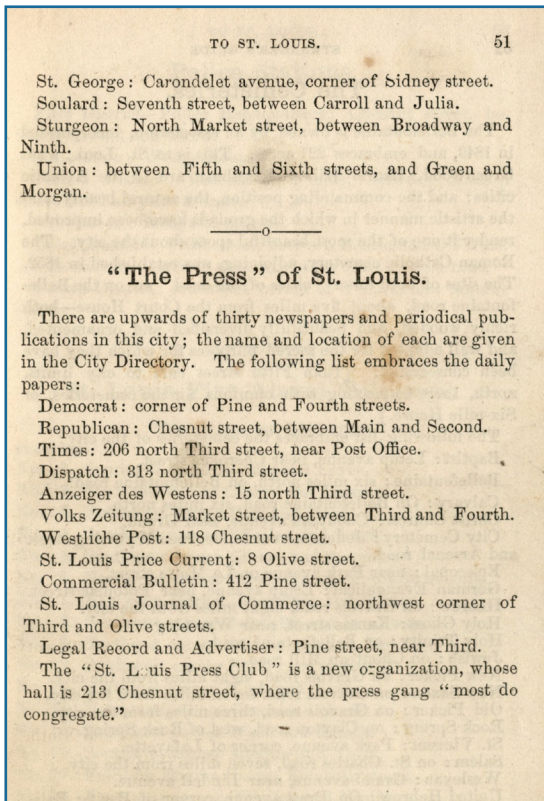
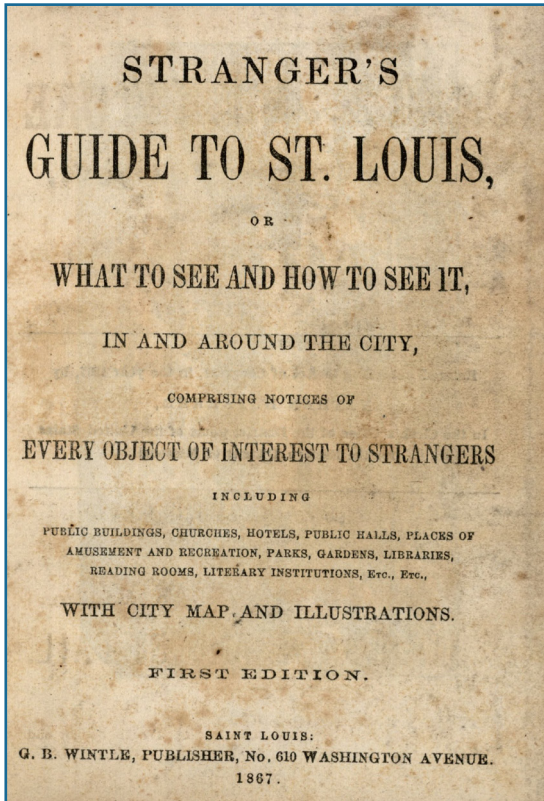
Kevin Smith, an events and creative professional, and current manager of Big Blue Spark, produces experiences for corporate, non-profit, and private clients. He helps his clients create engaging stories and strategizes impactful ways to deliver their messages through events, design, videos, and virtual experiences. Over the course of his career, he has worked with a wide range of clients, media professionals, and entertainers. Additionally, he sits on the board of directors for Kids in the Middle, where he co-chairs the fund development committee and serves on KITM event committees.



Sarah Thompson is a public relations, marketing and media specialist, working actively and extensively in the St. Louis market for more than 16 years. She started Sarah Thompson LLC in 2009 after branching off on her own from a former St. Louis-based PR and brand reputation management agency. Sarah Thompson LLC's client portfolio focuses on nonprofit organizations and small businesses in the areas of arts, culture, and lifestyle. She is a three-time Emmy Award-winning producer and five-time nominee -- receiving two Emmy Awards for arts and entertainment stories and one for a commercial campaign. Sarah is the host and producer of STL TV's 30 minute program "City Corner," which also airs on ABC30.



THE PRESS CLUB HERITAGE By Rick Stoff



Stranger's Guide to St. Louis, 1867

The current St. Louis Press Club began in 1956 when our founders filed registration papers with the Missouri Secretary of State. Our official history states that previously there were “at least 10 different demises and resurrections” of the club.

In 2004 a series of historical chapters were written for the club’s Courier newsletter by a long-time member (and dear friend), the late Verna Green Smith. Her research showed that a St. Louis Press Club was incorporated in Missouri in 1882 but “dissolved a dozen years later.”

But wait! There’s more! An earlier predecessor was formed just after the Civil War.

While doing research for one of the many books I probably won’t actually write, I acquired a copy of the “Stranger’s Guide to St. Louis” printed in 1867 by “G.B. Wintle, Publisher, No. 610 Washington Avenue.”

“The Press of St. Louis” are listed on page 51 of the pocket-sized (4-by-6-inch) hardbound publication. Following the names and addresses of 11 newspapers is this paragraph:

The “St. Louis Press Club” is a new organization, whose hall is 213 Chestnut street, where the press gang “most do congregate.”

Our ancestral home, therefore, is memorialized as part of the Gateway Arch National Park lawn. The Hyatt Regency St. Louis, at 315 Chestnut Street, now marks the eastern end of the street, across the interstate highways from the Arch grounds.

The Stranger’s Guide provides histories of St. Louis and its civic features -- after a page of “Advice to Strangers” on avoiding fleecing while in the city by confidence games, keno halls, gambling dens, pickpockets and unscrupulous operators of hackney carriages and baggage wagons.

Dozens of pages list hotels, amusements, libraries, schools, convents, hospitals, churches, asylums (eight for orphans and infants), passenger railways, banks, cemeteries and 386 sidewalk fire alarm locations.

Among the options available to the faithful of 1867 was a weekly service of The Society of Spiritualists. There were two pages of halls operated by social organizations including the Masons, Good Fellows, Odd Fellows, Good Templars and the Workingmen’s Assembly. There was a Temperance Hall at 3rd Street and Washington and four halls welcoming Druids. Display advertisements were printed in the back pages for establishments such as De Bar’s Opera House, D.C. Jaccard & Co. clocks and watches, Wesley Fallon Carriage Manufacturer, Dr. Storm’s Celebrated Scotch Cough Candy and Prof. Wm. Henry’s Fashionable Dancing Academy.

Would it be politically incorrect to say that a favorite haunt of the press gang may have been the Laclede Parlor Saloon?

“A fine saloon fitted up in a very beautiful style, where is kept constantly on hand the finest assortment of wines and liquors. This saloon is constantly open day and night.”



Covering News During Contentious Times

On February 24th St. Louis journalists and a media lawyer looked into the issues and practice of Covering News During Contentious Times a Zoom Webinar presented by the St. Louis Press Club.

Journalists work to report honestly and fairly may be needed more than ever. Misinformation moves at lightning-fast speed. Political divides and protests call out for coverage, but in volatile environments reporters also need to be safe while doing their jobs.

The U.S. Press Freedom Tracker recorded 369 assaults against journalists last year. This January, during the storming of the U.S. Capitol, some journalists were targeted, with Murder the Media carved into a door there.

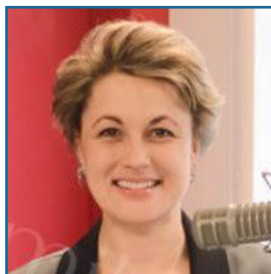
The St. Louis Press Club hosted this discussion to explore if local media are facing more friction and barriers to doing their jobs than in the past? Do they need to report differently? How do they build trust? And when does speech cross a line -- what's the difference between a mean tweet and hate speech?



Elliott Davis
News Anchor and Reporter
Fox 2 KTVI/KPLR 11



Audrey Prywitch
Vice President of News
Fox 2 KTVI/KPLR 11



Debbie Monterrey
News Anchor and Reporter
KMOX Entercom/St. Louis



Joseph Martineau
Attorney
Lewis Rice LLC



Betsy Taylor
Managing Editor
Health Progress

Press Club's 64th Annual Meeting

The Press Club's 2020 annual meeting was in a Zoom event held on December 21st

President William Greenblatt gave an overview of the year's activities and adjustments due to the pandemic crisis and shared plans for 2021.

Board member **Jessica Brown Billhymer** has interviewed 40 local media professionals for a web series entitled "Our IN THE NOW" available on YouTube.

A very successful Beauty Buzz fundraising event was held by Zoom in 2020 thanks to the support of our sponsoring organization, **Neiman-Marcus**, and two outstanding co-chairs, **Phyllis Langsdorf** and **Miran Halen**. They, along with a hard-working committee, put together a fund-raising event that netted the club over \$11,000 for scholarships.

Nearly \$22,000 in scholarships were awarded this year to sixteen very deserving journalism and media students from our region. The club also gave small grants for two enterprise journalism projects – completing the "33 and Counting" documentary on prison sentence injustice by **Aisha Sultan** and providing seed money for the "Beyond Ferguson" series of stories coordinated by **Dick Weiss**.

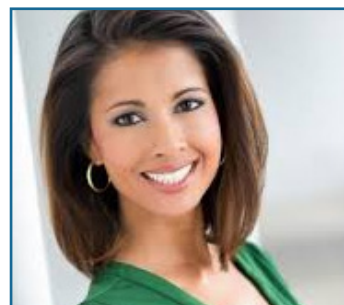
At the end of the year the club had nearly \$103,000 in checking and mutual fund accounts.

The members voted to re-elect the following board members for another three year term: **Ellen Futterman**, **Richard Gavatin**, **Kent Martin**, **Trish Muyco-Tobin**, **Kedra Tolson**, and **Karyn Williams** and announced the officers for 2021 (See listing in President's Message on page one.)

Greenblatt concluded the meeting with the announcement of the club's 2020 President's Above-and-Beyond award recipient, **Jasmine Huda**, and the club's 2020 Catfish Award winner, **Jessica Z. Brown Billhymer**.



2020 Catfish Awardee:
Jessica Z. Brown Billhymer



2020 President's Above-and-Beyond Awardee: Jasmine Huda



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Thanks to our sponsor:



St. Louis Press Club Unveils Online Programming Series: "Our IN THE NOW"

More than forty communications professionals speak candidly on work and life during a pandemic, protests, economic stress and a community facing frank and varied discussions about racism.

St. Louis Press Club (STLPC) announced its first online programming initiative conceived in the early days of COVID 19, 2020, as a way to stay connected with members and the St. Louis community.

Channel:

St. Louis Press Club



“Grappling with an unraveling major health crisis, it became clear to us, pivoting to a new way of connecting with our members, and continuing in the tradition of public service, was a must,” S. Louis Press Club President, Joan Lee Berkman said.

Ten conversations are being debuted each week on the St. Louis Press Club’s YouTube channel, accessed via the Press Club’s website: www.stlpressclub.org

“It’s almost a year ago, now, we were all suddenly thrust into a situation about which we had very little comprehension,” Jessica Z Brown Billhymer, St. Louis Press Club board member who interviewed all the communicators said of the ensuing health crisis. How, in an unfolding crisis media institutions and media communicators negotiated new pathways to continue with their jobs—if they still had them—makes for interesting storytelling. Our subjects do not disappoint.”

Brown added, “There are four takeaways from these conversations:

1. Media communicators are adept at pivoting to new solutions in the face of disruption.
2. Technology’s role as a star and integral player, in our society and in the communications business, is dynamic and key to connecting with all stakeholders, and is invaluable in connecting collaborative teams to meet deadlines and provide uninterrupted public service.
3. Media institutions and individuals seriously take safety of others as a primary concern during a pandemic and civil unrest.
4. Communicators divulge honest, inspirational feelings of wins, losses and amazement regarding their and colleagues’ communications journey -- something we rarely hear about. And, we learn from these professionals what it takes to do their jobs in these times, and what it means to carry on, no matter what.”

“What we offer the community is both compelling content, from a variety of our colleagues, as well historically significant information” Berkman said.