

STATIC

The Newsletter of the AEJMC Electronic News Division | Volume 56, Number 3 | Fall 2018

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Electronic News Division decreases dues; re-ups with Sage

*Dylan McLemore, News Editor
University of Central Arkansas*

Electronic News Division members voted at their annual business meeting to decrease dues by \$10, hoping it will attract new members and offset the costs of publishing the Electronic News journal.

The dues decrease was suggested by the Electronic News Journal Task Force, formed in 2017 to assess the viability of the division's journal.

Previously, the division's dues of \$42 a year were the highest among all AEJMC divisions and interest groups. The new dues of \$32 now tie with Cultural and Critical Studies for AEJMC's highest, but place Electronic News near a tier of \$30 memberships that includes the Advertising, History, Magazine, Public Relations, and Law and Policy divisions.



The task force, chaired by Bill Davie of the University of Louisiana, originally proposed a one-year dues decrease. An amendment introduced at the business meeting extended the new \$32 dues for two years. Lee Hood of Loyola University Chicago proposed doubling the trial period to have ample time to see if it has an effect on membership numbers.

The high dues are based in large part on still high journal expenses, meaning the discounted dues will need to produce an increase in membership to be sustainable.

Graduate students rates will remain \$7, and will continue to not include the journal. After considering self-publishing avenues, the task force recommended continuing to publish Electronic News with Sage. Journal editor Anthony Moretti of Robert Morris University told attendees of the business meeting that the costs and logistics of self-publishing would be greater than the current agreement with Sage.

After discussion, membership approved a contract renewal.

For complete minutes from the 2018 business meeting in Washington, visit <https://aejmc.us/end/annual-reports/>.

Inside: New Officers Elected, p. 6

Maxwell: Media researchers and educators must stand against “enemy of the people” rhetoric

*Lindsey Maxwell, Division Head
University of Southern Mississippi*

As we begin to plan for the 2019 conference in Toronto we must look back to our recent gathering in Washington, D.C. The Electronic News Division was proud to present programming ranging from the status of graduate teaching assistants, to covering breaking news topics like hurricanes and firearms. With the assistance of panelists from our division and researchers who submitted refereed papers, we were able to schedule programming that reflected the concerns of educators, members of the electronic news media and the public at large. We hope to continue this trend in 2019 and into the future.

In order to accomplish this, I ask you to begin planning your research and teaching concerns with the current media and political climate in mind. With the president declaring some media outlets “the enemy of the American people,” it is our responsibility as researchers and educators to take a stand against this mentality. Our democracy cannot function without a responsible and transparent media, and to declare the media as the enemy of the people is to discredit and attempt to undermine democracy itself. Although it may not seem like any one individual can change the political conversation at the national level, we as media educators are responsible for shaping how the next generation of voters and commentators feel about the relationship between media and politics. Each student and educator may not feel the same way on a specific political issue, but we must be united in declaring that the media is not the enemy, but instead is the voice of the people.

The first step in creating a future where news and media are properly understood is to create a media literate public. We can influence this in our classrooms and through research, and my hope as your division head is that the Electronic News Division contributes to an understanding of how media function, and takes an active role in shaping critical thinkers.

I’m looking forward to listening to your panel discussions and reading your research papers in 2019.



Maxwell

**2019 Electronic News Award Calls
Coming Soon! Get them online first:**

Website: aejmc.us/end

Listserv: aejmc.us/end/listserv

Facebook: Search [“enewsddivision”](#)

Call for Electronic News journal co-editor

Bill Davie, Electronic News Journal Task Force Chair
University of Louisiana

Dr. Anthony Moretti has been serving as co-editor of Electronic News, the official journal of the Electronic News Division (END) for eight years, and along with co-editor Robert Papper, has guided the journal with dedication and a commitment to excellence. However, his university has asked him to take on an administrative role, and he consequently will be leaving his position of management over the journal.

The Electronic News Division seeks an individual to serve as EN's next co-editor to replace Dr. Moretti, who will continue to maintain the highest standards of scholarship and writing for EN to the benefit of professors and practitioners in this field. The applicant should be an accomplished scholar who has insight and experience in contemporary issues regarding electronic news media and effects. This co-editor should have superior organization and communications skills with a commitment to maintaining EN's place as a relevant and vital resource for both academic and professional communities in electronic journalism.

Successful applicants will hold positions as either a faculty member or researcher at a university and prove relevant expertise through experience as an editor, associate editor, editorial board member, or active reviewer for peer-reviewed journals. The next EN co-editor should have published articles relevant to online and electronic journalism with clear discernment of the goals of scholarly writing and theoretical relevance.

This person will receive a stipend and work collaboratively with co-editor Robert Papper to ensure EN meets the overarching mission of END and AEJMC, reporting annually to the END membership on the performance of the journal, including the END officers and the journal publisher to resolve any issues related to its publication.

The successful candidate will assume the position of EN co-editor officially beginning on or before April 1, 2019, after a period of service and orientation with the outgoing co-editor.

EN INVITES NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATIONS BASED ON THESE CRITERIA:

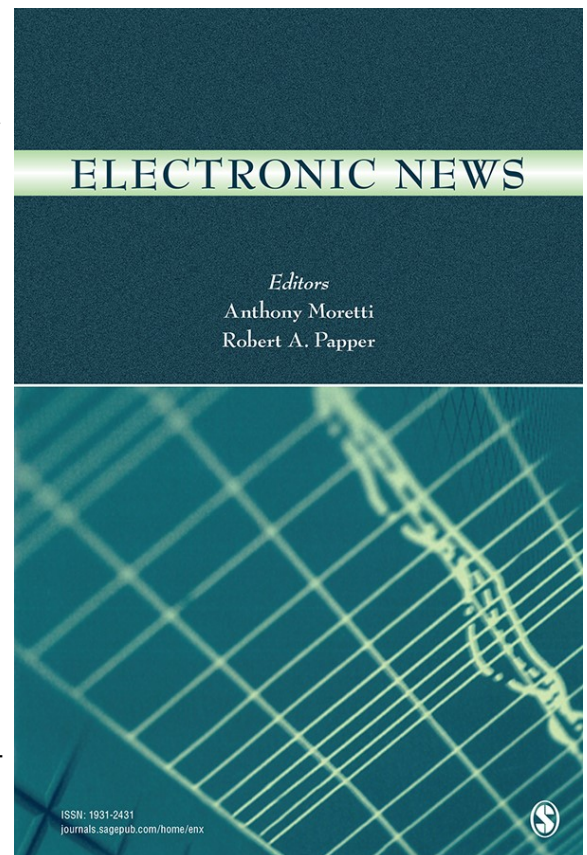
Interested individuals should submit an application no later than December 1, 2018, to include the following:

- A curriculum vitae, and
- A letter of interest with qualifications, including an indication of how the prospective co-editor will meet the demands of editing EN with assurance of support from the candidate's institution to accept this contract that includes a stipend of \$5,000 disbursed bi-annually and divided between the two co-editors.

Candidates whom the EN Search Committee wishes to interview will be asked to provide the following:

- Names and contact information for three references;
- The letter should include a vision statement for attaining the goals of EN in the following areas:
 - Number, quality, and relevance of submissions
 - Proposed approach for making the journal relevant to the electronic news profession, including scholars, practitioners in the field, students and others with an interest in electronic news
 - Communication and outreach to submitting scholars and manuscript reviewers

Applications and/or questions for the Search Committee should be submitted by email to Bill Davie (wrдавие@louisiana.edu). Applications must be received by Dec. 1, 2018.



Bliss winner Griffiths passes away

Dale Cressman
Brigham Young University

Former Brigham Young University Communications broadcast journalism professor and Edward R. Bliss award winner Thomas A. Griffiths died early Sunday, September 23, after suffering a massive stroke several days previously.

In 2004, the Radio-Television News Division (now the Electronic News Division) of AEJMC honored him with the prestigious Edward L Bliss Award for distinguished



Photo by Mark A. Philbrick, BYU

service to broadcast journalism education. He had taught and mentored thousands of students, including many who either continue to work in broadcasting or have followed in his footsteps as professors. Three of his protégés have served as officers of the Electronic News Division.

A BYU graduate, Griffiths returned to the university in 1974 after working in Salt Lake City as a KSL reporter and anchor.

Upon arrival, he worked with Norm Tarbox to start a student-produced television newscast for KBYU-TV. It was uncommon at the time for student-produced newscasts to be shown on PBS television stations and over the years representatives from other universities would come to visit Provo to learn how they might duplicate what Griffiths and Tarbox were doing at BYU.

Serving in a joint appointment for KBYU and Communications, Griffiths was news director for KBYU-TV and KBYU-FM until 1981, when he was appointed assistant professor on the Communications faculty. In 1984, he was appointed managing director of Broadcast Services, the forerunner to BYU Broadcasting. He served in that position until being named associate dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communications in 1995. Later, he returned full-time to the Communications faculty.

Griffiths completed his Ph.D. at the University of Utah in 1992, writing his dissertation on program placement on public television. A long-time member of the Air Force reserve, Griffiths retired as a Lieutenant Colonel.

Tom and his wife Annette finished his academic career with an assignment at BYU-Hawaii. He retired in 2007.

Southeast Colloquium heads to Columbia

Ginger Blackstone, Southeast Colloquium Chair
Harding University

The paper call for the 2019 Southeast Colloquium has been released and the submission site is open!

This year's conference is hosted by the University of South Carolina, Thursday evening through Saturday afternoon, March 7-9, 2019. The event is held in conjunction with the Media & Civil Rights History Symposium, so there's added benefit in attending this year.

The Electronic News Division welcomes original research papers, research-in-progress, and panel proposals. The deadline for submissions is 11:59 p.m. EST on Monday, December 17, 2018. The submission link for END is <http://bit.ly/sec-electronic>.

If you're a new scholar, the Southeast Colloquium is a great opportunity to get some presentation experience in a more laid-back setting. And you can still submit your work to the full AEJMC conference.

If you have a bit more experience and would like to expand your skills as a paper reviewer or discussant, this is a great opportunity for that, as well. If you're interested, please contact Dr. Ginger Blackstone at gblackstone@harding.edu.

Check out [the site here](#) for more information. We hope to see you there!

Read the call for papers, p. 8

Archive: Griffiths receives Bliss



Thomas A. Griffiths receives the 2004 Edward L. Bliss Award at the AEJMC annual convention in Toronto, Canada. // Photo courtesy BYU College of Fine Arts and Communications.

END offers professional development opportunities for graduate students

*Christoph Mergerson, Membership Chair and Graduate Liaison
Rutgers University*

I'm writing this from Philadelphia, where we "trust the process" with Sixers basketball, and struggle to find neighborhood parking. If you're in a doctoral program like me, and you're interested in teaching or researching topics related to broadcast, cable, or online news media, then this column is for you.

Here you are, reading this newsletter, procrastinating and hoping that the chapters that you should be writing or reading at this very moment will develop artificial intelligence and complete themselves. While you're waiting for that to happen, here's a more productive suggestion: join AEJMC's Electronic News Division.

You should join because someday you'll want a job, and it'll be easier to find this mystical unicorn in academia called a tenure-track job if you've cultivated an active network of professionals who share your interests before you enter the job market.

You can accomplish this if you join our division. As a division member, I have been privileged to meet professors in different stages of their careers who can provide me with advice on how to position myself for success. I can't imagine entering the competitive academic job market without having this kind of support and guidance.

The professionals in our division can also help you to develop a research portfolio, or prepare for a career that is focused on teaching.

Suppose you want to submit a paper to AEJMC's annual conference, and eventually submit it to a peer-reviewed journal. By being active in our division, you can interact with scholars and journalism professionals who can give you feedback on your research ideas, or help you to identify and pursue relevant new angles for research.

If your professional goals are more teaching-oriented, you should know that our active membership includes a two-time Emmy Award-winning journalist from a top-five Nielsen market who has been honored for her teaching, a versatile sports broadcaster who was part of an excellent panel earlier this year on the art of teaching journalism, and a two-time Fulbright Scholar with years of experience teaching international journalism ... and so on. If you're passionate about teaching, you can meet people in our division who can advise and guide you.

If you're a graduate student who is already a member of AEJMC, you can join our division for the low price of \$7. It's not a bad investment in your professional future. To

become a member, go to <http://www.aejmc.org/home/membership/>, click on "AEJMC Division & Interest Group Sign-up Form," and then select "Electronic News" to complete your division membership. Be sure to answer "YES" to the question asking if you're a graduate student to obtain the discounted price. You can complete the entire process online, and it only takes a couple of minutes.

Only AEJMC members can join our division, so if you're not already a member of the association, now's a good time to become one. The \$50 annual membership fee for graduate students is a bargain compared to other major associations in our field, which can charge up to twice as much for membership.

I've found that membership is worth the investment. Over the past two years that I've been a student member, I've met and interacted with a number of deans from

schools and departments of journalism, communication, and media studies, and developed some valuable professional relationships with department chairs and professors. I've also learned a lot about the profession of higher education. In fact, it was Dr. Jennifer Greer, a professor and associate provost at the University of Alabama's College of Communication and Information Sciences, and the most recent past-president of AEJMC, who inspired me to pursue a leadership role within the organization. I am grateful to her for her guidance, and from the guidance of many others whom I've met during my time here.

Also remember that AEJMC membership is required for students who want to attend the 2019 annual conference. You either have to become a member in advance of registration, or pay for a membership as part of your student registration. So why not join now, and start reaping the benefits of membership sooner rather than later?

Be on the lookout for special events for graduate students hosted by our division at upcoming AEJMC conferences. You are invited to drop by and learn more about who we are, and what you can accomplish as a member. I also want to stress that regardless of your race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or disability, you are welcome in our division. We look forward to meeting you. We are also in the process of updating our social media presence, and you will hear more about that in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about joining the Electronic News Division, or becoming a graduate student member of AEJMC, contact me at christoph.mergerson@rutgers.edu.



Electronic News Division elects '18-19 officers



Lindsey Maxwell
Division Head
University of Southern Mississippi
lindsey.conlin@usm.edu



Karen McIntyre
Vice Head and Program Chair
Virginia Commonwealth University



Dylan McLemore
Secretary & News Editor
University of Central Arkansas



Ken Fischer
Vice Head-Elect and Diversity Officer
University of Oklahoma



Christoph Mergerson
Membership Chair / Grad Liaison
Rutgers University



Harrison Hove
Research Chair
University of Florida



Bill Silcock
Bliss Award Chair
Arizona State University



Maria Fontenot
Prof. Freedom & Responsibility Chair
University of Tennessee



Nancy Dupont
Burkum Award Chair
University of Mississippi



Maria Williams-Hawkins
Teaching Chair
Ball State University



Tony DeMars
RTDNA Liaison
Texas A&M University-Commerce

Special Appointments:



Bill Davie
Electronic News Journal
Task Force Chair
University of Louisiana



Lee Hood
Bylaws Committee Chair
Loyola University
Chicago



Ginger Blackstone
Southeast
Colloquium Chair
Harding University

Rwandan journalists use WhatsApp to advance their career and country

Karen McIntyre, Vice Head and Program Chair
Virginia Commonwealth University

Mention the East African nation of Rwanda and many westerners likely think of the genocide the country endured in 1994, when up to 100,000 Rwandans were brutally murdered by their friends, colleagues and neighbors in 100 days. What many people don't know about Rwanda is how much social and economic progress the country has made in the past quarter century. The country's literacy rate has increased more than 20% since then (up to 70%). Life expectancy has more than doubled. And real GDP has increased 7 to 8% per year in the bulk of the past seven years. This progress extends to the journalism landscape as well, where among other innovations, reporters are using the online messaging and calling application WhatsApp to strengthen their field and promote development.

Scholars argue that WhatsApp should be an integral part of a journalist's toolbox, and in many newsrooms outside of the U.S., it is. Although WhatsApp hasn't seemed to have caught on in the U.S., it has been growing in popularity in Africa at an exponential rate. WhatsApp is free, functions through an internet connection and is easy to use, which helps explain why more than one billion people are using the app in over 180 countries, including Rwanda.

The app can be an especially useful tool for journalists in developing countries or in situations where news coverage is difficult. For example, WhatsApp proved to be a useful tool in 2015 during election coverage in Nigeria, Ebola coverage in West Africa, and earthquake coverage in Nepal. In these situations, it was logistically difficult, dangerous, or sometimes impossible for reporters to conduct in-person interviews. Therefore, they interviewed sources and delivered information via WhatsApp. Additionally, WhatsApp is usually allowed in countries where other me-

dia are blocked. And WhatsApp can further be useful in developing countries where social media platforms are new or unfamiliar or communication is generally poor, such as in Rwanda.

After conducting interviews with 24 journalists in Kigali, Rwanda's capital city, in 2016, my colleague Dr. Meghan Sobel from Regis University in Colorado and I learned that Rwandan reporters rely on WhatsApp in their daily routines. They use the app to generate story ideas, find and communicate with sources, disseminate news quicker and to a wider audience, and more easily receive

audience feedback. And our research found that these activities empowered audiences, increased participation and encouraged communication from official sources.

In the U.S. and other western countries where journalists don't rely on WhatsApp, reporters are using other social media tools for similar activities, such as developing story ideas and finding and communicating with sources. However, we found that Rwandan journalists also use

WhatsApp for a purpose that differs from the way American journalists use social media in their work.

In addition to using WhatsApp as part of their news processes, Rwandan journalists use the messaging service to communicate with other journalists — journalists who work at other news outlets — both to collaborate on stories and to educate each other on professional practices by engaging in analysis and debate.

They do this through WhatsApp "groups," which allow users to send messages to multiple people simultaneously through organized lists of contacts. The most popular group, mentioned by almost all the journalists interviewed,

continued on p. 9



McIntyre conducts a focus group as part of her research in Rwanda. // Photo courtesy Karen McIntyre, roamingrwanda.travellerspoint.com

Paper Calls

2019 AEJMC Southeast Colloquium END Call for Papers, Panels and Research-in-Progress

Authors are now invited to submit research papers, panel proposals and/or research-in-progress abstracts for the [44th Annual AEJMC Southeast Colloquium](#), which will be held **March 7-9, 2019** in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina. The Colloquium will take place in conjunction with the biennial [Media & Civil Rights History Symposium](#).

Authors interested in submitting to the Electronic News Division should prepare submissions as a PDF file and submit them to the following link: https://form.jotform.com/uofsc_cmcis/aejmc-electronic-news

General submission rules and other information are available on the [event home page](#).

All submissions must be completed by **no later than 11:59 p.m. EST on Monday, December 17, 2018**. Submissions must be original and must not have been previously presented at a conference. Students and faculty should indicate their status for consideration of faculty and student top paper awards. Authors should plan to submit an abbreviated, 100 word abstract on the application form. Do not include any author identifying information on any page of the paper submission. Authors also should redact identifying information from the document properties. On the cover page of the attached paper, only the title of the paper should appear, followed by a 250-word abstract. Length of papers should not exceed 30 pages including references and tables for all divisions (except Law and Policy, which has a 50 page limit).

The author of each accepted paper (at least one author in the case of a co-authored paper) must present the paper at the Colloquium or it will not be listed in the final program. Acceptance and/or submission of papers to colloquium paper competitions *does not* prevent authors from submitting to AEJMC divisions for the AEJMC Annual Conference in August. Complete contact information and a complete list of (all) authors must be submitted with other material (and on deadline) or a paper will be disqualified. For online instructions on “how to submit a clean paper” for blind review, see [this link](#). Authors of accepted papers will be notified by early February 2019. You may read more about the event at: <http://bitly.com/aejmc-southeast-colloquium>

PANEL PROPOSALS: Panel proposals using the same link by **Monday, December 17, 2018**, and should include a brief description of the panel along with proposed panelists. Proposals should not exceed three double-spaced pages.

RESEARCH-IN-PROGRESS: The Colloquium will include research-in-progress sessions as an opportunity for researchers to share and get feedback on projects that are in some stage of development. Research-in-Progress abstracts are NOT eligible for Colloquium research awards.

Authors must submit a synopsis of the project, with research questions or hypotheses and at least one paragraph that explains what stage of development the project is in. More detailed submissions are also allowed but should not exceed ten double-spaced pages.

For more information contact Ginger Blackstone (gblackstone@harding.edu).

**Have a paper or award
call, or other news for
our next issue?**

Email Static Editor

Dylan McLemore

dmclemore@uca.edu

STATIC

is the newsletter of the Electronic News Division of the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication.

It publishes three times annually (Fall, Spring & Summer).

Static accepts articles focusing on the division, as well as anything related to the professional or academic sides of our field.

Comments, questions, or article submissions should be directed to

Dylan McLemore, END Newsletter Editor, dmclemore@uca.edu

WhatsApp for Rwandan newsroom collaboration

Continued from p. 7

is called Rwanda Editorial Meeting Online and is a group for all journalists in Rwanda who wish to participate. This group is similar to the face-to-face editorial meetings that regularly occur in newsrooms everyday to discuss story ideas and other relevant issues, but this discussion is online, it's ongoing, and it involves journalists throughout the country. Additionally, there are more specialized groups for journalists of different beats.

Journalists in Rwanda use these groups in a highly collaborative manner, prioritizing the interests of society over their own professional gain. For example, if one journalist secured an interview with a prominent person, he or she might share that information on the group and allow other journalists to suggest interview questions. They also use the groups to alert each other of possible stories. "When there is something that happens somewhere, every journalist and former journalist who is in that group gets to know it through that group. We share ideas," one journalist said. They also use the groups to discuss who will take what angle on a particular story, especially in regard to stories in which many journalists will attend the same event. Although there is some level of competition between the various news outlets, the priority is getting the public the information they need.



In addition to mobilizing news coverage, Rwandan journalists use WhatsApp groups to ask for advice, debate ethical issues, educate each other, and improve the standards of professionalism in their industry. One journalist said: "We exchange ideas on news, we give advices among ourselves. When someone wants to post something or write about something he can start by posting it in our group: 'please, advise me on how I can proceed' ... So it's a platform of exchanging ideas and encouraging ourselves."

Members also use the group to point out journalistic errors in an effort to improve their work. "If someone wrote a story that is incorrect somehow, we do ask him some questions, 'come on, your story lacks this and that, your story had to be like this.' That's what we do, because there are some of us in that group that didn't go to the school of journalism so it's another way of training. I really learned a lot," one journalist said.

In a country whose journalism industry is still relatively new and where many reporters deal with a lack of education, training and professionalism, this type of peer-to-peer mentorship is especially valuable. Rwandan journalists' self-initiated and innovative use of electronic media to help educate each other and further develop their news industry is something I think journalists in all nations can learn from.

McIntyre is currently spending a year in Rwanda as a Fulbright Scholar.

2018 E-News award winners celebrated



▲
Larry Burkum Service Award winners Deborah Potter and Debora Wenger stand to each side of Edward L. Bliss Award winner Lee Hood. // Photo by Dylan McLemore.

Above: The 2018 E-News Awards Ceremony was held at NPR Headquarters in Washington. NPR journalists spoke to members as part of the event. Right: Bliss winner Lee Hood, next to the perpetual plaque that is now housed at American University. // Photos by Dylan McLemore.



Electronic News has a capital convention

The Electronic News Division held panels, competitive paper sessions and off-site events at the 101st annual AEJMC conference in Washington, D.C. Photos by Tony DeMars, Dylan McLemore, Laura Smith, Indira Somani



More photos available in our [Facebook Group](#). Search for "enewsddivision."

