



December 2010 | [www.pwpa.us](http://www.pwpa.us)

Don't forget ...

to renew your your PWPA membership for

**2011**

For just \$25, you can look forward to:

**NEW  
BYLAWS**

**NEW  
WEBSITE**

**AND OUR ALWAYS-POPULAR CONTEST**

# Happy holidays

Before we welcome in 2011, I wanted to wish everyone a happy holiday season.

I realize this time of year everyone is so busy with shopping and spending time with family and friends, but just wanted to remind you to buy a present for yourself, a membership in the PWPA and it only costs \$25. I received my renewal in the mail and am sure you did, too.

Invite co-workers who may be interested to join our group because they may not know about us and this would be a good time to get on board.

I am counting on you to help promote PWPA and I appreciate what each of you is doing to let others know about us.

Next year promises to be a busy one with our upcoming contest (look out for information on that), lots of informative and fun meetings, and, of course, our annual luncheon and awards presentation.

I continue to look for a keynote



speaker so any suggestions you may have will be appreciated. I have attempted to contact Penn State several times about Sue Paterno, but have not been successful at getting a response, so I am visiting other options.

Our newly designed website should make its debut in 2011 as well as an

updated version of our bylaws.

If any of you are interested in being part of that committee please let me know.

District directors, I know this time of year is tough to plan a meeting because of weather and the fact everyone is so busy.

If you want to plan an online meeting I am fine with that, especially if you haven't had one in a while and people need one to qualify for a less expensive contest rate.

With today's technology many of our future meetings may have to be done via the web.

Once again, happy holidays, and I hope 2011 is a year of health and happiness for all of you!

JoAnne Harrop,  
PWPA president

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## New director at helm in Northwest

**Former Northwest District co-directors Erica Erwin and Kristin Bowers recently stepped down. Lindsey Poisson, features writer at the Erie Times-News has taken their place. Here is some more information about Lindsey:**

### CONTACT INFO

Erie Times-News  
205 W. 12th St.  
Erie, PA 16534  
(814) 870-1871

### JOB HISTORY

■ Flint Journal, Flint, MI: Summer 2007 (Internship)

■ Bay City Times, Bay City, MI: Fall 2007(Internship)

■ Erie Times-News, Erie, PA: Summer 2008 to present

### GOALS FOR PWPA

Expand on goals generated in 2010's regional meeting, and offer more educational opportunities in the northwestern part of the state.

### JOURNALISM TIP

No solid tips or tricks — you just have to roll with the punches.

### PERSONAL INFO

I write mostly features for the Erie Times-News, although I also write for the news side and help generate original online content, including videos and interactive graphics.

But enough of the technical stuff. Here are three quick, fun Lindsey Poisson facts:

1. I'm originally from Michigan.
2. One of my most memorable stories was about a lead on the location of Jimmy Hoffa's remains.
3. I can't stand the feel of velvet.

Spotlight on ...

# Jessica VanderKolk

**Q:** Where do you work? What are your responsibilities?

**A:** I work for myself in State College, as a freelancer. Right now I write regularly for three newspapers and a magazine, in Centre and Blair counties.

My most regular gigs are for the Centre Daily Times, covering Bellefonte Borough Council and contributing to the weekly Helping Neighbors series, featuring community volunteers.

**Q:** How did you get where you are today in terms of education and experience?

**A:** I earned a B.A. in journalism at Michigan State University.

After graduation I worked for a small, daily newspaper in West Michigan before moving to State College in 2005.

I worked as political reporter for the Altoona Mirror for three years before taking a “sabbatical” with my husband to Germany for an academic year (he’s a German PhD student).

The industry took its dive while we were away, hence my new freelance career.

**Q:** What do you do when you’re not working?

**A:** I enjoy running (I just finished my fourth marathon), reading and cooking. My kitchen is always a mess.

**Q:** What does the future hold for journalists?

**A:** I don’t know exactly what to think. I hope there is a place for trained, professional journalists.

One way I see newspapers

coming back is for them to change focus to more in-depth, explanatory, reporting-heavy work, while the Internet excels in shorter, quicker news reporting.

It’s hard for me to predict how the industry will evolve, but evolution seems inevitable.

**Q:** Best career moment so far? Worst moment?

**A:** My best moment probably was covering the 2008 presidential election.

It really was a long series of moments, including two days of traveling to get a feel for voters in central Pennsylvania, writing a huge issue series leading up to the election and covering every candidate who came to town (and every town within a couple of hours driving distance), culminating with five minutes on Barack Obama’s campaign bus.

This leads to my worst moment, which was missing the Obama bowling story in our town because his people didn’t tell us he was making that stop. And we didn’t ask.

**Q:** What advice do you have for other journalists?

**A:** It’s basic, but always, always double-check a name spelling. Never assume it’s a “typical” spelling.

I have a second tip, as well: Never just cover a government meeting. Find the story within the meeting.

**Q:** Why did you join PWPA?

**A:** A former co-worker reminded me I should join up again after seeing some of my work. I was a member while at the Mirror. Thanks, Kay.

## NEW MEMBERS

### OCTOBER

■ Jessica VanderKolk, freelance journalist

### AUGUST

■ Elsa Kerschner, freelancer, Times News

■ Amy White, freelance writer, Eastern Pennsylvania Business Journal

### APRIL

■ Frank Craig, editor, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

### MARCH

■ Johanna Billings, editorial assistant, Northampton Press, Whitehall-Coplay Press

■ Amanda Clegg, staff writer, Altoona Mirror

■ Amy Crawford, education reporter, Greensburg Tribune-Review

■ Katherine A. Morris, copy editor, Altoona Mirror

### JANUARY

■ Rosemary R. Brasch, columnist, Spectrum Features Syndicate

■ Heather Cass, special sections editor, Erie Times-News

■ Karen L. Cimms, lifestyle editor, (Lehigh) Times News

■ Madelyn Dinnerstein, weeklies editor, Gateway Newspapers

■ Gordon Glantz, managing editor, The (Norristown) Times Herald

■ Jodi Weigand, reporter, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

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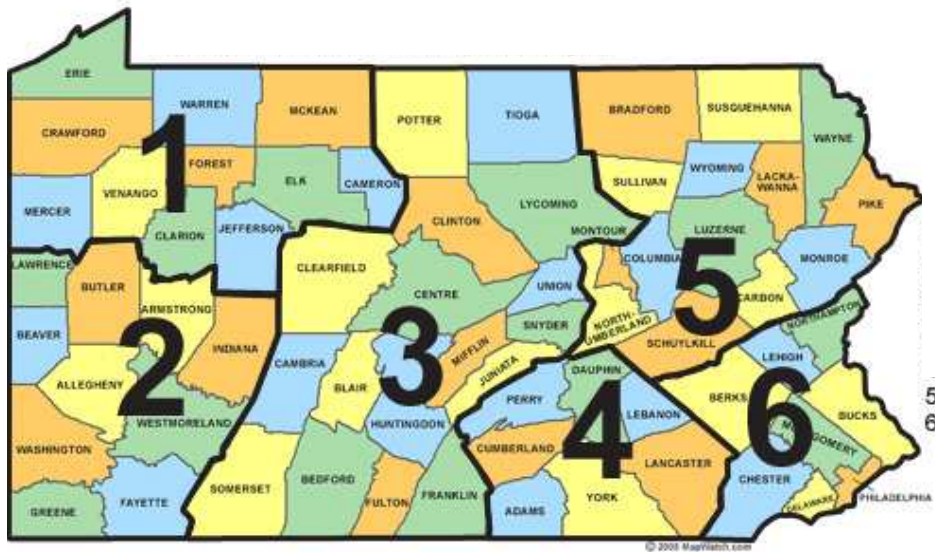
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