

# PWPA

PENNSYLVANIA WOMEN'S PRESS ASSOCIATION



January 2011 | [www.pwpa.us](http://www.pwpa.us)



## SNOWED IN

The weather outside has been pretty frightful,  
so why not curl up inside with a cup of hot cocoa  
and enjoy the latest issue of the PWPA newsletter?

# TAKE NOTE

## February

■ **Feb. 13:** PWPA Excellence in Journalism contest deadline

## March

■ **March 5:** PWPA board meeting; location to be determined.

## April

■ **Saturday, April 16:** Black Diamond Writers' Network's second annual Write it Right conference at the Best Western-Genetti Inn in Hazleton.

Keynote speaker is Maria V. Snyder, New York Times best-selling author, who will speak about "The Path to Publication."

Early bird fee is \$50 for registrations postmarked by Feb. 28.

Contact Kathy Ruff at (570) 645-3059 for details.

## May

■ **Saturday, May 21:** PWPA awards luncheon at the Pennsylvania Press Conference, Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel.

## 2012

■ **PWPA's 75th anniversary:** Any ideas how we should celebrate this milestone? Let us know.

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

# Ring in the new

Happy 2011! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and that the new year will bring health, happiness an increased PWPA membership and less snow and cold weather.

Don't forget about getting those contest entries together. All of you should have received information in the mail. The deadline is Feb. 13.

Please take time to enter because I am sure all of you wrote some amazing pieces last year. I am sure at some point in the future our contest will move to online like many of the others in the state have already done.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in PWPA this is the perfect opportunity since they can join and enter the contest at the same time. Make sure you all save the date of Saturday May 21 to you can attend our annual awards luncheon which will be at Penn State this year.

District Directors, please start thinking about meeting ideas and when you would like to have your first meeting of the year.

There will be a board meeting on

March 5 so if you have any issues you would like the board to address please email or call me so I can add an item to the agenda. A few members have e-mailed me ideas for our luncheon speaker which is a priority at this time. I don't have anyone confirmed so I am still open for suggestions.

Our new website is moving along and should be up and running soon and I will definitely let you know when everything's official. I realize it is taking more time than originally expected but it will be worth it once it's finished.

I also will let you know when I have something from our bylaws committee on our new and improved

bylaws which need some re-tooling.

These are just a few of the exciting things happening with PWPA. That's all for now.

JoAnne Harrop,  
PWPA president

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# Resolve to renew this year

By **Theresa Hegel**  
PWPA TREASURER

With January almost over, most of us have likely already forgotten the new year's resolutions we so diligently made on the first of the year.

But there's still time to renew your PWPA membership for 2011. At \$25 a year, it's much cheaper than a gym membership, and you'll never have to

break a sweat.

I've already received checks from a number of people, so thanks. And so far this year, we have 11 new members, which is great. Keep up the recruitment!

If you wish, you can also send in your membership dues with your contest entry. The contest deadline is Feb. 13, so get those entries out soon.

**BALANCES**  
(as of Jan. 29)

**Checking:**  
**\$2,709.33**

**Money market:**  
**\$13,129.14**

“Everyone is entitled to his own opinion,  
but not his own facts.”  
— Daniel Patrick Moynihan

# Spotlight on ... Jo Ciavaglia

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

**A:** Bucks County Courier Times/  
Doylestown Intelligencer/Calkins  
Media.

I am a health-care reporter, who also covers crime and is part of a multi-paper enterprise reporting team.

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

**A:** I have my associate's degree in journalism from Bucks County Community College and in 1990 received my bachelor's degree in professional writing (magna cum laude) from Trenton State College (now the College of New Jersey).

I have worked as a paid journalist since I was 19, starting at small weekly newspapers, where I covered municipal government and schools.

I started at the Bucks County Courier Times in 1989, as a part-time reporter and was hired full time in 1992.

I have covered every beat including crime, municipal government and social issues.

Before I covered health care I covered education for eight years.

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

**A:** Sleep. I teach indoor cycling part time at the YMCA and LaFitness, and I volunteer for Big Brothers/Big Sisters and a local cat shelter.

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

**A:** I think there will always be a place for journalists, particularly in the watch-dog role.

I don't know that it will be in newspa-



Jo Ciavaglia is a health-care and crime reporter for the Bucks County Courier Times.

pers, but it could be online publications are the “new” newspapers.

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

**A:** I've won some national awards. That was nice. Very nice.

Especially when I got to be flown out to California and stay at a swanky hotel.

Worst moment, too many to name, but Sept. 11, 2001, will always be among them.

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

**A:** Always act like you know more than you do. It tends to loosen

tongues.

Never take no for an answer.

If someone won't call you back, call them every 10 minutes until they give up.

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

**A:** Curiosity, and I've heard good things about the organization.

**Q:** Any other thoughts or stories you'd like to share with members?

**A:** Yes. “Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts.” — Daniel Patrick Moynihan

Spotlight on ...

# Scott Muska

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

**A:** I work as a staff writer at the Altoona Mirror, in Blair County. I cover the education beat, write general assignment stories and cover any late-breaking news (I work a later shift).

I also write a blog for the Mirror's website, lame-ly titled "The Graduate." I write about pop culture, interesting news and personal experiences. Sometimes, if I'm lucky, all three of those come together, and those ones are a lot of fun to write.

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

**A:** When I was in fifth grade, I edited a magazine with some friends, then I went to Penn State. While I was there, I worked for two school papers and did four internships.

In my last semester at school, I did this thing where I'd apply to a newspaper with an opening every day. I found out about an opening at the Mirror, and applied. I wore my lucky tie to the interview, and here I am.

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

**A:** I'm a huge reader, and I write a little bit outside of work, too. Other than that, I do what most 23-year-old guys do: I



**Scott Muska is a staff writer at the Altoona Mirror.**

eat, sleep, play basketball, etc.

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

**A:** It's difficult to say. So much about journalism is changing constantly, but I hope it's a bright future and I'm not a brick layer 20 years from now.

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

**A:** I think the best happened — oddly enough — before I even started my first day of work. I was getting ready to leave my parents' house for my apartment a couple of days before I was to start, and my

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## NEW MEMBERS

### JANUARY 2011

■ **Rachel Anderson**, videographer/photographer, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

■ **Greg Bock**, reporter, Altoona Mirror

■ **Jo Ciavaglia**, health and crime reporter, Bucks County Courier Times

■ **Linda T. Gracey**, special sections editor, Altoona Mirror

■ **Shasta Kurtz**, copy editor, Altoona Mirror

■ **Mark Leberfinger**, assistant news editor, Altoona Mirror

■ **Kim Leonard**, business reporter, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

■ **Laurie Mason**, reporter, Bucks County Courier Times

■ **Kate Morris**, copy editor, Altoona Mirror

■ **Scott Muska**, staff writer/reporter, Altoona Mirror

■ **Freda Savana**, staff writer, The Intelligencer

### OCTOBER 2010

■ **Jessica VanderKolk**, freelance journalist

### AUGUST 2010

■ **Elsa Kerschner**, freelancer, Times News

■ **Amy White**, freelance writer, Eastern Pennsylvania Business Journal

### APRIL 2010

■ **Frank Craig**, editor, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review



Shasta Kurtz is a copy editor at the Altoona Mirror.

# Spotlight on ... Shasta Kurtz

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

**A:** The Altoona Mirror, Altoona, PA. My responsibilities include copy editing and paginating.

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

**A:** I've been working with newspapers since ninth grade. I became a part of the executive board of my college newspaper, the Clarion Call, freshman year and have been writing, editing and designing ever since.

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

**A:** I like to travel and explore new cities. Hopefully, I get to meet some interesting people along the way.

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

**A:** I think the future holds drastic changes for media as we know it. Journalists are going to become multi-media machines, regardless of print or broadcast specializations.

In 10 years, all of us will have to know how to code for a web audience.

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

**A:** My best moment? Finding a journalism job after college. The worst has been realizing there's a mistake on a page after we've already gone to press.

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

**A:** Always keep a camera near. You never know when you may need it.

## Spotlight on ...

# Freda Savana

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

**A:** I'm a staff writer at The Intelligencer in Doylestown, Pa.

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

**A:** I've been a reporter for the better part of 25 years.

I graduated from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1982 and first went into broadcast journalism. After a job opened up at the Indiana Gazette and I switched to print, I never went back to radio and television.

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

**A:** I'm into yoga. Love to read and enjoy interior design. Friends and family are very important too.

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

**A:** Wish I knew. I'm sure we'll see a continuing growth in digital media and the merging of social media and

journalism. I'm hoping print doesn't die.

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

**A:** A story I wrote about a homeless man helped him find a place to live and begin a new life. That felt pretty good.

The worst? Having to do multiple, back-to-back, interviews with people who had lost loved ones on 9/11.

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

**A:** Trust your instincts.

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

**A:** I've always wanted to be part of such a well respected professional organization, but never got around to joining.

**Q:** Any other thoughts or stories you'd like to share with members?

**A:** Journalism that is more than a quick hit on a hyperlocal site or a tweet still matters.

## Spotlight on Scott Muska

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mom cried a little bit.

She told me how proud she was that I'd been able to get a job doing what I'd always wanted to do. It meant a lot, since my family has always supported me so much and were instrumental in me ending up where I currently am.

The worst was a few weeks after I got here, when the first two words of a lede I wrote were "Kimberly" and "Wolfe." If I'd have been accurate, the first word would've been "Kristie." That was pretty bad.

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

**A:** Make sure you get names right.

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

**A:** I love Pennsylvania and the press almost as much as I love women, so it seemed like a logical move.

# CENTRAL STAGE

From learning to organize contacts to becoming a better storyteller, the Pennsylvania Women's Press Association Central District is striving to write themselves a better 2011. Here is a compilation of worthwhile moments in 2010 and goals for 2011 from some Central District members.

## Kay Stephens

*Altoona Mirror staff writer and PWPA membership director*



In 2010, I have learned to organize my list of contacts and their phone numbers — and it's working for me. In the past, I've used several ways to compile contacts and phone numbers.

While all have worked to a certain extent, I now have a system that works well for me, and leaves me with a faster answer when someone asks: "Do you have a phone number for so-and-so?"

I created a desktop file, labeled Kay's phone book, on my work computer. I've alphabetized the file and I enter names in a way that matches with my recollection of where a person's name would be. I've been so happy with this system as it seems to provide me with ready access to several phones and cell phone numbers.

For me, this works better than a box with index cards. It works better than using an online phone directory. And it works better than my email address book which is full of e-mail addresses.

## Dianne Byers

*The Progress staff writer*

### 1. What is something you'd like to accomplish in 2011?

To make more time to take care of myself.

### 2. What is something you'd like to learn in 2011?

To paint.

### 3. What was something you wrote in 2010 that was worthwhile?

A story about a young girl who is now believed to be completely recovered from a rare form of cancer and the positive outlook she has on life.

## Shasta Kurtz

*Altoona Mirror copy editor*

1. **What is something you'd like to accomplish in 2011?** To be off the floor by 9:30 p.m. on a Friday or Saturday night.

2. **What is something you'd like to learn in 2011?** How to entice the wire to move the stories I want early.

3. **What was something you wrote or edited in 2010 that was worthwhile?** I haven't really been on the copy desk long enough ... so hopefully 2011 will bring something exciting.

## Wendy Zook

*Altoona Mirror staff writer, Central District assistant director*

In 2011, I'd like to really master the art of balancing my new role as mother with my role as a reporter. I'd also like to become more organized in both areas too! I need to invent a great shelf system for notebooks and folders on my desk and a way to keep all of the baby bottles from collapsing onto the floor every single time I go to grab just one.

I also hope that my role as a mother will make me a better writer and that my job as a journalist makes me a better family gal. I think the new emotional rollercoaster that's come with mommyhood can help me empathize with the people I'm writing about and meeting, and I hope that my job asking questions will encourage my son to always ask questions and be curious.

I'm so excited for all of the possibilities in 2011.

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# More from the center ...

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## Amanda Clegg

*Altoona Mirror staff writer and Central District director*



**I**n 2011, I'd like to develop my feature writing. I'd like to dig deeper as a journalist and write more in-depth stories. I want to do a series.

I want to manage my time better and produce more copy. Also, this year isn't so much about what I'd like to learn as what I'd like to un-learn. I'd like to kick my habit of apologizing for things beyond my control.

Something I am proud of in 2010 is not one particular article, but my transition from education reporter to Northern Blair and Hollidaysburg bureau reporter.

Developing a beat takes time and dedication and is often frustrating. In the newspaper industry, time is crucial, so when you're developing a beat it can often feel like it is not happening fast enough or you're not submerging yourself deep enough. I am proud to say I am beginning to find the rhythm to my beat.

I also want to become a better PWPA leader. We have four new Central District members in 2011 — Religion Editor Linda Gracey, Copy Editor Shasta Kurtz and Staff Writers Greg Bock and Scott Muska. That's a good start.

I will strive to encourage a camaraderie among members and host informative meetings where the topic is more important than the food. That's a tough one, but I'm up for the challenge.

## Linda Gracey

*Altoona Mirror religion editor*

**1. What is something you'd like to accomplish in 2011?** To put more story telling in my stories. I would like them to be more lively and get more everyday people to share their experiences. Looking back over the year, I realized I talked to a lot of the experts and few of the ordinary people whose views are probably shared by their neighbors or other people of faith. I would also like to work toward a balance in covering all the faiths in the area, a goal that continues to be a challenge.

**2. What is something you'd like to learn in 2011?** Isn't this another goal, only put in a different way? The list is long but I would like to study the history of some of the faiths I cover.

**3. What was something you wrote in 2010 that was worthwhile?** The piece I did on the Rev. D.L. Brinton Shafer's retirement was rewarding for me. He is a pillar of the Christian community who finally got the recognition his deserved. The fun part was interviewing his church members who could not stop saying good things about him and how much he meant to them. They told the story, making it easy for me to write.

