

SDX Confronts Contest Issue

By SARAH HOOVER

Contests, contests, contests — journalists in every area are faced with them, particularly business writers, but the Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi is raising ethical questions about contests journalists enter.

A resolution urging journalists to refrain from participating in contests sponsored by corporations or interest groups where journalism ethics may be compromised was adopted by the Society Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi at its annual meeting in San Francisco in November.

The action capped a debate which had arisen over the past year about whether or not contests sponsored and financed by corporations, trade associations and other "special interest groups" represent a potential conflict of interest for journalists that participate in them.

The resolution asked journalists to refrain from such contests and directs the society's ethics committee to conduct further study on the matter and propose contest guidelines at next year's convention.

While delegates seemed to agree in general with the idea of confronting the issue, their comments reflected a split on the best ways to go about it.

Steven Dornfeld, now the immediate past president of SDX, told delegates that the Society has been slow to confront the awards issue, adding that it would be a shame for a society such as SPJ to continue to duck the issue.

While delegates seemed to agree in general with the idea of confronting the issue, their comments reflected a split on the best ways to go about it.

Among the questions raised during the debate were:

- Whether the wording of the resolution

is too vague to be effective.

- Whether all participation should be banned, or just contest entries and not judging.

- Whether the resolution meant that Quill, the society's monthly magazine should now refrain from accepting advertising from group's sponsoring such contests. For example, there are a lot of John Hancock ads in Quill.

But the final vote on the resolution seemed to reflect a desire that the society do something about what one delegate called "contest mania."

An effort to refer the matter to further study failed. Subsequently the resolution carried by a margin 164 to 105.

Dornfeld made a rather impassioned speech for the matter. In a parliamentary move, he relinquished his duties as presiding

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Tampa — scene of the action in 1984

TAMPA

In John Naisbitt's book, *Megatrends*, Tampa is listed among the "top 10 cities of the 1980s."

In January, 1984, Tampa will host the National Football League's Super Bowl, giving it and the area around it new national stature.

What has taken place during the past decade to propel this city, and many others like it, into the national and international business spotlight?

In May 1984, the Society of American Business & Economic Writers will attempt to find out when they hold their annual meeting in this city.

While Naisbitt isn't on the program, a number of business luminaries have already been lined up for SABEW's annual meeting.

For headliners, there's Walter Wriston, chairman of Citicorp; Frank Borman, chairman of Eastern Airlines; Ed Hennessy, chairman of Allied Corp. — and to give us per-

spective on shipbuilding and the rites of spring is George Steinbrenner, head of American Shipbuilding Co. and principal owner of the New York Yankees.

That by no means is the complete program. But, according to Harry Costello of the Tampa Tribune — who along with Jim Mitchell of the San Jose Mercury, is heading the program committee — most of the program has been locked in and a more detailed description should be available by the next newsletter.

The growth of Sun Belt cities will only be one of many newsworthy and thought-provoking topics to be addressed.

Attention will be paid to the economy of Central and South America and how it will impact the growth of the U.S. economy.

Predictions are already being made that the automobiles we drive in the next decade may be made in one of these developing nations as our economy evolves into one more informational and service oriented.



Frank Borman



George Steinbrenner

This changing industrial base is causing major changes in the nation's banking, investment and insurance industries. Large money

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Resolution Proposes Contest Guidelines

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officer of the convention early to deliver his views on the resolution. The society, he said, has been a conscience of journalism, and must take action.

Other delegates, however, believed that the resolution got the support it had because it was Dornfeld's major proposal as president.

Journalism contests — specifically those sponsored by corporations, trade associations and other "special interest" groups — have been under scrutiny by the SPJ/SDX Ethics Committee, headed by Fred Behringer, for the past year.

At issue is the question of whether or not contests sponsored and financed by such groups represent a potential conflict of interest for the journalists who participate in them.

The question of conflict of interest is certainly not a new one, but the issue was more intensely questioned last February in Quill. In his president's column, Dornfeld, a correspondent in the Washington bureau of Knight-Ridder Newspapers, wondered if such contests present the appearance of a conflict of interest.

"Most of these contests probably are established with good intentions," he wrote. "Many have judging panels made up largely or entirely of journalists. But many sponsors clearly are trying to promote themselves, if not curry favor with the journalists who cover them."

Dornfeld, who turned down an invitation to be a judge in the John Hancock Awards for Excellence in Business and Financial Journalism, said the issue was referred to the Ethics Committee to determine if SPJ should adopt guidelines governing contests and how restrictive or flexible they should be.

An ethics survey report at the annual SPJ/SDX annual meeting showed 60 percent of the editors encourage or permit entries in sponsored contests.

Dornfeld's criticisms weren't directed strictly to business-economics journalism contests and the issue obviously is broader than that. Groups other than business groups sponsor awards programs and businesses sponsor awards for other than business writing. The annual awards issue of Editor & Publisher listed more than 400 contests with cash prizes adding up to about \$500,000.

Ironically, John Hancock has just raised its cash awards from \$2,000 to \$5,000 in each of six categories in its "Awards for Excellence in Business and Financial Journalism."

The field of business and economics writing and reporting has some established prestigious awards programs sponsored by corporations and trade groups. Some of the top ones

SDX Resolution

Whereas the number of journalistic contests sponsored by corporations and interest groups has grown dramatically in recent years, and

Whereas many of these contests are designed, in part, to promote the sponsoring organization and encourage coverage of issues it deems important, and

Whereas some of these contests offer large cash awards to journalists who might have occasion to report on activities of the sponsoring organization, and

Whereas in some cases, the sponsor or his representatives play a role in the selection of the winners, and

Whereas the Code of Ethics by the Society of Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi adopted in 1926 and strengthened in 1973, urges journalists to accept "nothing of value" and to avoid practices that can "compromise the integrity of journalists and their employers,"

Therefore be it resolved that the 74th anniversary convention of the Society urges journalists to refrain from participation in contests sponsored by corporations and interest groups where journalistic ethics may be compromised and particularly those contests that seek to promote the sponsor or encourage coverage of certain causes.

Be it further resolved that the convention directs The National Ethics Committee to study this issue and propose guidelines for contests to the Society at its 75th anniversary convention.

have independent panels of judges (mainly journalists or journalism instructors) and some are administered independently of the sponsoring business, such as through a university.

The INGAA-Missouri competition and the National Association of Realtors Real Estate Journalism awards both are 19 years old. The Hancock awards program is 17 and the Champion competition, 6. On the other hand, only recently did the American Society of Newspaper Editors adopt a business writing category in its Writing Awards competition. There is a Financial Reporting category in the George Polk Awards originated by the Long

Island University Department of Journalism and a Business News Reporting category in the Overseas Press Club awards program, according to a list published in Quill. The Sigma Delta Chi Distinguished Service Awards does not have such a specific category, however.

Dornfeld resists such categorization for SDX awards on the belief that it will open the door to other specialized categories such as food, fashion or sports.

Awards mean not only prestige and recognition — especially important to reporters on smaller newspapers — but also cash. Two of the most widely known corporate-sponsored business journalism contests make the list of the top 10 in cash prizes distributed. As listed in Editor & Publisher's annual awards issue the top 10 contests in sums distributed in 1982 were the following:

1. Hearst Foundation: \$105,050.
2. Champion International: \$101,500.
3. World Hunger Year: \$100,000.
4. Scripps-Howard: \$25,500.
5. Livingston: \$15,000.
6. UPS — Jim Andrews: \$15,000.
7. Penney-Missouri: \$12,850.
8. John Hancock: \$12,000, now \$30,000.
9. Pulitzer (plus gold medal): \$11,000.
10. Education Writers: \$11,000.

The World Hunger Media Award is for journalistic and literary achievement and was inaugurated under an endowment by Kenny Rogers and his wife, Marianne.

In terms of top first-place prizes Editor & Publisher listed the following:

1. MPA Stephen Kelly: \$25,000.
2. DuPont-Columbia: \$20,000.
3. UPS — Jim Andrews: \$15,000.
4. World Hunger: \$10,000.
5. Livingston: \$5,000.
6. George Jean Nathan: \$5,000.
7. Champion: \$5,000.

The E&P also noted, "The richest fellowship-scholarship available to prospective and working journalists was the Sportswriters Scholarship at Vanderbilt University given by the Thoroughbred Racing Association. It had a four-year value of \$31,500."

Under the categories of business, economics, coal, oil, travel (industry impact as opposed to travel articles) and housing, there are 21 contests listed with cash awards adding up to almost \$150,000. Two of the contests are restricted regionally (one for Canadian-based writers, one in New York) and one, the Morton Margolin awards program, is for topics concerning Colorado business but is open to all journalists.

Dornfeld said he isn't questioning anyone's motives. As someone who has done a lot of

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Defining Realistic Goals For SABEW's Future

It's a great honor and privilege to be chosen to lead the society in 1983-84. Newer members may not be familiar with the heritage of professionalism that stretches back through our past presidents, so this is a suitable occasion for calling up a few memories.

There was Joe Livingston, who as our first president in 1964 and 1965 won a Pulitzer Prize for his economic reporting; Bob Nichols, who led us in 1967 while he built the business desk of the Los Angeles Times into an important new center of economic journalism; Bart Rowen, two-term president in 1974 and 1975 who put the society on the map with Washington's economic policymakers; Larry Birger, the father of the Business Monday sections at Knight-Ridder Newspapers; Margaret Daly, a pacesetter for the growing legions of women moving up in economic journalism; Jerry Heaster, whose tireless labors gave direction to our administrative affairs and recruiting efforts. There were many other officers whose names are too numerous to mention.

Today is a new time of ferment and change for our organization. The task ahead is first to identify the challenges that face us and then to do our best to meet them.

We are coming off of a good session. At our annual meeting in Washington last spring, we heard from many good speakers with important responsibilities in making our business and economic system work. We produced a history of our first 20 years, experimented with critiques patterned on those of the American Press Institute, drew a near-record attendance in a time when travel budgets remained tight.

Among those attending were a number of newcomers, solid additions to our organization. Several have offered to help us with our committee work; one went so far as to offer to do fairly detailed research for our organization.

We have a good crew of officers and governors, but predictably we continue to be bedeviled by the same limitation that hurts many other voluntary national organizations. Since we rely on volunteer help, we cannot order anyone to do work for the society; we must depend upon the good will and professional commitment of our members. And since we are spread across the country, we must do our business entirely by phone or mail except for the four days of our annual meeting.

How can we surmount these limitations and become more of a force for professional growth in our field? In general terms, there's really only one way. We must define our goals, then set up a realistic plan that enables us to reach them. My sense tells me we did some of that at our meeting, but never framed into a single statement the consensus of what we felt. My job is to do that, so here's the way

President's Letter

I see it.

Our first step is to resolve an identity crisis by defining our reach. The landscape of business and economic journalism looks different today than it did when our group was founded 20 years ago. The metropolitan daily newspaper business desk remains as the core group for our membership, but we must acknowledge that the field has grown mightily in the last two decades. It now embraces the broadcast media, a new and fast-growing regional business press and an assortment of fairly general interest trade or professional publications. This change has been reflected somewhat in our membership roster, but not enough. Our constitutive mandates that we take the broad view here, to encourage "the common pursuit of the highest standards of economic journalism."

Next, we need to identify a series of goals that will enable us to function better as a professional organization. Our society usually works well at annual meetings, but doesn't do much on the other 361 days of the year. This newsletter is our only sustained effort at organized communication and, as we all know, publication of it is disturbingly irregular. One of the strongest roles of the society is its function as a network, linking members who can learn from one another how to do their jobs better. We must do more, much more, to develop that network on a

year-long basis, particularly through the strengthening of our newsletter.

Let me set out three realistic goals which with a little bit of stretch, seem to be clearly attainable by our meeting next May in Tampa.

1. To broaden our membership by reaching out more to newspapers and newspaper organizations — the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Associated Press Managing Editors and others — and beyond those organizations to potential members in newer fields of economic journalism. Part of our job is to make the society more visible.

One way we did that this year was to help the ASNE put together a spread on business writing for its May-June bulletin; of the eight articles in that package, five were written or arranged for by society members. Another was to help the APME's Business and Economics Committee prepare its annual report. We did that by providing for the committee's report our survey this year of relations between the media and securities analysts.

Joe Cappel of Crain's Chicago Business is helping us reach beyond these groups to bring a broader dimension to the society, through his efforts to draw to SABEW more members from the regional business press. In the broadcast end, Craig Miller at KDKA-TV in Pittsburgh promises to make similar efforts.

Your officers and Dave Dietz of the San Francisco Examiner, will be working to set

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Officers and board of governors

Here are the officers and board of governors of the Society of American Business & Economic Writers for 1983-84.

PRESIDENT — Dave Beal, executive business editor, St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch.

VICE PRESIDENT — Jim Mitchell, business editor, San Jose Mercury News.

TREASURER — Mike Millican, business news editor, The Associated Press, New York.

SECRETARY — Susan Bischoff, assistant business editor, Houston Chronicle.

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS: Dave Beeder, business editor Omaha World-Herald; Harry Castello, business editor, Tampa Tribune; Dave Dietz, financial writer, San Francisco Examiner; Bill Doyle, syndicated columnist, King Features; Alan Gersten, business editor, Rocky Mountain News, Denver; Cheryl Hall, business editor, Dallas Morning News; Sarah Hoover, free-lance writer, Boulder, Colo.; Gary Klott, business writer, United Press International, New York; Mike McNamee, business writer, USA Today, Washington; Fred Monk, business editor, The State, Columbia, S.C.; Tom Shean, business writer, The Norfolk Virginian-Pilot; Elizabeth Yamashita, director, University of Oklahoma School of Journalism.

Contests

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government and politics reporting, he explained, he would feel awkward about accepting an award from a group with a particular political ideology.

"It just raises questions in the public's mind and puts journalists in an awkward position," he said. "There are some ideological groups that sponsor contests and as a political writer I couldn't do it."

While few news organizations appear to have adopted contest guidelines, editors tend to look who judges the contests, how they are judged, and the administration of the contest as the basis for entering the contests. And Dornfeld's concerns are not universally shared.

For example, John Rumsey, business editor of the Times-Union, Rochester, N.Y., served on the judging committee for the Hancock awards earlier this year. None of the 74 entries in six categories had anything to do with the insurance industry, he recalled. All the Hancock entries were screened first by a panel of three news people in Chicago, he explained, and then sent to the judging committee which also was all journalists.

"Nobody in the insurance business does any of the screening," he said.

Of the judging, he continued, "We were for the most part looking at what was enlightening and instructive for the readers."

"However, Rumsey added, contests may be more an ego trip for newspapers than a they are a self-serving device for the sponsors.

"Contests probably do not do much to benefit the reader," he said. "And the reader ought to be the main concern of newspapers and newspaper people.

"From what I've seen, a lot of newspaper manhours go into trying to win contests, time that would be better spent trying to cover the news and tell the readers what's going on."

"We shouldn't need contests as motivation to do a good job," he added.

At the Rocky Mountain News in Denver, Alan Gersten, the business and financial editor, said he encourages the staff to enter the contests as long as they are judged independently.

Dornfeld said there hadn't been much reaction to his column — several notes from newspapers (the Washington Post, Milwaukee Journal and Philadelphia Inquirer.) The only critical correspondence, he said, came from a member of the public relations staff at John Hancock.

Dornfeld described the Philadelphia In-

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President's letter

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a membership goal for 1983-84.

2. To file the papers needed to establish ourselves as a tax-exempt organization. We have already updated our constitution and by-laws, part of the work needed for filing, but our major task is to set our financial records in order. Tax-exempt status may be a necessity if we decide to anchor our administrative affairs at an educational institution.

3. To recommend action, to be placed on the agenda at our meeting next May, regarding anchoring. Our administrative problems are painfully obvious to anyone who has dealt with them; at each annual meeting, the records of the society move from one president's attache case to another's. In doing so, they often get misunderstood, misplaced or lost forever. What's more, each president has a different style, with little administrative continuity to help tie the styles together. Mix into this blend the fact that we are all volunteers, inundated with responsibilities on our jobs, and you have a recipe for administrative chaos.

Thus, at our meeting this year, we asked Susan Bischoff of the Houston Chronicle to find out how other organizations of professional journalists handle their administrative affairs and communications with members.

At another level, we have invited interested parties to submit proposals to us for handling our administrative work. Four responses have come in — from the University of Missouri, Northwestern University, Ameri-

can University and the University of South Carolina.

Your officers will be getting back to the principals who have expressed interest, to further define and then help to evaluate their proposals. We intend to frame the issues involved for the society in anchoring its affairs, communicate those issues to the membership and recommend by the meeting next May any action that could alleviate our administrative difficulties.

The society is in good shape to take on these goals. We are in the process of compiling a financial report and will convey our financial status to you soon in our newsletter, but we can tell you now that we did very well. Thanks to the careful planning of our immediate past president, John Rumsey, we erred on the side of conservatism in pricing the meeting and, because several cost-boosting factors we feared didn't develop, we came out significantly ahead.

Meanwhile, if you are not active in committee work, please call me in St. Paul (612-222-5011) and I'll find something for you to do. There's no shortage of work. Already making much progress is Harry Costello of the Tampa Tribune, who is arranging the program for our 1984 annual meeting May 6-9 in Tampa.

In its first two decades, SABEW has built up a tradition of distinction. The society has become a leader in establishing a code of ethics, encouraging continued education, urging better media-business relations, exposing its members to the leaders of the business world and developing more professionalism in economic journalism. But times change and we must too, for our organization to continue to meet the growing needs of an increasingly diverse field of present and prospective members.

DAVE BEAL

SABEW committees

The following committees and heads of those committees have been appointed by SABEW President Dave Beal:

Long Range Planning — Dave Beal, executive business editor, St. Paul Dispatch and Pioneer Press.

Program — Jim Mitchell, business editor, San Jose Mercury, and Harry Costello, The Tampa Tribune.

Publicity — Tom Shean, business writer, The Virginian-Pilot, Norfolk, Va.

Newsletters — Fred Monk, business editor, The State, Columbia, S.C.

Workshops/Surveys — Cheryl Hall, business editor, Dallas Morning News

Governance — Gary Klott, business writer, United Press International, New York.

Membership — Dave Dietz, financial writer, San Francisco Examiner

In addition, Susan Bischoff, assistant business editor of The Houston Chronicle is chairing a special task force on administration of SABEW's affairs.

SABEW history also charts growth of business writing

The Society of American Business & Economic Writers was organized in 1964, and its growth parallels the emergence of business news writing from the backwaters of the news trade to prominence in virtually all media.

Although founded in 1964, its roots go back to 1958 when R.K.T. "Kit" Larson — not a business writer but associate editor for public service at The Virginian-Pilot and Ledger Star in Norfolk, was attending an advanced management course at the University of Virginia.

Following discussions with Dean Charles C. Abbott at what is now the Darden School about "the generally poor reporting of business news," Larson organized several small seminars on business reporting. In October 1961, he put on a three-day session in Norfolk that attracted 60 business editors.

That meeting, and particularly the give-and-take sessions on business reporting, led to a second seminar in 1963. At that gathering, the editors and writers determined to form a permanent organization and the Society of American Business & Economic Writers was conceived.

The birth took place in May 1964, when the Society of American Business Writers held its first annual meeting in New York at the Drake Hotel. "Economic" wasn't added to the organization's name until 1976, according to Bill Doyle, a charter member who prepared the 29-year history of SABEW which was distributed at the 1983 annual meeting in Washington.

Gene Miller, then with McGraw-Hill and a Newsday Features syndicated columnist, put the first meeting together with the unenviable chore of getting top-name business executives to speak before a virtually unknown and scarcely operative business writers group.

But the top corporate brass turned out — from E. J. McNeely, president of AT&T, to M.J. Rathbone, chairman of Standard Oil of New Jersey, and an impressive list of other business elite.

The 1964 gathering did result in worthwhile news, writes Doyle, and set the tone for subsequent SABEW conventions, which always have attracted speakers from the top ranks of business and government.

At the 1964 meeting, members elected Joe Livingston, financial editor of the Philadelphia Bulletin, president; George H. Arris, financial editor of the Providence Journal and Evening Bulletin, vice presi-

dent; Ben Schiffman, financial editor to the Kansas City Star, treasurer; and Gene Miller, secretary.

In recognition of his role in bringing the organization into being, Kit Larson, was named honorary chairman for life.

The members adopted bylaws stating the the society's intention to "lift the caliber of business writing." Shortly after the meeting, Livingston won a 1964 Pulitzer Prize.

The second meeting was held in 1965 in New York and the slate of officers was re-elected. Meetings were held in Minneapolis in 1966, Washington in 1967, Los Angeles in 1968 and New York in 1969, proving the society's nationwide stature and setting up a four-year rotation of convention locations.

This rotation system of New York, someplace else, Washington, someplace else, and back to New York was written into the society's by-laws in 1971.

As a result, conventions have been held in Boston, 1970; Detroit, 1972; San Francisco, 1974; Chicago, 1976; Atlanta, 1978; Dallas, 1980; Kansas City, 1982; and the 1984 meeting will be Tampa, Fla.

At the 1968 convention, William M. Alrich, a society member and editor of The Wharton Quarterly, proposed a seminar at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania in conjunction with the Society of American Business Writers.

At its 1974 convention, the society adopted a code of ethics that called on members to "avert even the appearance of conflict of interest."

Some of the code's provisions, particularly the one involving junkets, hit some members hard. One member of the board of governors, admitting his newspaper allowed corporations to pay for out-of-town trips, believed he had no choice other than to resign from the society.

"The society continues to play a unique role as the only broad national organization for business and economic journalists," writes Doyle, who now writes a daily syndicated investments column for King Features.

Active members fluctuates between 100 and 150, not large by standards of some other journalistic groups. "But many of the society's members are playing important roles in maintaining and extending the reach of business and economic journalism," he writes.

Personnel Shifts And Openings

FRED ELIASON becomes the business editor of the Rochester Democrat Chronicle succeeding Neil Bezowski who has joined the Philadelphia Inquirer as technology reporter.

MARK SELL has been named assistant business editor at the Fort Lauderdale News and Sun Sentinel. He had been business editor at Cocoa Today in Florida.

ERNEST HOLSENDOLPH has been named business editor of the Cleveland Plain Dealer. He had been with the New York Times.

THE DALLAS TIMES HERALD is looking for a business editor. Anyone interested should contact Ray Herndon, assistant managing editor.

Tampa

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center banks are pushing hard to get into the deposit rich states like Florida, Texas and Arizona.

Wall Street's power is being diluted by fast growing regional brokers and securities sales groups. Insurance companies are struggling to get a grasp of the future financial needs of consumers. These issues will also be addressed.

Issues such as farm credit, textiles, transportation and even the business of sport are part of the agenda.

Also scheduled to be part of the program will be a "special" focus on tourism and family entertainment. This may require a little bit extra time in the program, so plan a little looser schedule next year.

Not to be overlooked are the professional development issues which we find gaining popularity and attention. The critique of business sections will be continued, and SABEW is also working to get a presentation from the researcher who recently compiled an extensive study on the amount and types of economic and financial news which is distributed daily on the wire services.

Make plans now — and allocate appropriate funds — to attend the 1984 session, which is shaping up to be one of SABEW's best ever.

Poll: most ME's permit contest entries

According to the recently published Society of Professional Journalists 1983 Journalism Ethics Survey, most newspaper managing editors and radio-television news directors encourage or permit their staffs to enter contests sponsored by corporations and interest groups.

Of the managing editors who responded 9.3 percent said they encourage entries in the contests and 49.3 percent said they permit entries.

Twenty four percent, however, said they discourage such entries and 12.4 percent said they prohibit them.

Among the news directors, 20.5 percent said they encourage entries and 57.3 percent said they permit them. Just 14.6 percent discourage the entries and only 4.9 percent prohibit them.

The annual awards issue of Editor & Publisher lists more than 400 contests, many sponsored by corporations and interest groups. Together, the contests offer cash awards of about \$500,000.

The survey showed that 51.6 percent of managing editors have a favorable opinion of contests, but that's down nearly 17 percent from a 1974 survey conducted by the Associated Press Managing Editors Association. Just 37.3 percent of radio-television news directors said they have a favorable opinion of contests. Among the SPJ, SDX members surveyed, 41.6 percent said they view contests favorably.

"Nonetheless, news executives appear reluctant to rule out contests sponsored by corporations or interest groups, even if the sponsor derives promotional benefit from the contest or plays a role in the judging," according to Steven Dornfeld, immediate past president of SPJ-SDX, writing in the special edition on Journalism Ethics.

The survey found:

- 64 percent of the managing editors and 67 percent of the radio-TV news directors have no reservations about contests in which the name of a corporation or interest group appears in the title of the competition.

- 61.3 percent of the MEs and 67 percent of the news directors do not object if public relations representatives of the sponsoring group participate in the judging.

- 35.1 percent of the MEs and 45.4 percent of the news directors would not rule out contests in which the corporation or interest group has "veto power" over the entries considered for awards.

In 1974, a 13-member committee at The Milwaukee Journal studied such contests and recommended that the newspaper enter only contests sponsored and administered within the journalism profession. But the Journal

rejected those recommendations and adopted a more flexible approach — that each contest be evaluated by a panel of reporters and editors.

Several years ago, editors at The Louisville Courier-Journal and Times made a similar study and determined that about 60 contests were acceptable.

Executive Editor Paul Janensch told SPJ-SDX that his newspapers tried to limit themselves to contests that are purely journalistic, but did approve commercially sponsored contests if they are judged by journalists and are "recognizing journalistic excellence rather than publicity for a particular cause."

The Philadelphia Inquirer appears to have the most detailed and restricted guidelines,

according to the SPJ-SDX report by Dornfeld. It will not enter a contest if:

1. The contest is sponsored by a special interest group.

2. The contest name implies an inherent bias.

3. A corporate sponsor seeks commercial advantage by including its name in the title of the contest or by exploiting its sponsorship at the time the winners are announced.

4. The judging is not primarily by journalists, if a public relations representative of the sponsor participates in the judging or if the sponsor has a veto over the winners.

5. The contest charges an exorbitant entry fee.

tion, with the exception of those contests sponsored by a foundation, deemed appropriate by the editors and free of commercial or self-serving interests.

The guild had termed that portion of the code "unreasonable" and also had objected to portions of the code which it said conflicted with the union's contract.

ASNE made no specific mention of reporter participation in contests in its rules. Consoli continued, but endorsed a book by John Hulleng, *Playing It Straight*. The APME rule, he continued, was that "stories should not be written or edited primarily for the purpose of winning awards and prizes. Blatant commercial journalism contests or others that reflect unfavorably on the newspaper or the profession should be avoided."

At the Denver Post, the guidelines are patterned after the Inquirer, according to John Klustner, assistant to the managing editor. Out are contests sponsored by a company with its name in the contest title, (a contest named for a person is okay as long as the company's name isn't the same). Such groups as Realtors, homebuilders or title insurance companies are out, Klustner said, as too publicity conscious and any company's contest which appears to exploit the announcement of the winners will be avoided in the future.

Dornfeld said it is his belief that journalism societies will increase their recognition of business and economic writing and reporting as the business reporters become more aggressive, the writing improves and the topics play a more important role in people's lives.

He said anyone who wants to comment should contact Fred Behringer, Ethics Committee Chairman, at the Montgomery Newspapers, Box 188, Fort Washington, Pa. 19034.

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quirer contest codes as the most restrictive in industry, a seven point code the prohibits participation if the sponsor is a special interest group, or if the sponsor seeks commercial advantage through the contest.

Editor & Publisher earlier this year described the efforts of newspapers in Florida and Seattle to adopt codes of ethics which included restrictions on contest entries.

The Jacksonville papers, according to the article by John Consoli, essentially encouraged entering contests which "have as their central purpose the recognition of outstanding achievement in journalism" while calling for careful scrutiny of contests whose special purpose it is to promote a special interest.

Some special interests are benign or worthy, the rule continued, including those aimed at improving the health, educational or legal systems. Special interests devoted primarily to commercial gain were to be shunned, the rule stated, and somewhere in between were all those connected with civic causes, trade or professional associations, some sports or leisure-time activities.

Identification of sponsors and study of the rules and methods of judging were the standards to be used in determining contest approval.

At the Seattle Times, the contest restrictions were included in a code of ethics document, portions of which were under protest by the Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild. The contest code quoted in the article basically prohibited entering any contest not sponsored by a professional journalistic organiza-

New members

The following is a list of new SABEW members or those who have re-established their membership:

STEPHEN AUG, ABC news business and economics reporter, 1717 De Sales St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

GLENN NIXON, free-lance writer and former U.S. News & World Report editor, 224 Riverside Ave., Riverside, Conn. 06878.

BILL FLYNN, financial editor, Buffalo News, One News Plaza, Buffalo, N.Y. 14214.

DAVID LYONS, business writer, Miami Herald, One Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla. 33101.

ANGUS ROBERTSON, Washington bureau chief, Commodity News Service, 1319 F Street, NW., Suite 300, Washington, D.C., 20004.

EMILY ROSE, producer, Cable

News Network, 1050 Techwood Drive, NW, Atlanta, Ga. 30318.

DEBRA SKODACK, business editor, El Paso Herald-Post, 401 Mills St., El Paso, Texas 79999.

SUSAN THOMSON, business editor, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 900 N. Tucker Blvd., St. Louis, Mo. 63101.

JIM TOMS, business editor, Akron Beacon Journal, 44 Exchange St., Akron, Ohio 44328.

Society of American Business and Economic Writers

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Career History

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 55 East Fourth St.
 St. Paul, Minn. 55101

Dues are \$25 a year. New members include an initiation fee of \$15.

The fiscal year is from June 1 to May 31.

New packages for business news

By **SUSAN BISCHOFF**
Boston Chronicle

There wasn't the one classic point of agreement such as one that evolved from an earlier American Press Institute seminar — Run had art big. But the critique group for medium-sized business news staffs at the annual meeting in Washington last May came up with some interesting points.

Continuing experimentation with the market tables came up several times. Bruce Koon said the Oakland Tribune dropped its options tables and did not receive one call protesting. The tables the Tribune is running are patterned after the packaging of the Kansas City Star.

At the Miami News, David Lyons (now with the Miami Herald) discontinued stock tables, but started a Monday Money section which focuses on international business. Joe Goodrich of the Providence Journal-Bulletin has designed the commodities tables with a heavy emphasis on tables with a local thrust. He also works with a statistician to provide New England economic indicators.

At the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, Neil Borowski oversees all economic news.

Ann Curley of the Milwaukee Journal said one of her section's best-read features is a

including Page One wire stories and work from the paper's bureaus. The day before a major indicator is to be released, Borowski gets on the phone and gets comments from the experts who generally have a good idea of what's coming. The next day the story moves as a national story on the Gannett wire.

The Democrat & Chronicle is writing its own daily stocks story, with help from local brokers. Borowski has written a letter to 18 local houses, asking them to have representatives available at a certain time and prepared to comment on regional stocks in particular.

At the edge of Silicon Valley, the San Francisco Examiner runs a locally-produced high tech trends column. Dave Dietz' paper also puts together a Bay Stocks index.

On the graphics side, the Examiner includes a graphic regularly, such as a T-hill indicator, in its digest which anchors the bottom of the page.

locally-written advertising column. It has the added plus of being a favorite of advertising.

The Milwaukee Journal has worked up a series of leading local economic indicators with its area chamber of commerce. They've taken it back 10 years and are historically predicting change. Curley volunteered to send a list of indicators to anyone interested.

Help!

As usual it's taken a while to get this first quarterly issue of the SABEW newsletter off the ground. But we are determined to get back on a regular publication basis with some interesting features and useful information for society members.

But that involves HELP from society members about what's going on, story ideas, comments, etc.

We expect to come out with the next issue early in 1984. So, if you have something you want to contribute, have a story suggestion, or just want to pass along a change in job, or an award, do so. We even accept phone calls.

Send the information to Fred Monk, Business Editor, The State, P.O. Box 1333, Columbia, S.C. 29202. Or CALL — 803-771-8610, or 782-3356 at home.

Like most of you, I keep rather irregular hours, so don't give up, and don't be afraid to call me late at the office or at home. Fred Monk, newsletters chairman.

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