



THE Source

Society of Professional Journalists
Oklahoma Pro Chapter

February 2000



Newspapers fight subpoena for bombing documents

By **Mark Thomas**
OPA Executive Vice President

Last month subpoenas were served to nearly every daily newspaper in Oklahoma seeking everything ever published about the Oklahoma City bombing.

Defense attorneys for Terry Nichols are asking for every article, photograph, diagram, cartoon, letter to the editor, advertisement and any other dialogue pertaining to Nichols, Timothy McVeigh, Michael Fortier and the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing on April 19, 1995.

Members of the press are fighting to block the subpoenas.

"An objection has

been filed on behalf of the OPA's Legal Service Plan members," said Mark Thomas, executive vice president of the Oklahoma Press Association. "And several other newspapers have used their own attorney to file an objection."

Although fighting a subpoena isn't covered under the advice or defense sections of OPA's legal service plan, Thomas, as LSP administrator, can make exceptions for services that affect many LSP members.

Thomas authorized LSP Attorney Michael Minnis to file an objection to the subpoenas of 31 LSP members.



Mark Thomas

"This request is burdensome and there are other places to get that information," Thomas said. "They should seek those other options."

In the letter of objection for the 31 LSP members, attorney Michael Minnis said, "The Oklahoma newspapers object because the production requested would subject them to undue burden. To comply with the subpoena, each newspaper would have to hire one or more persons to review five years of newspapers published, that is, read approximately 1,700 newspapers for

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Awards banquet nears

Excitement continues to build as the Feb. 26 SPJ awards banquet nears.

All winners, non-winners, SPJ members and guests have been sent notification letters and reservation cards.

If you want to attend the banquet but did not receive a letter and reservation card, there is still time to make plans.

The banquet is open to all who are interested in attending.

Call Kim Morava at (405) 214-5520 or Ronna Austin at (405) 793-2774, or you may e-mail a request to: kmorava@news-star.com or raustin@okc.cc.ok.us

The evening's festivities will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a cash bar, followed by dinner and the awards presentations starting at 7:30 p.m.

Come join the fun and mingle with fellow journalists.

NEXT Board Meeting, Feb. 11

Make plans to attend the monthly board meetings of the Oklahoma Pro chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, held the second Friday of each month.

The meetings are a great place to be heard and share ideas with other SPJ members or to become a member.

The next meeting is noon, Feb. 11 at the OPA board meeting room located at 3601 N. Lincoln in Oklahoma City.

Bring a brown-bag lunch including a drink and join fellow journalists.

SPJ needs you and your ideas so make plans to attend. We look forward to seeing you there!

Presented by
The Society of Professional Journalists
Friday, Feb. 25, 2000

12:30 to 4 p.m.

Frontier Room, Oklahoma Memorial Union
The University of Oklahoma - Norman

Keynote Speaker

Tom Lindley

Senior Staff Writer

The Daily Oklahoman

Before coming to *The Oklahoman*, Lindley was editor of *The Flint Journal* in Michigan, where he also wrote columns for the opinion page. In addition, he has served as graphics and sports managing editor at *The Times-Picayune* in New Orleans and as a national reporter for *The Dallas Times Herald*.

Panel Members: Editors and Recent Graduates

Carol Hartzog, managing editor, *Edmond Sun*

Dennis Lang, managing editor, *The Lawton Constitution*

Carla Hinton, metro editor, *The Daily Oklahoman*



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From the President



By *Jim Campbell*
SPJ president

Annual awards banquet promises good food, fun

price, an easily accessible site with adequate parking.

And we have a program streamlined somewhat from a year ago.

So let's have a really outstanding turnout Feb. 26 at the SPJ annual awards banquet to enjoy some journalistic camaraderie and show our appreciation to winners of the annual SPJ awards.

It's the biggest event of

the year sponsored by the Oklahoma Pro chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Preparations are in excellent shape thanks to months of work by Kim Morava and Ronna Austin.

The deadline for returning RSVP cards for the event at Applewoods in Oklahoma City is Feb. 10.

I look forward to seeing you there.

We have distinctive work by Oklahoma journalists to recognize and a splendid opportunity to talk with the people who produced it.

We have an outstanding menu at a reasonable

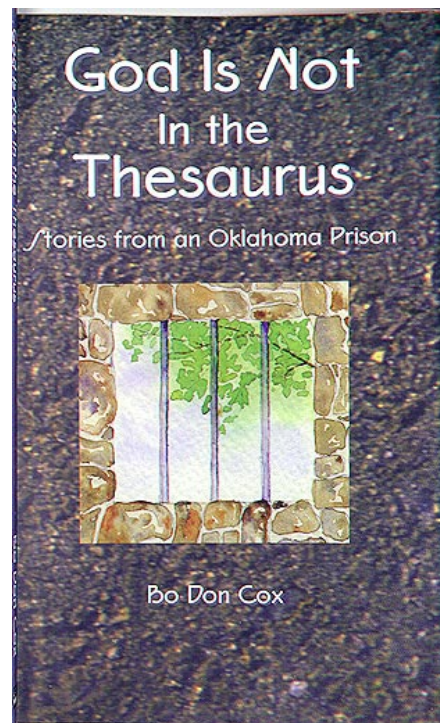
Former SPJ winner enters literary world

One of SPJ's contest winners for 1993 has just released his first book, "God Is Not in the Thesaurus: Stories From an Oklahoma Prison."

Writer, and prison inmate, Bo Cox sent word that his work has been published by Forward Movement, a press associated with the Episcopal Church. Cost is \$8.95.

In 1993 Cox won first prize for Commentary and was allowed to attend the awards banquet to receive his plaque. It was a first for SPJ and him.

Since then Cox has continued to hone his skills and search for an audience. Forward Movement began publishing some of Cox's work in pamphlet form a couple of years ago. At one point his book of daily meditations, called "Release," was the press's most frequently requested title at 95 cents. To order copies of Cox's work, call 1-800-543-1813.



National website full of helpful information

Journalists! Keep up with the latest journalistic news from across the nation at SPJ National's electronic website lo-

cated at www.spj.org

There you will find news updates about events that affect all journalists, updates to

the 2000 covention to be held in Ohio, FOIA information, links to other chapters, regional information and much more.

Waiting game begins on OKC bombing court order

“Nichols,” cont. from p. 1

each subpoena.

“None of the Oklahoma newspapers have the resources (money, personnel, or time) to comply with the subpoena.”

Thomas suggested Nichols’ defense team review the newspapers at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

“Terry Nichols’ defense team is getting a million bucks to defend him,” Thomas said. “Why don’t they go down to the Historical Society, do the research and buy those copies rather than putting it on a private business to use our employees and our time to help them make their case.”

Now that the letter of objection has been sent,

“we just wait to hear from Nichols’ attorneys,” said Thomas. “If we don’t hear anything, it’s over and done with.”

If a motion to produce is filed by Nichols’ attorneys, Minnis will file a motion to quash and then make oral arguments before a judge.

“If we’re compelled to produce the documents by a judge, we’ll argue for a fee structure,” Thomas said. “We’ll try to establish a uniform fee structure for newspapers to be paid to produce these documents. Newspapers should not be required to provide copies and do extensive historical research at no cost every time someone wants to see something.”

Timothy McVeigh has been sentenced to death for his role in the bomb-

ing. Nichols was convicted by a federal jury of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter and is serving a life sentence.

Fortier pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI.

Oklahoma County District Attorney Bob Macy filed 160 counts of first-degree murder against Nichols earlier this year.

LPS members included in the motion are: the Ada Evening News, Altus Times, Alva Review Courier, Anadarko Daily News, Blackwell Journal-Tribune, Broken Arrow Daily Ledger, Chickasha Express Star, Claremore Progress, Cushing Daily

Citizen, Duncan Banner, Edmond Sun, Elk City Daily News, Enid News and Eagle, Guthrie News Leader, Guymon Daily Herald, Henryetta Daily FreeLance, Holdenville Daily News, McAlester News Capital and Democrat, McCurtain Daily Gazette, Norman Transcript, Okmulgee Daily Times, Pauls Valley Daily Democrat, Perry Daily Journal, Ponca City News, Pryor Daily Times, Sapulpa Daily Herald, Seminole Producer, Stillwater News-Press, Tahlequah Daily Press, Vinita Daily Journal and Weatherford Daily News.

“This request is burdensome...”

—Mark Thomas

OPA Executive Vice President



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NEXT SPJ MEETING: NOON, FEB. 11, AT OPA, 3501 N. LINCOLN BLVD.