



Our Loss: Karen Ocamb Leaving Club's Board

Karen Ocamb, a high-profile member of the Los Angeles Press Club Board of Directors and an award-winning journalist, is stepping down to devote more time to her flowering career.

At the August 2004 board meeting, which adjourned in Karen's honor, several board members spoke about the incredible work Karen has done since 2001 to fight for public access to supposedly "open" government records and meetings, which are often wrongly and illegally restricted.

As chairwoman of the club-supported coalition known as the **Sunshine Committee**, Karen has spent much of her time successfully prodding the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to obey the state Brown Act and embrace open government.

A journalist with some 30 years of experience, and a veteran of CBS Network News, Karen enjoyed a truly whirlwind 2004.

She put in hundreds of hours as co-producer of the club's extremely successful gala awards banquet on June 12. She oversaw the widely praised technical production, creating the entire evening's look and sound. Even though she was an unpaid volunteer, she also supervised a professional technical crew who handled sound, lighting, video and other production issues during the event.

On the day immediately following the awards gala, Karen was honored by **Christopher Street West** as its **Woman of the Year** for her work in pressuring government entities to follow open government rules. Christopher Street West sponsors the largest Gay Pride event in the U.S.

In granting her the award, Christopher Street cited Karen's Sunshine work, which has included her own extensive testimony before the Board of Supervisors in support of a "Sunshine ordinance" to make government more accessible to the people.

"Karen Ocamb's unending commitment to government transparency has been an inspiration to LA Press Club members and others

throughout Los Angeles government," said Christopher Street West. "Her energy, enthusiasm and leadership has been contagious to everyone involved. Many late-night strategy sessions and Karen's perseverance have kept the Sunshine Ordinance issue alive."

In August, Karen was named the first recipient of the **Leroy Arons Award** in Journalism from the National Lesbian & Gay Journalist Association Los Angeles chapter for her work in keeping government meetings and records open. The NLGJA will fete Ocamb at the Mark Taper Auditorium in the Riordan Central Library downtown on Oct. 4.

The award is named for NLGJA founder Leroy Arons, former editor of the *Oakland Tribune* who founded the organization in 1990 after coming out as the first openly gay editor of a major national daily newspaper.

Press Club board member **Jon Beaupre** said Karen "has provided a model for the hard-working, take-no-prisoners kind of journalism that is scrupulously fair, but insistent on answers from those in power. She has been an inspiration for me, and in fact to an entire generation of journalists in Los Angeles."

In 2002, Karen received the California First Amendment Coalition's prestigious **Beacon Award** for her Sunshine work, which aims to pressure government to operate with transparency and thus improve democracy for everyone.

A member of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, Karen's work appears in *GayWired.com*, *IN* and *Lesbian News*, as well as many other gay and mainstream publications.

One of Karen's many friends on the Press Club board, political columnist **Jill Stewart**, said Karen "spends long hours fighting for public **Ocamb, page 2**



Karen Ocamb

Get Going! Join the Press Club's Great Board

BY TED JOHNSON

Candidates for the 2005 Los Angeles Press Club Board of Directors are invited to present their proposals at the Annual Meeting on Sept. 30 in Hollywood.

Any journalist who has been a member of the Press Club for at least

a year is welcome to run for one of seven open seats. At the gathering, which usually attracts a good-sized crowd of journalists and other Press Club members, candidates will present short statements about themselves and their ideas. If interested, contact Diana at (323)469-8180.

The Annual Meeting is the traditional kickoff of board elections, which will be held in November. The top seven voter-getters will each win a two-year seat on the board. All members are urged to attend. It's a great chance to meet other journalists and mingle with the board candidates.

The meeting will be held at the Press Club headquarters, 6464 Sunset Blvd., 8th floor, starting at 6:30 p.m. with drinks and hors d'oeuvres followed by the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Among the other items on the agenda will be an update on the club's non profit efforts as well as a preview of events to come in the next year.

Qui Bono?

August Panel at Press Club
Sorts It Out

BY ANTHEA RAYMOND

Who benefits when information gets out? This question helped shape the Press Club's August 4 panel on changes at the BBC after the so-called "Neil Report."

The BBC conducted an internal audit after being criticized by the British government for its handling of **Andrew Gilligan's** "unfounded" reporting and its unfortunate outcome—the suicide of its sole anonymous source, weapons expert **David Kelly**. The Neil Report recommends that the BBC put lawyers in newsrooms to vet breaking stories with potentially defamatory allegations.

"Corporate lawyers in the newsroom aren't okay, but First Amendment lawyers might be," said columnist and talk-show **Patt Morrison**. First-Amendment lawyer **Jens Koepke**, another panelist, argued for discretion: for knowing when to let information out and when to give it time to bake—as the BBC probably should have done with Gilligan's story.

But Koepke also said that US laws protect media better from libel suits than British ones.

Released earlier this summer, the Neil Report also calls for editors to vet anonymous sources and to limit live interviews with BBC reporters on breaking stories.

David Willis, the BBC's West Coast correspondent for Television and Radio—another panelist—was skeptical: "Correspondents will still have a lot of slack despite the misdeeds of Andrew Gilligan." But Willis said the new guidelines should encourage reporters and editors to collaborate.

Joining Willis on the panel was **James Tuck**, who worked at the BBC as an editor, producer, and presenter for over a decade. Now the afternoon producer at KNX 1070, Tuck said politics helped shape the Neil Report—particularly, the BBC's stormy relationship with the British government: "The Neil Report tries to redeem without giving too much away."

Joe Ames, of the *Orange County Register*, rounded out the panel. *The Register*, rare among major newspapers, does not allow anonymous sources in stories that it generates.

The panel split on how the reforms might influence other media. But it agreed the reforms highlight challenges now facing a 24-7 news industry. As Jens Koepke summed it up, "What's objectivity? What's balance? And can it be administered from on high?"

Journalists: Learn to Write from a Times Pro

Want to write sharper leads? Want to improve the way you organize your copy before you start typing? Want to edit your copy so your editor won't have to?

Former *Los Angeles Times* reporter, editor and writing coach **Bob Baker** will attack these and other writing issues in "Newstinking," a five-hour seminar sponsored by the Press Club and P.R. Newswire on Saturday, October 23. The session will be held at the Press Club, 6464 Sunset Blvd., Suite 806.

This rare chance to learn hands-on from a respected writing maestro is limited to 20 participants. Participants need not be Press Club members.

Baker will use participants' pre-submitted stories as examples of the qualities that make stories work—and the flaws that sabotage them. Participants will receive a booklet of all clips submitted, and will spend the day analyzing and critiquing them with Baker.

Participants are asked to submit three types of stories to Baker via e-mail at: bob@lapressclub.org by Oct. 1:

A hard-news story of 20 inches or less

A feature story or profile of 20 inches or less

A longer feature or news-feature of 60 inches or less

The seminar will be organized into four sections:

10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.-Nailing the hard news story

11:25 a.m. to 12:40 p.m.-Nailing the short feature

Lunch

1:40 p.m. to 3 p.m.-Nailing longer-form stories

3:10 p.m. to 4 p.m.-Setting goals for your own improvement

"The seminar is organized so that we avoid abstractions and talk about nuts-and-bolts storytelling," said Baker, a veteran of 34 years in the news business, the last 26 at the Times.

In addition to his work at the Times, Baker has taught writing at USC; run a series of statewide seminars for the California Newspaper Publishers Assn.; coached writers at numerous newspapers; authored "Newstinking," a book on mental organization for journalists, and currently runs the web site newstinking.com.

The cost is \$75, due by Sept. 30. To register, call us at 323-469-8180, email info@lapressclub.org, or visit our site at lapressclub.org. Payment can be made by check sent to LA Press Club, 6464 Sunset Blvd. Suite 806, Hollywood, CA 90028 or credit card (online or by phone).

Ocamb (continued)

access to government, and at the same time works very hard as one of the most respected gay journalists in California. As a reporter, she ferrets out information that nobody else seems to get, and her work is superb."

Karen, a busy freelancer, told the Press Club board that her increasingly tight schedule, after several years of volunteer work for the club, made it impossible for her to continue as a board member.

However, she said, "I will continue to help when and where I can," particularly with efforts by the Sunshine Committee.

Karen was roundly applauded by the club's board members. Press Club President **Ted Johnson**, of *V Life* magazine, thanked her for her "many hours of work and her devotion to important issues facing journalists."

She will be greatly missed.

Student Gives Her All

BY DIANA LJUNGAES

Melissa Morrissette has known that she wanted to be a journalist since she was six years old. By the time she reached the sixth grade, she wrote her idol, Los Angeles TV anchor **Pat Harvey**, asking her for advice.

Harvey's answer: "She told me to stay in school, to major in journalism, take political science and above all, love what I do in order to be good at it."

Melissa followed Harvey's advice and is now in her third year at Cal State L.A., majoring in journalism - and volunteering to help out at the Press Club.

"I love working for this prestigious organization and meeting with established journalists and writers," she says.

At the Southern California Journalism Awards Dinner last June, she finally got to meet her idol and tell Pat that she is staying on course, following her valuable advice.



Melissa Morrissette

event

Luke Ford book release party,
Wyndham Bel-Age Hotel, West Hollywood

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMY ALKON AND EMMANUELLE RICHARD



Author and guest of honor Luke Ford addresses the crowd



Cathy Seipp, Cecile DuBois and Luke Thompson



Andrew Breitbart



Nathaniel Branden

The miles-of-views rooftop of the Wyndham Bel-Age Hotel in West Hollywood

was the backdrop for a Press Club bash introducing blogger **Luke Ford's** two new books: "XXX-Communicated: A Rebel Without a Shul," a memoir of his years reconciling his Orthodox Judaism with his study of pornography and "The Producers: Profiles In Frustration," a collection of interviews with Hollywood power brokers. Hosted by syndicated advice columnist **Amy Alkon**, Liberation Publications' **Emmanuelle Richard** and National Review Online's **Cathy Seipp**, the evening drew a wild mix, including *City Journal's* **Heather MacDonald**, *Slate's* **Mickey Kaus**, *L.A. Weekly's* **Sharan Street**, true crime writer **Aphrodite Jones**, KFI TalkRadio 640-AM producer **Justin Levine**, Dateline NBC's **Susan Liebowitz**, *Vanity Fair's* **Richard Rushfield**, *Jewish Journal's* **David Finnigan**, "The Mailroom" author **David Rensin**, Drudge Report researcher and "Hollywood, Interrupted" author **Andrew Breitbart**, syndicated columnist **Jill Stewart**, *New Times's* film critic **Luke Y. Thompson**, cartoonist **Donna Barstow**, "Screwball," mystery author **David Ferrell**, Swiss journalist **Claudia Laffranchi**, Feral House publisher **Adam Parfrey**, attorney **Neville Johnson**, screenwriter **David Bottrell** and French journalist **Annette Levy-Willard**. Bloggers **Moxie**, **Vik Rubinfeld** and **Cecile DuBois** manned the book-selling table. Among the buyers was producer **Jay Bernstein** (profiled in Luke's book "The Producers"), who bought a half-dozen books. The broadly divergent attendees, including Orthodox Jews and porn industry folks, mixed nicely.

Foreign Reporters Face Tough Rules at LAX

BY JILL STEWART

Diplomats, foreign journalists and immigration officials joined in a lively Press Club debate over restrictions on foreign journalists who arrive in the U.S. to cover news events. The July panel discussion drew dozens of journalists, with interest particularly heightened due to recent headlines over British reporter **Elena Lappin**, who was detained at LAX, handcuffed and stuck overnight in an isolation room.

According to panel coordinator and *Reason* magazine reporter **Matt Welch**, since early 2003, agents of the Department of Homeland Security at LAX have enforced a controversial interpretation of the Visa Waiver Program, which since the 1980's has allowed journalists and all citizens from 27 friendly countries to enter the U.S. for up to 90 days without a visa.

The paperwork-free visa waiver is in dramatic contrast to the I-visa adopted in 1952, and still in use, which allows foreign journalists who enter the U.S. under a contract to gather news to stay for up to five years—unlike most other business travelers and foreign tourists. The five-year rule for journalists is among the most liberal foreign travel policies in the world.

But the catch is that, in order to qualify for the special I-visa, foreign journalists must present qualifying documentation before leaving for the U.S. Foreign journalists here on vacation could be breaking the law if they suddenly need to cover an unexpected major news event—unless they already got their qualifying documents before entering the U.S.

When the federal government created the Visa Waiver exemption in 1986, one panelist said the FBI fought the paperwork-free initiative. But it proved popular with foreign journalists who didn't want to go through the long I-visa process for every short working visit.

Now, in the post 9/11 era, critics contend, some LAX customs officials are wrongly applying the old 1952 rule, with its paperwork requirements, and are disqualifying journalists from receiving the far simpler waiver to enter the U.S.

The ensuing confusion over which rules apply starkly emerged at the July panel at Press Club headquarters in Hollywood.

Peter Gordon, of U.S. Customs, said nothing has changed since 9/11, and that customs officials have routinely applied a 1996 law passed by Congress that supercedes the 1986 "visa waiver" by tightening the list of people who can enter the U.S. without a visa.

According to Gordon, since 1996, travelers

permitted into the U.S. without a visa must be facing "unforeseen circumstances" such as a death in the family.

"I myself have rejected students and journalists without the right visa," since 1996, Gordon said. "Unfortunately, sometimes people don't get the right information and don't have the right papers."

However, **Michael Wolff**, press attache of the German Consulate in Los Angeles, which helps foreign journalists obtain visa approvals, said he has seen a burst of recent incidents in which foreign journalists were denied entry, yet recalls no crack-downs before last year.

"People are just not aware that they need the visa," Wolff says of foreign reporters. He said it's fine with him if the U.S. chooses to enforce newer rules, but a failure to communicate those rules, combined with poor treatment of some reporters "has created a public relations disaster" for the U.S. among angry journalists in Great Britain and Europe.

"A journalist coming here to cover a soccer game was sent back. Journalists see themselves as forced to be illegal, and dress up as tourists, because they can't get [the I-visa] on short notice." Short-term tourist visas are far easier to obtain, but journalists who get one cannot admit that they are here on assignment.

"I don't think we would like to introduce these barriers," Wolff said.

However, **David Stewart**, consul general for the U.S. Embassy in Tijuana, said European journalists may be complaining too much, since they can easily educate themselves on the paperwork required of journalists.

"Every embassy I know goes the extra mile to help get visas for journalists," Stewart said. "I would say that a journalist—who's pretty good at getting information—all they need to do is click on a webpage to find out how to get a visa."

Stewart acknowledged that sometimes foreign journalists are sent here by an employer or publication the very next day to cover breaking news. In those cases, it's hard to arrange the longer-term I-visa. "You're right, we get bad press," in that situation. So embassy employees "do what it takes to expedite that visa," Stewart said.

Welch, who hosted the panel, summed up the existing situation as "complicated" and noted that the new Department of Homeland Security interpretation now applied to some foreign journalists is possibly illegal.

Resourceful.

The Los Angeles Press Club and PR Newswire have teamed up to bring our members up to the minute headlines and access to a multitude of expert news sources. Find everything you need to write your story including news releases, photos, and video.

Get it all under the "Tools" section of lapressclub.org.



PR Newswire
United Business Media

the 8 ball

July/August 2004 • Vol. 57, No. 6

The 8-Ball newsletter is a monthly publication of the Los Angeles Press Club, which is responsible for its content.

LOS ANGELES PRESS CLUB

6464 Sunset Blvd., Suite 806
Hollywood, CA. 90028
Tel. (323) 469-8180. Fax. (323) 469-8183
Email: info@lapressclub.org

Web: lapressclub.org

LAPC OFFICERS

President: Ted Johnson, *V Life*
Vice President: Patt Morrison, *L.A. Times/KCET*

Secretary: Bob Baker

Treasurer: Alicia Flanary, *Flanary Press*
Executive Director: Diana Ljungaeus
(diana@lapressclub.org)

8 Ball Editors: Jill Stewart, Diana Ljungaeus

2004 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jon Beaupre, Sandy Cohen, Michael Collins, Rob Eshman, Diana Ljungaeus, Karen Ocamb, Jordi Ortega, Anthea Raymond-Beckler, Jill Stewart, Roy Ulrich, Norma Zager. Honorary: Adrienne Anderson, Alex Ben Block.

8 Ball is designed by Eric Almendral

Experience the Magic Castle

BY SANDY COHEN

It's been one of Hollywood's most exclusive nightclubs for more than 40 years.

In fact, it usually takes magic to get in.

Overlooking the city from its hillside perch on Franklin Avenue, the **Magic Castle** is a private haven for magicians and celebrities. **Siegfried & Roy** (minus the tigers) got their start there. So did **David Copperfield**. **Orson Welles** and **Cary Grant** used to be regulars at the Castle's multiple bars. Today it's **Drew Barrymore** and **Jason Alexander**.

It's a place where the walls talk, an invisible pianist takes requests and magicians amaze audiences nightly.

It's also the site of the second annual L.A. Press Club Halloween Party.

On October 28, friends and members of the Press Club can gain entrance to the exclusive Magic Castle for dinner, drinks and, of course, magic.

Visit the Parlour of Prestidigitation, the

Palace of Mystery and the Close-Up Gallery, where magicians somehow fool the eye from just a few feet away. Or just sit at the bar and wait for one of the stools to



Press Club members enjoyed a unique evening of dining and entertainment at last year's Magic Castle Halloween bash.

mysteriously move.

Packed with storied finds, including **W.C. Fields'** trick pool table and **Jimmy Durante's** breakaway piano, The Magic Castle is also home to bits of Los Angeles

lore. Pieces of the Santa Monica Opera House and the Hollywood High School gymnasium enjoy new life at the Castle.

Milt and Bill Larsen opened the place on Jan. 2, 1963 as a tribute to their dad, attorney-turned-magician **William W. Larsen**. As the founder of the Academy of Magical Arts, Larsen dreamed of a nightclub where magicians could socialize and share tricks. He died before the Magic Castle opened, but son Milt Larsen knows all the Castle's secrets. Tune into next month's 8-Ball to learn if the Magic Castle is actually haunted, and mark your calendar for the Press Club's party at the Magic Castle on Oct. 28. Reservations, which will be required to assure seating, can be made in

September by going to the club's website at www.lapressclub.org or contacting diana@lapressclub.org.

Tickets are \$75 per person and include the Magic Castle's gourmet three-course steak or seafood dinner.



SERT GROUP INTERNATIONAL

EMERGENCY MEDICAL
TRAINING AND SOLUTIONS
FOR JOURNALISTS IN HIGH-
THREAT ENVIRONMENTS

FOR COURSE DESCRIPTION &
INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

SCOTT SHELDON
1-866-500-5465
P.O. BOX 371231 RESEDA, CA 91337
USA

WWW.THESERTGROUP.COM

calendar

Wednesday, September 8: A pre-election panel discussion – Bush/Kerry: How to sift through it all.

WHO: Susan Estrich, a USC law and political science professor who managed the 1988 Michael Dukakis presidential campaign. **Andrew Breitbart**, author and researcher. **Peter Dreier**, the Dr. E.P. Clapp Distinguished Professor of Politics and director of the Urban & Environmental Policy Program at Occidental College. **Charles Wiley**, journalist and commentator and member of Accuracy in Media. **MODERATOR:** Press Club board member **Bob Baker**.

WHERE: LA Press Club, 6464 Sunset Blvd., 8th floor. **WHEN:** Cocktails begin at **6:30 p.m.**, with the program starting at **7:30**.

RSVP: 323-469-8180 or email info@lapressclub.org. **Members \$5 (drinks and snacks included), non-mem-**

bers \$20, free for those joining that evening

Monday, September 20: LAPC Board meeting.

WHERE: LA Press Club, 6464 Sunset Blvd., 8th floor. **WHEN: 7:30 p.m.**

Members welcome

Thursday, September 30: Los Angeles Press Club's Annual Meeting. Candidates will introduce themselves.

WHERE: LA Press Club, 6464 Sunset Blvd., 8th floor. **WHEN:** Cocktails begin at **6:30 p.m.**, with the program starting at **7:30**.

RSVP: 323-469-8180 or email info@lapressclub.org All members welcome. No cost.

Wednesday, October 10: Panel discussion (topic and guests TBA)

WHERE: LA Press Club, 6464 Sunset Blvd., 8th floor. **WHEN:** Cocktails begin at **6:30 p.m.**, with the program starting at **7:30**.

RSVP: 323-469-8180 or email info@lapressclub.org

new members

The Los Angeles Press Club Board of Directors welcomes the following new members in 2004. If you know anyone who would like to join the Los Angeles Press Club, please call us at 323-469-8180 or have them fill out an application on our website at www.lapressclub.org and click on "membership."

Dr. Betty Berzon, associate member
Lue Bken, press attachée - associate
Gwendolyn Driscoll, *Orange County Register*
Steve Duchesne, associate member
Michelle Emard, producer, E Entertainment
Roberta Freeman, staff writer, *Ventura County Star*

Philip Friedman, field producer/reporter for Film Industry Network

Jay Kugelman, cultural affairs producer KPFK/Pacifica Radio

Sam Malineaux, *Hollywood Reporter*

Susan Maltby, student member

Juliet Mothershed, associate member

Ilene Proctor, associate member

Martin A. Proctor, cameraman, NBC

Anita Varghese, *The Argonaut* newspaper

New California Media EXPO & Awards 2004



Promoting Inclusive Communications in Valley California

NCM EXPO 2004
September 24
Fresno, CA

NCM Awards
November 17
Sacramento, CA

Log on to www.ncmonline.com or
Call 415 503 4170 for more information



News Writer Wanted

Weekly community newspaper in Burbank looking for freelance news writer/reporter to cover variety of topics including City Hall, courts, Burbank Airport, crime and more.

Call 818-276-4002 or e-mail
lorenzo@theburbankbugle.com.

The Bugle
BURBANK

356 East Olive Ave. / Suite 102
Burbank, CA 91502

www.theburbankbugle.com

Press Club Members:

If you are interested in new, unique and exciting stories
then you will definitely want an invitation to this
International Media Launch Luncheon

Wednesday, September 15, 2004, Hollywood, CA, 12:00 noon -1:30 PM

Introducing

How to Become a Magnet To Hollywood Success™

A Revolutionary New Book and DVD Training System
For Actors, Writers, Directors & Anyone Who Has a Desire to
Succeed in the Wonderful World of Film and Television.

“In my 50-plus years in this business, this is, by far, the most complete, step-by-step how-to succeed-in-the-entertainment-industry system I’ve ever seen!” - Irwin Zucker, One of Hollywood’s most respected publicists (Steve Allen, Dinah Shore, Burl Ives, Connie Francis, Helen Gurley Brown, Jacqueline Susann, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Norman Vincent Peale, etc.)



Including
**Free Gifts,
Delicious
Luncheon,
Fine Wine &
Champagne**



Rock Riddle – President of **APS Entertainment** and former co-owner of a Hollywood Talent Agency, he has been empowering actors for over 25 years. His profound expertise and experience in **all** areas of the Entertainment Industry makes his advice priceless!

Michele Blood – Int’l. Transformational Speaker, Author, TV Show Host and Producer of **MPowerTV.com** and the creator of the world-renowned psychological discovery **MusiVation™**. She is regarded as one of the world leaders in helping people achieve their dreams!

For Invitation Please Contact APS Entertainment
invitation@hollywoodsucces.com or call (323) 462-2777
with your name, business mailing address, and phone number.

Please Book Immediately To Guarantee Your Seats