



ARKANSAS PRESS WOMEN

January 2024 APW Communicator Newsletter



Faller named APW president

(See p. 1 for story.)

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Arkansas Press Women January Newsletter (January, 2024)



Faller named APW president

by Kristin Netterstrom Higgins

[Arkansas Press Women](https://arkansaspresswomen.org)

<https://arkansaspresswomen.org>) members closed out 2023 by electing Angelita Faller of Little Rock as their next president. Faller, who serves as news director at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, brings a wealth of experience in journalism, communications, and digital storytelling to the role.

Faller succeeds Kristin Netterstrom Higgins, a program associate at the Public Policy Center at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture and a new public policy doctoral student at the University of Arkansas. Netterstrom Higgins, a former newspaper reporter, had served as APW president since 2017.

In assuming the role of president, Faller expressed her enthusiasm for the future of Arkansas Press Women, which will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2024.

“I am honored to lead this esteemed organization during this important anniversary year I look forward to fostering collaboration, innovation, and the continued growth of our community of talented professional communicators,” Faller said after the meeting Saturday, Dec. 30. “I am especially grateful to our immediate past president, Kristin Netterstrom Higgins, and all her hard work while leading APW for the past six years. Together, we will amplify the impact of Arkansas Press Women and contribute to the vibrant landscape of journalism in our state.”

A native of Newton, Illinois, Faller holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from Eastern Illinois University and a master's degree in digital storytelling from Ball State University. Her extensive background includes work as a newspaper reporter and photographer in Illinois, as well as roles in communications at Ohio University and Grambling State University before she joined UA Little Rock in 2016. Currently serving as the at-large district director and APW's scholarship chair, Faller is deeply committed to promoting excellence in journalism and communication within the state.

“Angelita’s passion for the field, coupled with her diverse experiences, makes her an excellent choice to guide Arkansas Press Women,” Netterstrom Higgins said. “I am excited to see our organization flourish under her direction, and I extend my full support to Angelita in her new role.”

2024 APW Board

APW members from across the state met virtually Dec. 30, 2023 to elect their 2024 board. They chose:

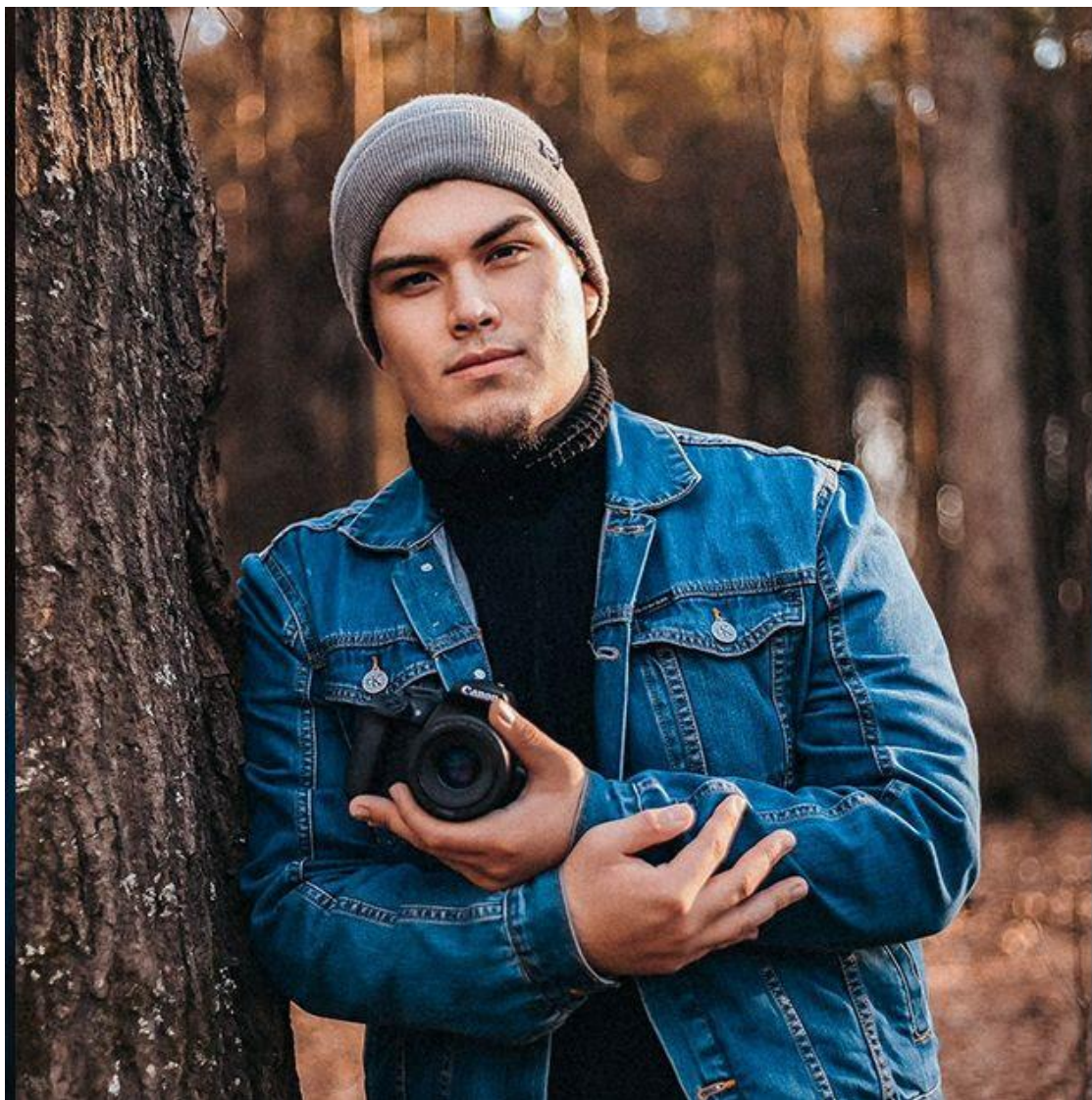
President: Angelita Faller, UA Little Rock

Vice President: Lara Farrar, Arkansas Business

Secretary: Debbie Miller, NorthWest Arkansas Community College

Treasurer: Richard Plotkin, Retired

Charlotte Schexnayder Journalism Internship Recipient Joe Santana Gains Valuable Experience at Hometown Newspaper



by **Angelita Faller** (<https://arkansaspresswomen.org/author/angelitafaller/>) | **Dec 30, 2023**
| **Internship** (<https://arkansaspresswomen.org/category/internship/>)

For the second summer in a row, aspiring journalist Joe Santana has had the opportunity to gain valuable professional experience as a reporter while interning at his hometown newspaper, the Dumas Clarion.

Santana, a senior mass communication major at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, was selected for the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation's Summer Internship Program. The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation supports Arkansas newspapers by helping fund summer interns at Arkansas Press Association member newspapers across the state. The paid internship is designed to help aspiring college-age journalists get started in their newspaper careers.

Santana's internship, the Charlotte Schexnayder Journalism Internship, was specially sponsored by donations from the Arkansas Press Women, the Dumas Chamber of Commerce, and Merchants & Farmers Bank of Dumas in memory of Charlotte Tillar Schexnayder.

Melvin and Charlotte Schexnayder owned and published the Dumas Clarion for 44 years. Schexnayder, who passed away in 2020, was one of the first members and a former president of Arkansas Press Women and the first female president of the Dumas Chamber of Commerce, among many other honors, making her a powerful role model for future journalists in Arkansas.

"As an aspiring journalist who wants to become a reporter, I am glad I got experience in every field of journalism," Santana said. "Working for my hometown newspaper helped me figure out how to find local news. It taught me the rules of journalism and helped me build my resume."

Over the summer, Santana worked with Dumas Clarion Publisher Linna Jones and covered city meetings and events. He cites his favorite stories of the summer as those involving his high school classmates. He wrote a feature story about [Maria Lopez](#), who has returned to Dumas to become the parent center coordinator and middle school band director, as well as an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony for a new business, Raye Haven Salon, that is located at the site of a once vacant Bumper to Bumper shop.

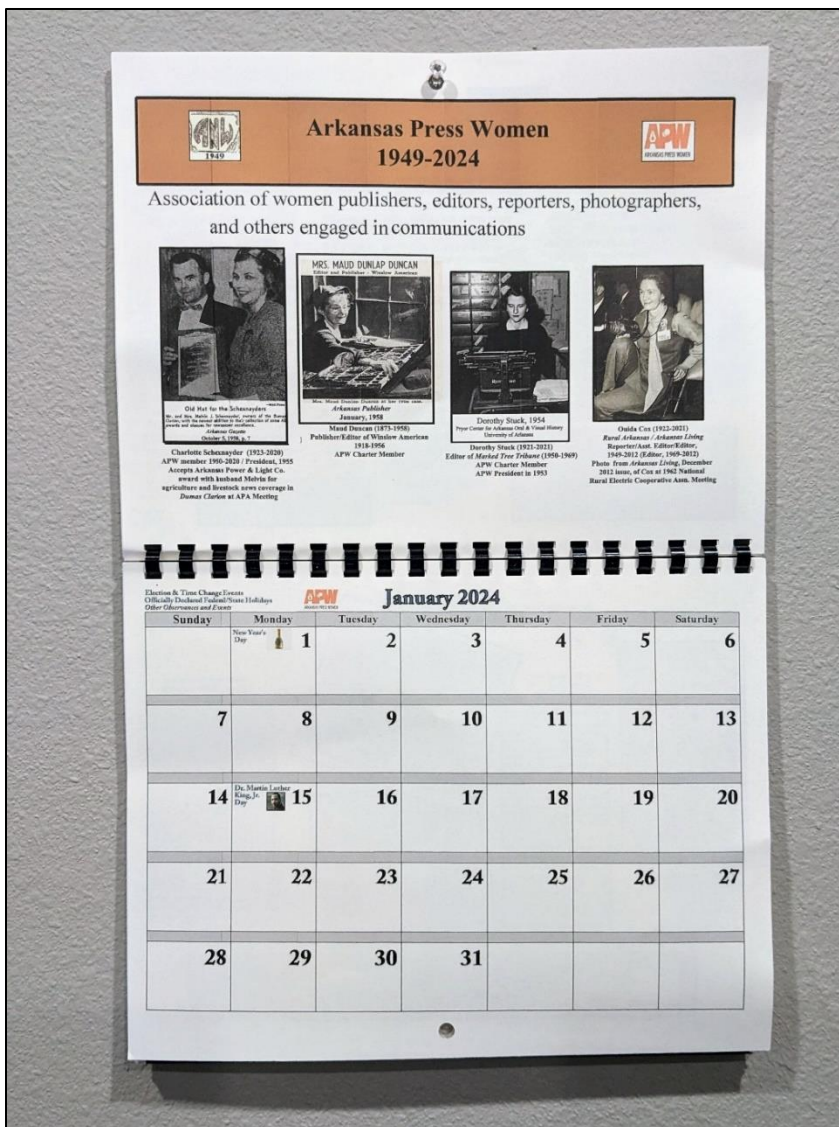
"This summer I felt like an official reporter," Santana said. "I had more responsibility and learned time management skills. This internship has already helped my career and will continue to do so in the future."

During the fall semester, Santana completed an internship at KATV and credits landing the internship to the experience he received at the Dumas Clarion.

At UA Little Rock, Santana also serves as a reporter for the student newspaper, the Forum, as well as co-vice president and social media chair for the Hispanic/Latinx Initiative, all while running his part-time photography business. He will graduate in May with a bachelor's degree in mass communication with a concentration in journalism.

For other students who are considering completing a summer newspaper internship, Santana advised them to take chances and ask plenty of questions.

"Put yourself out there and don't be scared to make mistakes because you will learn from them," Santana said. "In this industry, you have to network. For students who are taking an internship, don't just ask questions. Make sure that you make an impression."



Celebrating APW’s 75th anniversary through history

by Catherine Nolte

Have you received your APW 75th anniversary calendar?

Historian Wendy Plotkin designed the calendar featuring articles, photographs and additional historical documents outlining the organization’s impact on the state and region.

[Read more about Wendy in the next article, on p. 7]


The 75th anniversary calendars have been mailed to APW members. If you have not received a calendar or would like to receive one as a non-member, please contact Wendy Plotkin at wplotkin66@gmail.com.

Celebrating APW's 75th anniversary through history


by **Catherine Nolte** (<https://arkansaspresswomen.org/author/cnolte2023/>) | Jan 8, 2024
 | [APW History](https://arkansaspresswomen.org/category/apw-history/) (<https://arkansaspresswomen.org/category/apw-history/>)



Arkansas Press Women 1949-2024




Association of women publishers, editors, reporters, photographers,
and others engaged in communications



Old Hat for the Schexnayders
Mr. and Mrs. Melvin L. Schexnayder, owners of the Rural Electric Center, with the newest addition to their collection of antique hats and shoes for vintage occasions.
Arkansas Gazette
October 5, 1958, p. 7

Charlotte Schexnayder (1923-2020)
APW member 1950-2020 / President, 1955
Accepts Arkansas Power & Light Co. award with husband Melvin for agriculture and livestock news coverage in *Dumas Clarion* at APA Meeting




MRS. MAUD DUNLAP DUNCAN
Editor and Publisher - *Winslow American*
January, 1958

Maud Duncan (1873-1958)
Publisher/Editor of *Winslow American*
1918-1956
APW Charter Member




Dorothy Stack, 1954
Paper Center for Arkansas Oral & Visual History
University of Arkansas

Dorothy Stack (1921-2021)
Editor of *Marked Tree Tribune* (1950-1949)
APW Charter Member
APW President in 1953





Ouida Cox (1922-2021)
Rural Arkansas / Arkansas Living
Reporter/Asst. Editor/Editor,
1949-2012 (*Editor*, 1969-2012)
Photo from *Arkansas Living*, December 2012 issue, of Cox at 1962 National Rural Electric Cooperative Assn. Meeting

Election & Time Change Events
Officially Declared Federal/State Holidays
Other Observances and Events



January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	New Year's Day  1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

This year marks Arkansas Press Women's 75th anniversary. Founded in 1949 by Roberta Fulbright, we remain true to our mission: supporting and empowering communicators across Arkansas.

To take a deep dive into our organization's history, join Wendy Plotkin in her work to preserve, highlight and celebrate the accomplishments of our members.

Wendy Plotkin became the historian of APW in 2021, drawn by the involvement of her brother, Richard and sister-in-law Helen.

She earned her doctorate in urban history from the University of Illinois at Chicago, studying how racial discrimination impacted housing development. She was also a co-founder of H-Net, an organization connecting historians through more than 100 forums, which has been running for over 20 years.

Through these opportunities, she combined her passions for history and for increasing access to resources through the internet, passions that she brings into her work as the APW historian.

"I have never felt so happy, doing the work I love so much," Plotkin said. "I just feel very fortunate."

Along with the ongoing digitization of APW papers and files, Plotkin has worked intensively on projects including researching the lives and careers of Roberta Fulbright, Dorothy Stuck and Nan Snow.

She also created a digital version of Horizons: 100 Arkansas Women of Achievement, published by APW in 1980. (The book can be accessed at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10JD8amaQ4D4aIQxY6R1YQs2qsiIBEWL/view>)

For the 75th anniversary of APW, Plotkin designed a calendar featuring articles, photographs and additional historical documents outlining the organization's impact on the state and region. She said she felt as if the project was a perfect culmination of her previous three years working as historian.

"When I sat down and began to look at the papers, oh my god, there was so much material," Plotkin said. "I looked at them with a historian's eyes. I found a lot of material that was just perfect to be displayed online and in something like a calendar."

For Plotkin, the history of APW impacts the mission that unites members and draws new communicators to the fold. It also helps leadership to see the challenges the organization has overcome in order to shape future goals.

"This is the perfect time for APW ... I feel that an organization with the rich history of APW, especially its founder who is somewhat unique, will attract people, and people will be willing to stay on as members longer if there is a strong sense of identification with the organization."

"I believe our history will be important, not just for Arkansas historians but I think anybody who studies the history of journalism or of women in general will find it interesting," Plotkin said.

The 75th anniversary calendars have been mailed to APW members. If you have not received a calendar or would like to receive one as a non-member, please contact Wendy Plotkin at wplotkin66@gmail.com.

Enter the Arkansas Press Women 2024 Communications Contest — Initial deadline Jan. 17

by Richard Plotkin

The Arkansas Press Women (APW) Professional Communications Contest provides an opportunity for entrants to include their best work in a respected competition. The state contest, now accepting entries for 2024 through an initial deadline of noon on Jan. 17, also provides a benefit to APW

The contest is the largest source of funds for the organization, which is a Section 501(c)6 not-for-profit organization. Net cash flow attributable to the contest in 2023 exceeded \$2,500. APW uses these funds to award an annual \$1,000 college scholarship and for other purposes that promote the professional development of its members and First Amendment rights.

"Beyond the thrill of recognition, participating in the Arkansas Press Women contest is an opportunity to showcase your exceptional work, elevate your skills and gain valuable feedback from industry experts," APW President Angelita Faller said. "It's not just a competition; it's a celebration of excellence, a chance to learn from the best, and a stepping stone for personal and professional growth. I encourage every member and Arkansas communicator to seize this opportunity, share your stories, and let your talents shine because every voice deserves to be heard and celebrated."

All else equal, the profitability of the state contest increases with each entry submitted.

In 2024, for entries submitted after noon on Jan. 17, a one-time processing fee of \$25 will be charged in addition to regular entry fees. The final deadline for books is noon on Jan. 31; for all other entries, noon on Feb. 7.

Entries in the professional contest, which includes a collegiate section, must have been published or broadcast in calendar year 2023.

The categories and category requirements for the state contest are described at <https://nfpwcontest.secure-platform.com/a/page/professional-communications-contest/professional-category-requirements>

on the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) website.

The link at <https://nfpwcontest.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/AR/home> takes you to the Arkansas contest home page, from which entries can be submitted in the professional or high school contests. There is information on this page about entry fees and deadlines, which differ in the two contests. Entries also are being accepted in the high school contest.

An entrant in the Arkansas professional contest does not need to be a member of Arkansas Press Women, but entry fees are lower for APW members. An entry that places first in the Arkansas contest advances to the national tier conducted by NFPW, but only if the recipient is a member of NFPW. For a non-member, the deadline to join NFPW for these entries is March 15.

Join or renew now at <https://arkansaspresswomen.org/about-apw/>

Individuals with entries that place in the Arkansas contest will be recognized at an APW event in spring 2024. Results will be posted on the APW website and social media platforms.

Awards in the national contest will be presented during dinner on June 22, 2024, which is the final night of the annual NFPW Conference, to be held in St. Louis, Missouri. Information about the conference is posted at <https://www.nfpw.org/2024-conference-st-louis>

Questions about the professional contest should be sent to co-directors Kristin Higgins at arkpresswomen@yahoo.com or Richard Plotkin at rplotkin@conwaycorp.net.

Best Reads

This space is reserved for recent best work of women communicators in Arkansas. Have a nomination? Send a submission for our next newsletter to arkpresswomen@yahoo.com.

Check Out:

- **McKenna Knott-Debord** (*The Sentinel-Record*) highlights the spiritual journey of [Rev. Leslie Roper of First Presbyterian Church](#) (<https://www.hotsr.com/news/2023/dec/17/power-in-the-pulpit-leslie-roper-leads-in-non/>) in Hot Springs, while examining the challenges women in the clergy face.
- **Ellen Kreth**, (*The Madison County Record*) traveled to Fayetteville, W. Va. to see how the designation of the New River Gorge National River as a national park and preserve [impacted the local community](#) (<https://www.mcrecordonline.com/stories/changes-afloat-for-nations-newest-park-and-preserve,34211>) — the same designation recently considered for the Buffalo National River.

Communicator's Corner

What is inspiring you? Discover a new tool? Share with us and we will include it in the next newsletter.

Preparing for election coverage: safety toolkit

It's 2024, which means the state presidential primary and general election will be here before we know it. The Committee to Project Journalists has released an extensive safety kit for reporters covering elections, including assessing risk, storing data securely, managing stress and more.

Access the guide at <https://cpj.org/journalist-safety-elections/>

In a pickle? Contact the SPJ Ethics Hotline

If you are facing an ethical dilemma in your reporting, the Society of Professional Journalists is here to help. Members of the Society's ethics committee will coach you using the Code of Ethics. The hotline also offers support and resources for students. *Note: This is for ethical questions only. This hotline does not answer questions about legal issues.*

Contact the hotline at <https://www.spj.org/ethicshotline.asp>

Moral courage and messy feelings — managing emotions in the newsroom

- Journalists are human. Just like the variety of stories we cover and people we interact with, our emotions can run the gamut, especially in tense situations. [Journalism.co.uk](https://www.journalism.co.uk) shares emotional management strategies and the importance of supportive newsroom leadership.

Read more at <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/emotions-in-journalism/s2/a1103293/?fbclid=IwAR3Ef5-YxgYlVlIH8CHM23ukAxXrQehfjhAJ66ZGKLmEFtKNvyTa7ozUeGM>

In case you missed it:

The Arkansas Legislature passed an amended Freedom of Information Act in September, allowing records related to Arkansas officials' security to be shielded from public view. A new grassroots group, Arkansas Citizens for Transparency, is petitioning to protect FOIA through an Arkansas Constitutional Amendment.

Read more at:

<https://arcitizens4transparency.org/#:~:text=Arkansas%20Citizens%20for%20Transparency%20is,are%20unit ed%20in%20this%20effort>



Established 1949 - APW is a professional organization dedicated to leadership, professional development and networking opportunities for professional communicators in journalism, public information, business, education and government. Become a member today at www.nfpw.org.

Contact us at:

ArkPressWomen@yahoo.com