

NLN FEATURE

Hurricane Alley: **News Librarians Weather** **the Storms**

Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne. Florida was pounded by four hurricanes in six weeks. An unprecedented event? In fact, you'd have to look back to Texas in 1886 to find the last time that four hurricanes hit a state in one storm season.

And let's not forget Tropical Storm Bonnie who opened the door for them all.

Here, four colleagues share what it was like preparing for, working during, and coping with these storms:

Marjorie Bril, *The Stuart News*

(Editor's note: This was an email sent to me that Marjorie allowed me to use for publication)

It has been so hectic here and I knew I just wouldn't be able to write anything for you or even have the time to properly respond so I'm glad you sent me a follow-up email.

We have three daily newspapers here and all three buildings were hit very hard. Many employees no longer have homes or power. The power just came back on after two weeks. I just got back to my office today (September 20) for the first time in almost three weeks. It had been unsafe to enter. The inside is all torn apart due to rain and now mold damage. The printing facility where I was working when the hurricane hit—an entire seven story wall blew out in the room next to me. The sound was so loud I thought it was a car hitting the roof. A selected staff worked trying to get

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In preparation for Hurricane Frances, officials at the Dreher Park Zoo in West Palm Beach moved these spoonbills and ibises into the women's restroom at the park.

Photo: Damon Higgins/The Palm Beach Post.

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KATHRYN PEASE

When working for a news organization, there are seldom any dull moments. Since taking on the task of managing editor of *News Library News*, the news has been anything but run of the mill. We have just made it through another hotly contested presidential election cycle, and we have seen Mother Nature wield her devastation repeatedly. These stories are just the tip of the iceberg—or should I say top of the volcano in a nod to Mount St. Helens?

In this issue, you'll hear how some of our Florida colleagues dealt with four unwanted visitors named Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne. As for the political maelstrom, **Jennifer Aleknavage** of LexisNexis and the New York Public Library's **John Ganly** give us an insider's view into working the Republican National Convention.

You'll also be introduced to NLN's newest staff members:

Amy Disch, library assistant at the *Wisconsin State Journal and Capital Times* and University of Wisconsin Madison December 2004 graduate is our new Library Profiles editor. **Jennifer O'Neill**, library director at *The Florida Times-Union*, takes on the People column. A new feature is "Who Wants to Be a News Librarian?" by **Angelica Cortez**, a part-time news librarian at the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. Of course, **Jennifer Evert** will continue her "Notes from the Chair" column.

For the next two years I will be looking for volunteers, so if you have ideas for stories or regular features you'd like to see, please don't hesitate to contact me. Would you like to see the return of Tech Tips or Intranet Q&A? Is there some "hot topic" that you are itching to know more about? Please consider giving your time even if it's to make a suggestion. This is your newsletter, and your input is vital.

In closing, I'd like to thank **Ron Larson** and **Leigh Poitinger** for getting me into this mess! Seriously, I appreciate their nominating me for this role and their guidance in publishing this issue. It is truly an honor to give something back to this group which has been so incredibly helpful to me over the years.

Here's to some good news!

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



By JENNIFER SMALL
EVERT

Hope everyone is enjoying a lovely fall. I'm sure newsrooms across the country have been busy with election coverage.

In my last column, I outlined a couple of issues that will be very important for the News Division this year, namely membership and professional development. I would like to focus this column on the latter—professional development.

In my mind, one of the reasons that people join an organization like SLA is for the professional development opportunities. Many of us have had the chance to attend the annual conference and I'm sure everyone will agree that the wealth of programming and networking opportunities at the conference help us all improve our skills as news librarians. But in recent years we've heard quite a bit about a crisis in news libraries. The journalism world is changing, more and more reporters and editors are doing their own research, technology is facilitating the archiving of content, and news librarians are thinking of new ways to become vital components of the newsroom. In times like these, professional development opportunities are vital. While the conference is a great place to address issues common to all, I think you often lack the time necessary to really examine the challenges and identify opportunities to overcome them. This is why I am such a fan of workshop programs, similar to those available at Poynter and IRE/NICAR.

Several years ago, while I was working at the *San Antonio Express-News*, I was given the opportunity to attend a Poynter seminar on News Librarianship. At the time, **Nora Paul** was teaching the course. I found that seminar to be extremely rewarding on several levels. First, it gave me an opportunity to get away from the newsroom and really focus on some issues that our department wanted to address. Second, it allowed me to network with some really great people and hear stories of not only the problems and issues that other news librarians were facing, but also the successes that were being enjoyed by everyone. Finally, because the program was focused on developing action plans,

everyone walked away with specific goals and objectives to bring back to their newsrooms and a core group of colleagues with whom they could share their trials and tribulations along the way.

This year the News Division and the Poynter Institute collaborated to bring back a very valuable seminar for news librarians. The program was entitled, *Mission Critical: Reshaping News Librarianship for the 21st Century*. The sessions focused on the challenges facing managers of news libraries and looked at issues like expanding beyond the newsroom and leadership techniques. We received about 40 applications for the 17 slots available and, by all accounts, had a very successful four days in St. Pete. The courses were taught by Poynter's Paul Pohlman; **Kathy Foley**, *San Antonio Express-News*; **Teresa Leonard**, *The News & Observer* [Raleigh]; **Laura Soto-Barra**, *The Post-Standard* [Syracuse]; and **Deb Wolfe**, *St. Petersburg Times*.

The News Division will continue to push to create this type of programming. Because of support from both Heritage Microfilm and NewsBank, we were able to waive registration fees for News Division members. Poynter is very willing to work with us to keep this program going. Currently, I am working with the team outlined above to plan our next offering in the first half of 2005. Our next session will again focus on leadership issues, but after that program, we plan to address hot topics for news researchers and extend programming to any researcher in a news library.

I'm hopeful that the News Division can also begin to look for other groups with which to partner. I've always thought the traveling workshops provided by IRE/NICAR would be a good model to follow. If anyone has any ideas on things that would be particularly valuable for the News Division membership, please let me know.

In the meantime, keep an eye out for calls for applications for the Poynter seminar in 2005 and enjoy the last couple of months of the year!

Librarians join elephant stampede through NYC's midtown

By JENNIFER ALEKNAVAGE, LEXISNEXIS AND JOHN GANLY, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Special Libraries Association, the New York City Host Committee, the New York Public Library, and LexisNexis teamed up to provide on- and off-site research help beginning August 28 to an estimated 15,000 journalists at the Republican National Convention in New York. Factiva, Information USA and OneSource also donated access to their resources.

The New York City Host Committee's concierge desk served as the central hub for inquiries. The question intake center, known as Information Center 2004, allowed members of the press to place queries through a web site, by telephone and through "walk-up."

In many cases, questions required searching through LexisNexis' and the New York Public Library's extensive archives.

"By working with the New York City Host Committee and librarians from the New York Public Library and SLA, we created a central and convenient hub for information," said **Dawn Conway**, vice president of Content and Business Development for LexisNexis.

To serve specific needs of the media, a special LexisNexis Campaign Center 2004 was staffed with LexisNexis researchers and located near the concierge desk in the James A. Farley Post Office Building. In this center, LexisNexis computer terminals provided access to its database of more than 32,000 news, business, government and legal sources, along with an exclusive compilation of Campaign 2004 resources. The Campaign 2004 online site contains breaking news on all relevant issues, interviews with candidates, perspectives on the candidates' positions, full public opinion polls on the issues, and an archive of news surrounding the election and vital U.S. political issues.



At the convention, LexisNexis releases the Headline of the Day for journalists.

Photo: William Shade/LexisNexis.

LexisNexis also provided news of the day to journalists so they could use the information for their talk shows and campaign-related articles.

One of the most popular headlines of the day was a press release talking about how a LexisNexis search revealed that the expatriate vote could play role in determining next president.

Questions that couldn't be answered onsite, such as those needing historical or statistical resources, were referred to the New York Public Library's Information Central 2, a volunteer professional librarian operation.

John Ganly, Assistant Director for Collections at the Science, Industry and Business Library (SIBL) of the New York Public Library modeled the service after a similar activity, which he designed for the 1992 Democratic National Convention in New York City.

In conjunction with **Pamela Rollo**, Manager of NYPL Express, the fee-based

information service of the library and President-elect of SLA, a core of SLA members was assembled between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. to answer email and phone questions from the press.

The operation was housed at SIBL and over 80 questions were answered.

Questions ranged from the very detailed, such as identifying all of the individual organizations which benefited from the Faith Based Initiatives sponsored by the federal government to the short but tricky, such as the height (not elevation) of Casper Mountain in Wyoming. Most of the questions fell into the biographical or legislative category.

Conway said, "We all had a common goal—to provide the best information for journalists." She added, "We were able to help journalists with a variety of inquiries, such as tracking down voting records, speaker backgrounds, and candidate mentions and trends in the press." All in all, it was a successful team effort.

PEOPLE



BY JENNIFER O'NEILL

On the Move

Susan M. Kaufman joined the staff of the Fortune Magazine Business Information Research Center as Research Librarian in May 2004. She was formerly the Director of the Knowledge Center at Manning Selvage & Lee, which closed its New York department at the end of 2003. Susan returned to Time Inc. after a 10-year hiatus, having worked at the Time Research Library from 1984 to 1994.

After 14 years with the *Los Angeles Times*, Library Director **Dorothy Ingebretsen** retired on August 26th. She is looking forward to spending her newly acquired leisure time sailing, traveling and visiting her new granddaughter, Jessica.

Cary Schneider, the *Times*' Manager of News Research, has been named Director, succeeding Dorothy. Cary, who has worked at the *Times* for 14 years, oversees a staff of 27, which is responsible for providing a broad range of information services, from research to electronic archiving of *Times* content.

The Palm Beach Post Editorial Library is very pleased to announce that their newest researcher is **Larry Boytano**, who began work on October 11th. Larry had been at American Media Inc. since 2000, doing research for editors and writers. He also has a little radio in his past and freelances for *Closer* magazine from time to time.

Another AMI alum, **Maria Peters**, took an early retirement from that company and moved to Palm Coast, Florida. She is doing consulting work and pursuing her other passion, volunteering at animal shelters.

Liz Donovan took retirement from the *Miami Herald* and moved to the mountains of North Carolina (Murphy, in the far-western corner, to be exact). She'll be working part-time online for the *Herald*, but mostly will be blogging more and looking for other interesting things to do.

Mike Meiners, Editorial Research Manager at the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, resigned that post to accept the position of Director of News Research at the *St. Louis*

Post-Dispatch.

Gail Bulfin is the *Sun-Sentinel's* new library manager. Gail's new title is Editor for Newsroom Research, Training and Readership. Gail first came to the *Sun-Sentinel* in 1986 and has held a number of positions in and out of the library. A former "Staffer of the Year," for the past four years she has coordinated the area's National Writers Workshop.

Carol Kasel, longtime librarian at the *Rocky Mountain News*, recently left the News to become a Configuration Analyst with Raytheon in Denver. She earned her master's degree in library science at the University of Arizona in 1987 and joined the News as a "marker" in August of that year. In 1989 she became Database Librarian and then Assistant Library Director in 1995. In 2002 the News' library merged with New Media and Carol moved to the newsroom as Research Librarian.

Ander Murane joined the *Rocky Mountain News* in September as Librarian. He is also the new Secretary of the Colorado Association of Libraries. Before moving out West, Ander worked for the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Business Department from 1998-2004 where he was a business reference librarian. During this time he moonlighted for three years as an adjunct professor for Point Park University. He earned his MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh in 1998.

Several changes have occurred at *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*:

The Information Services Deputy Director, **Justin Scroggs**, left the AJC in September to take a position as Director of Publisher Services for NewsBank Inc.'s Media Services Division.

Jennifer Ryan is now the Deputy Director. Jennifer joined the AJC's News Research department in 1998 as a researcher. Before coming to the AJC, Jennifer was the Library Team Leader at the Greensboro, *NC News & Record*. In recent

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Off the Air: Behind the Scenes at the NPR Library



By AMY DISCH

The National Public Radio Library and its staff support the reference and research needs of the journalists, editors and producers who create the programming, about 300 hours of which is original, for NPR and its more than 750 member stations.

NPR consists of two libraries: the Reference Library and the Broadcast Library. The former is staffed by **Kee Malesky**, **Alphonse Vinh** and **Mary Glendinning**. The Broadcast Library is currently in the process of filling one position, which will bring its staff total to 7.5. Senior Librarian **Rob Robinson** oversees both libraries.

Kee Malesky earned her master's degree in library science from The Catholic University of America. She worked as a cataloger in the Broadcast Library for three years and as a staff librarian for the program *Performance Today* before joining the Reference Library in 1990. Kee has many claims to fame, one of the more notable being the lending of her name to the main character in producer Josh Seftel's 2003 documentary *Breaking the Mold: The Kee Malesky Story*. Kee is married to NPR senior producer Robert Malesky, who calls his wife "the queen of NPR's reference librarians."

Alphonse Vinh joined NPR in 1996 after several years working at the Yale University Library. In addition to his master's degree in library science, he has also completed graduate work in education, social work and theology. Alphonse writes a monthly online column,



NPR broadcast librarians front row (L-R): Beth Howard, Maureen Clements, Robert Goldstein, Denise Chen. Back row: Rob Robinson (Senior Librarian), Dan Onstad, Katherine Baer. Missing is Giselle Foss.

"Musings," in which he discusses the various books and articles he has read and points out some of their more interesting aspects. He is an active member of SLA and currently serves on the board of its Washington D.C. chapter.

The most recent addition to the staff is Mary Glendinning, who joined the Reference Library this past May. Mary's experiences include working at ABC News, LexisNexis and the Freedom Forum. Although she has worked in a variety of environments, she says, "The news library setting has been the most compelling so far. The combination of subject matter, resources and colleagues is extraordinary."

The Reference Library's collections are comprised of 2,500 to 3,000 books and around 100 jour-

nal and magazine titles. According to Rob, the library has "as many electronic databases as we can afford," among them LexisNexis, Factiva, EBSCO, Gale, ProQuest, CQ, Encyclopedia Britannica and OED, and describes their use as being "constant." He adds that "Kee is a big fan of printed reference books, so we have a good collection of them as well." The staff clips articles from both *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* and the resulting clip files are actively used by NPR's reporters and editors when they are beginning to work on stories.

The Broadcast Library contains copies of every NPR program aired since the station's founding in 1971. It also has spoken word (speeches and the like) and music

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By ANGELICA CORTEZ

News librarianship seems to be an exciting and challenging profession, as most of you reading this already know. But I just have one question for the news librarians out there: How does one go about becoming a news librarian? Internships in news libraries? An MLS degree? Maybe a journalism/mass communications degree? An interest in news? Well, welcome to my journey.

For those of you who don't know me, I am a recent MLS graduate seeking full-time employment in a news library. I actually have done all of the above (two internships in news libraries and currently working part-time for a news library; MLS degree; mass communications degree; very interested in news; check, check, check!), but still I have yet to land a full-time position.

Why should you care? Well, you might not. But you also might be interested in this

as it relates to the profession. Are there standards in hiring news librarians? What skills should employers be looking for and what skills should potential candidates have? Is there really a need to recruit more news librarians? Are the positions in news libraries dwindling, and if so, what does this mean for the profession?

I obviously don't have the answers to all of these questions, but I can tell you my experiences from an aspiring news librarian's point of view. So forget about those silly reality TV shows like "Who Wants to Marry My Dad?" and "Who Wants to be a Superhero." Join me in "Who Wants to be a News Librarian?" and find out just what it takes while struggling to enter the profession.

Angelica Cortez currently works part-time as the night librarian at the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.

New Members

April-August 2004

Fiona Alexander

*Student
Sheffield, UK*

Vivienne Beckett

San Antonio, TX

Gordon Belt

*Freedom Forum
Nashville, TN*

Stephanie Blundell

*AIC Investment Service, Inc.
Burlington, ON*

Kenia Brown

*Student
Ft. Lauderdale, FL*

Karen Buntin

*Student
Hobbs, NM*

Lizabeth Cole

*Minnesota Public Radio
St. Paul, MN*

Robert Daicopoulos

*CNN
Los Angeles, CA*

Antonia DiGregorio

*Student
Oceanside, NY*

Megan Doherty

*Student
Boston, MA*

Roger Dudley

*Student
Denver, CO*

Barbara Eales

*Ventura County Library
Camarillo, CA*

Melinda Figueiredo

*Student
Newark, NJ*

Corinne Florin

*Northwestern Health Sciences
University
Bloomington, MN*

Gary Gengler

*Student
New Hope, MN*

Jodi Gregory

*Access Information Services
Kettering, OH*

Leigh Gusts

*Council on Foreign Relations
New York, NY*

Wendy Hall

*Columbia College Library
Chicago, IL*

Linda Holmes

*Brooklyn Law School Library
Brooklyn, NY*

Sage Hulsebus

*Freedom Forum Library
Arlington, VA*

Judith Israel

*Penguin Group USA Library
New York, NY*

Pamela Katz

*Student
Alpharetta, GA*

Francis Kim

*Student
Thornhill, ON*

Gloria Knotts

*Factiva
Washington, DC*

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Off the Air: Behind the Scenes at the NPR Library

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NPR reference librarians Kee Malesky, Mary Glendinning, and Alphonse Vinh.

collections. Each program is cataloged according to content by the staff.

The libraries are staffed seven days a week, from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time Monday through Friday and on weekends from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Generally the first librarian to arrive in the morning assumes responsibility for the clipping of newspaper articles, while the last librarian to leave at the end of the day compiles a summary of what happened that night and e-mails it to whomever is scheduled to arrive first the next morning.

What happens in between is anything but typical. Mary says that staff is called on to “answer anything from ready reference, such as phone numbers and help with pronunciations, to more in-depth research requests along the lines of ‘I need to know all there is to know about this person.’” The librarians may have some time to answer questions or they may literally have only minutes or seconds to supply information for programming that is either about to or already on the air. “Because our programming airs at all hours and our reporters are literally all over the world, there isn’t a real

pattern or rhythm to the day.”

When asked about the ways in which the library markets itself, Rob commented that it helps that the libraries “are happily situated in the middle of the news floors, so we are literally in the face of many reporters and editors.” When a new NPR employee is hired, he/she is required to attend a mandatory orientation session in both libraries. In addition, the library offers training and refresher sessions on its databases, as well as occasional training on how to use Google effectively. It maintains an intranet site, which is a resource for reporters looking for information on specific subjects and topics. The library also sends staff lists of its new resources and some of the librarians take part in editorial meetings. However, Rob says, “One of the best ways to market the library is simply to walk through the newsroom and ask people what they are working on.” Mary adds that “the library’s everyday work is a form of marketing—answering questions with the highest level of accuracy and timeliness.”

What skills do members of the NPR Library staff need to possess? Rob says they must have “an interest in news, the desire to learn new reference tools and the ability to think like a journalist.” This last point is particularly important because the librarians must be able to hear reporters’ questions and then to understand what it is they really are asking for. In addition, “good news librarians need to have an interest in using technology and must be willing to embrace and master it.” And don’t forget being able to work under the pressure of constant deadlines. “You should be curious, well-educated and well-read,” adds Mary. “You should be able to recognize when to change your tactics when formulating a search strategy and when to ask for help. That’s true when working in any library setting, but particularly important in a news library where it’s paramount to know what search methods will yield the best results in the timeliest manner.”

In the midst of an election year, the editorial desks hire additional staff to handle the majority of extra duties that emerge; however, Rob says the library staff performs “extra work putting together election books online.” Mary has also stayed late on the evenings of the recent presidential debates to assist reporters with fact-checking. (“An intense but fun” experience, she says.) On Election Day, one of the librarians will stay late into the night as results come in from around the country.

Kee describes an election year as very different from other years, filled with a much higher level of intensity. “Every waking moment, I’m focused on preparing the huge amount of background material we need for election night.” That includes working extra hours on her days off and using available time during her work hours to compile details on the rosters of all races, information on races that NPR considers ‘hot,’ maps, polls and fundraising information.” Kee arranges these materials for a print edition, while Mary organizes and posts them to the library’s intranet. Many have to be added at the last minute.

What changes are envisioned for the two libraries? Rob feels that as “NPR continues to grow, the library must respond by hiring additional staff, staffing for longer hours, offering more online databases and providing additional opportunities for the training of new staff. Mary’s view is that “there will continue to be a need for librarians who can find, navigate, analyze and act as a conduit to information. The sources and their formats will change, but that shouldn’t pose a problem to a good librarian.”

As this goes to print, one major change has already occurred. Rob, who joined NPR right out of library school in 1974, left his position at the station. The week of October 18th was his last on the job. Rob and his wife, Julie, are moving to a little beach town on the Gulf Coast of Florida. Best of luck to you in your future endeavors, Rob!

PEOPLE

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months, Jennifer has managed technology and web-related projects. She is also the News Research project manager for implementing the new SCC archive, which goes live this fall.

AJC News Research biz-whiz, **Nisa Asokan**, moved to part-time. Nisa cut back her hours so she could spend more time on her book and music publishing company, Fifth Planet Press.

That same week, the *AJC* welcomed back **Dorothy Shea** as a part-time researcher. Dorothy worked in the *AJC's* News Research department from the early 1990s until 1999 when she moved to Florida where she worked part-time at another Cox paper, *The Palm Beach Post*. She and her husband Paul, who's now an *AJC* editor, moved back to the Atlanta area last spring ahead of hurricane season.

Recent changes at *The New York Times*:

Charlie Robinson, Director of Information Services, and **Tony Zirilli**, who was Charlie's assistant, retired over the summer. A re-evaluation of the department led to the creation of three deputy positions:

Linda Amster, who has been *The Times'* News Research Manager, has been named Deputy of Information/Research. Her focus will be on continuing to refine and deliver reliable, resourceful research and to explore ways to push tailored information to meet the needs of reporters and editors.

Margot Williams has been named Deputy of Information/Database Research. Margot will work with editors and reporters to identify and obtain databases that will prove useful on a daily basis and to help train in their effective use. Margot, former Research Editor at *The Washington Post*, has worked and taught as part of programs offered by IRE/NICAR, the investigative reporting group, Poynter, Freedom Forum and other journalism groups.

Barbara Oliver, a *Times* researcher and former director of research at the *St. Petersburg Times*, becomes the new Deputy of Information/Library and Administration and will oversee the 60,000-volume library and its employees. She will take over many administrative duties, including identifying and negotiating for outside databases, managing the collections, developing appropriate training among the researchers and in the newsroom, and exploring new techniques for accuracy and integrity of information.

Awards & Acknowledgments

Business Week's **Susann Rutledge** was awarded a Salzburg Seminar Knight Fellowship to attend a week-long session called

"Libraries in the 21st Century." The seminar was held at the Schloss Leopoldskron in Salzburg, Austria and examined the major issues affecting libraries worldwide. The fellowship covers tuition, airfare, meals, and accommodations. Susann says she learned about the opportunity through NewsLib.

Darlean Spangenberger of *The Dallas Morning News* received a 1A byline for the story, "Criminal Checks Deficient." In analyzing county and state records, she and a reporter discovered thousands of county criminal records missing from the state's criminal convictions database, leading law officials to acknowledge that hundreds of thousands of records are missing from the state's system and that public safety is put at risk.

Researcher **Bonnie Ross** was a key player in *The Post-Standard's* [Syracuse] series showing how New York's leadership borrows billions of dollars for secret funds that are spent arbitrarily or on wasteful and politically motivated grants. She received a research credit for her work, which included identifying suspicious projects and finding charities that received grants and paid contributions in violation of federal tax law.



Congratulations!

Our new columnist, **Angelica Cortez** of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, was married on August 8th in a small outdoor ceremony in Corpus Christi, Texas. She and her husband, Jeff Polston, went to Disney World for their honeymoon, which was unfortunately interrupted by Hurricane Charley.

Hurricane Alley: News Librarians Weather the Storms

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out a paper—I was one of them. We published a small one-section paper everyday except one day—no advertising just stories and photos. We had to rename our paper to combine all three newspapers and called it the *Treasure Coast News*. We did not deliver them to the homes—we couldn't. We only distributed them to the shelters. We had the *Naples Daily News*, *The Palm Beach Post* or one of our four presses from time to time trying to print our paper for us. Having no power and no office has been very trying. I lived at our printing facility for four days working around the clock. I'm exhausted! Great showers but of course no beds. I slept in a chaise chair.

It's still far from getting back to normal around here. Everyone's nerves are shot. You really realize how unprepared you really are for a devastating hurricane.

Megan Gallup, *Daytona Beach News-Journal*

At the *Daytona Beach News-Journal*, we "hunkered down" for three hurricanes: Charley, Frances and Jeanne. As Charley approached the West Coast of Florida, there wasn't much concern in our area—no one expected it would be much of a storm by the time it traveled across the state, so preparation was minimal. But the storm knocked out electricity to our office for four days, though we had enough generator power to operate our computer systems and put out the paper.

After Charley, we perused the coverage by other newspapers and borrowed some of their ideas. The library was charged with compiling tons of hurricane-related information (we call them "Did you know?" boxes). We put together about 50 inches worth of hurricane factoids that were

Did You Know?

If you heard it once, you heard it a million times in recent weeks. Just what is the origin of the term "hunker down"?

It's believed that "hunker" has its roots in ancient Scandinavian language — the Old Norse word "huka" means "to squat." In the 18th century, the word hunker was first used in Scotland. The phrase "hunker down" can mean squatting close to the ground, seeking shelter, settling in or hiding out. "Hunker down" was popularized by President Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s.

— Compiled by News Researcher Karen Duffy

parceled out in the paper over the next few weeks (including the origin of the phrase "hunker down").

As Frances approached, everyone was a lot more cautious, anxious and expecting the worst. Windows in our building were boarded up. Managers held conference calls with other newspapers around the state in case papers needed to be printed at different locations. A team of editors, designers and systems experts was ready to travel elsewhere to prepare the paper if our building was severely damaged. There was enough lead-time during Frances to make backups of our digital archives, but not enough time to worry about old clippings and photos.

At one point during Jeanne's progress, it looked like she was going to go straight up the east coast of Florida, then make a quick left and head straight to Daytona Beach. Instead, she did a loop-the-loop and then hit further south. This time we were prepared with plastic tarps to put over our cabinets full of clippings and photos, as well as our stacks of contest papers, and more backups of the digital archives were made.

With each storm we learned lots of

lessons, which will prepare us for future weather emergencies (though hopefully there won't be any for a long time).

Sammy Alzofon, *The Palm Beach Post*

COVERING THE HURRICANE SEASON TO END ALL

Florida has had a record number of hurricanes make landfall in 2004: Charley on August 13, Frances on September 5, Ivan on September 16, and Jeanne on September 26. Frances and Jeanne made landfall in our circulation area; however, we covered all the storms, as well as their passage through the Caribbean. Our reporters and photographers were all over Florida and Alabama as well as Jamaica, the Bahamas, and Haiti. The Editorial Library here at *The Palm Beach Post*, which serves *The Post*, the *Palm Beach Daily News* and *La Palma*, has been staffed throughout these storms. We have a very large building generator, comfortable sleeping cots, and plenty of good food!

The storm plan for the paper is revised each year and everyone knows what they're responsible for ahead of time. The library posts it to our website and it also resides on the editorial system. The plan is large, comprehensive and it works. This is what a piece of it looks like:

SECOND WAVE (first full day of reporting after storm hits)

If you are designated "second wave," either stay home or go home after checking with your editor. If you come here (or stay here), you'll be put to work and still be expected to do your second-day assignment. Also note that if you're assigned to a place (a shelter, a fire station, a hospital...) you should make arrangements NOW for access (if necessary) and you should plan to stay there until the storm threat is over. That means pack a bag. Even if you're not assigned to a place, pack a bag. People will be sick or on vacation or out of touch so you may be sent to a shelter or who-knows as a substitute.

If you're assigned to a geographic location (a barrier island, for example) you need to make arrangements NOW for a place to stay. If you're assigned to a subject (animals,

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immigrants) you need to plug in now to whatever sources you can identify. As the storm progresses, you need to let the editors know whether you've discovered something of note so we can either devote your full time to that subject or send you in a different direction. In either case, be prepared for a change of direction as the storm turns. If you're designated to cover the Keys, for instance, you'll be called back (or off) if the storm is clearly headed for Vero Beach. Be ready to roll anywhere.



Hurricane Frances takes out Sammy Alzofon's mango tree causing a 2-week blackout at her home.

The library staff (one researcher and I staffed for Frances while I worked during Jeanne) helped with maps, contacts, addresses, and anything else that rolled in. That "second wave" is when it starts to get busy with the first questions related to emergency services before and during the storm.

Was there adequate time given for evacuation efforts? Did people go straight into harm's way? What of relief efforts and those who weren't being reached? What about the recovery process, such as the lack of insur-

ance adjusters where they're needed and when they're needed?

And what is the social fallout? Many people are homeless and unable to pay for new housing. Many are without jobs due to the storm. There is no money for food. Schools are closed. What happens with day care? (Martin and St. Lucie county schools were closed for a month and did not reopen until October 4.)

We had election questions: What kind of voter turnout can be expected in the general elections? What kind of turnout did Miami-Dade County experience after Hurricane Andrew?

We had people finding questions: Is there any way to find all Chevrolet Impala owners on a barrier island? (There was an Impala seen running barricades to return to the island and gets washed into the river.)

Our database editors really got a heavy load out of the hurricanes, with many extra open pages and photographs. There have been hundreds of stories and more than 400 photos for Hurricane Charley alone.

And there are personal struggles that are still going on amongst the library staff: damaged homes, loss of property, no elec-

tricity (my power was out for almost two weeks), emergency financial needs, exhaustion, disorientation, and distraction. For a light-hearted view, I highly recommend reading Dan Moffett's column in the Sunday, September 12 issue of *The Palm Beach Post* ("Unplugged, With Spam to Burn"). I think it is very, very funny and speaks to the personal experiences of us all (How can showers be cold when it's been 90 degrees each day for months?).

Many, many people have been left homeless by these storms. There is still debris to be hauled away and traffic lights to restore. Unlike many major stories we cover—the first anthrax death post-9/11, the space shuttle Challenger exploding on reentry, Bishop O'Connell resigning after admitting to incidents of sexual misconduct—this major story affected us all and continues to do so.

Jody Habayeb, *The Tampa Tribune*/WFLA News Channel 8 and TBO.com

IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, THE WORST OF TIMES: FLORIDA NEWS LIBRARIANS HUNKER DOWN DURING THE MOST ACTIVE HURRICANE SEASON IN HISTORY

As journalists, we look forward to opportunities to put all our skills, instincts, experience and training into action during major stories that will put us to the test. This year journalists in Florida and a few other southeastern states, as well as Caribbean countries, got 3 additional do-overs.

For eight weeks straight, the media, residents and volunteer workers from around the United States were subjected to category 2 - category 4 hurricanes. Approximately 2,177 people died of injuries during, or as a result of the storms. Haiti suffered the greatest loss of life. Florida suffered the most casualties as well as the greatest loss financially in the U.S this year.

We're a converged multi-media news operation here in our News Center, which

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Tampa Tribune staff front row (L-R): Frances Bekafigo, Renee Rohn, Buddy Jaudon, Jody Habayeb, Angie Drobnic Holan, Diane Grey. Back row: Kathy Winter, Ron Kolwak, Christine Perry, Melanie O'Bannon and Michael Messano.

Photo: Crystal Lauderdale/The Tampa Tribune.

***Hurricane Alley:* News Librarians Weather the Storms**

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houses *The Tampa Tribune*/WFLA News Channel 8 and TBO.com. We work under one roof and are all owned by our parent company Media General.

Executives made plans to evacuate our News Center during three of the four storms if the storm were a direct hit and a Category 3 or higher. Our operation sits right on the Hillsborough County River, which feeds into Tampa Bay, which leads to the Gulf of Mexico.

The plan was to set up shop for all three of our converged media platforms at the

University of South Florida, one of the few areas in Hillsborough County not surrounded by water. We would take over the ballroom at the Embassy Suites on campus, setting up a command center and newsroom capable of putting out at least 20 pages of news coverage during a major hurricane. A generator truck to be parked on campus would provide us with enough power to keep all partners publishing and broadcasting for up to two weeks if all power were lost or devastated by the storms.

WFLA would take over the university's fully equipped public TV station for their broadcasts. Every hotel room in the area was reserved for the most necessary journalists. Yes of course we're all necessary! But with a limited volume of publishing capabilities, why overstaff?

It's events that stretch our patience and strength to their limits that show what we're capable of. Before I could ask staff to adjust their schedules to work days and hours they weren't scheduled to, every person on the news library staff came forward on their own, suggesting workable schedules to get the job done.

We compiled research specific to our region the last time a hurricane hit our area on the Gulf Coast. Additionally, several years ago we compiled information boxes and timelines with more generic hurricane statistics, preparation tips, what the categories meant in terms of severity, as well as the top ten worst hurricanes ever and the worst to ever hit Florida.

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The idea that bad things happen over and over, so be prepared, didn't occur to me much until I attended the News Division's SLA program on "Planning for Disasters" at our annual conference in Philadelphia a few years ago.

We operated in a breaking news research mode when the first hurricane, Charley, was predicted to make a direct hit on Tampa August 13. As Charley made a last minute turn inland south of Sarasota—packing a wallop with sustained winds of 145 mph—we were reminded that as much as we think technology has been perfected to anticipate when, where, and the severity of natural disasters, Mother Nature has her own plan based on weather patterns.

We were still reporting on the devastation of that Category 4 hurricane, when Frances showed up on radar a mere 10 days later. A lumbering monstrosity the size of Texas, Frances came ashore in Florida as a strong Category 2 storm on September 5, killing 35, 23 of those in Florida.

Now two cleanup operations were ongoing in Florida and 10 days later, on September 16, Ivan hit as a Category 3 at landfall, with 130-mph winds, leaving 106 dead, 19 in Florida.

Now with thousands of volunteers from the Red Cross, Federal and State agencies, as well as electrical workers and clean up crews from all over the United States here to help, they and Floridians were at risk again, when nine days later, the fourth hurricane Jeanne hit: Jeanne, a Category 3 storm that killed more than 2,000 people. Most of those were Haitians, but an additional 8 were killed in Florida—the victims of the most active hurricane season on record. At no other time, have so many hurricanes hit one region in such close proximity to one another.



X Marks the spot where in Polk County, Florida, just miles from Tampa, three hurricanes in six weeks intersected. Map: Tribune Graphics.

News Channel 8 stayed on the air for hours on end. We became the news source of choice—a familiar voice, face and presence that viewers said they leaned on and appreciated to help them navigate this stress filled time. During one storm, Channel 8 stayed on air for 72 hours straight. There were 7 local radio stations who suspended programming and ran the audio of News Channel 8, reporting on what Federal and State emergency managers were recommending for all the regions of the state.

After the second storm, we realized that the news library had done all it could research-wise for the newspaper. There were so many reporters out gathering real people stories, that the focus wasn't research.

It was a harsh reality for us because we were ready, willing and able. However, we quickly got over it and realized it was time to pitch in and do all that was possible for WFLA & TBO.com.

Our station, which is an NBC affiliate, has a group of volunteers called 8's Army that has been trained to man telephones at our News Center answering viewer's questions. We found a new niche for researchers when it came to broadcasts around the

clock. The 8's Army volunteers were on hand offering to answer and guide viewers, along with TBO.com, to safety. The volunteers were not trained researchers equipped to search for answers to viewer questions, such as, "Is it safe to store food for long periods of time using dry ice?" We quickly mobilized a spot in the 8's Army headquarters just off our lobby, where a researcher worked using their laptop. When questions weren't coming that needed our help, we acted as reporters, calling the Emergency Operations Center for up-to-date reports on shelter availability.

What did our staff learn? A lot. Some of what we learned through the repetitive disasters is unique to converged media operations like ours, where one news library staff of 11 professionals, serve all 3 platforms, all with different advantages and strengths depending on where the storm was and how much time we had before landfall.

By the time we were on storm 3, little research was required. It was done and in the can. We were free to focus on "any" need at all—an extra person to do some reporting or compiling the latest shelter openings or closings.

You may not be in an area that experiences hurricanes, but you too will face your own disasters, natural or otherwise. Do your planning now. Disasters do happen, so be prepared and not surprised.

Tips, some unconventional, to consider:

- During the days leading to the big event, communicate your expectations about who is expected at work each day and when, based on what you know at the moment, by making them aware this is a moving target and so is the schedule.

Let your staff help with this; they'll come up with great ideas. Most are die-hard journalists who wouldn't want to be left out during the planning for or reacting to covering major events.

Remember you'll need a Team 1 and Team 2 that can spell Team 1 and so on after long hours and late nights of coverage.

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- Remember to include everyone on your team, even if their job description isn't daily research. You've hired a great staff of professionals who are smart and can adapt, especially during a crisis.
- Our philosophy is that everyone on the news library team is an essential part of our operation—whether they have family to consider or not. We consider it a privilege to work as journalists. We all have family. So we expect everyone to take their turn working when needed. That need may be after the storm in the form of overtime, to catch up with archiving, because Teams 1 and 2 have been over taxed.
- While you're standing ready to lend research support, archive stories and photos to keep up with archiving. We put news before the archiving when we can't do both.
- Be flexible and creative with staffing and the realities of the events as they progress.
- Time your research when it will most likely be appreciated. What would be most helpful for readers and viewers to know 7 days out, 3 days out, during the storm and afterward?
- Don't worry about what isn't in your job description. Offer to do whatever it takes to get the paper out, information online or through the broadcasts.
- Believe in yourselves. During times like this, major bonding happens as people pull together in the same direction for days on end.
- Desperate times call for desperate measures.
- Be kind and thoughtful of your staff and team-mates' needs, both emotionally and practically. They're dealing with the fear and anxiety, too, while reporting the event.
- The closer the impact of the storm and shortly afterward, broadcast media needs are greater than the daily newspapers.
- Break the rules occasionally during a disaster; it's comic relief. You'll have to twist my arm at our annual conference to get me to expand on this thought.
- Save all the research you do when it comes to tips, info, timelines and historical information, whether it makes it to publication or not. Disasters will happen again. When they do, you'll be more than half-way to your historical research goal.

Florida Hurricane Season 2004

Hurricane Charley

U.S. Landfall: Aug. 13, 2004 at Cayo Costa, just north of Captiva Island
Category at Landfall: 4
Maximum Sustained Winds: 145 mph.
Deaths: 36 (31 in Florida)
Estimated Insured Damage: \$7.4 billion

Hurricane Frances

U.S. Landfall: Sept. 5, 2004 at Sewall's Point, about 12 miles south of Port St. Lucie.
Category at Landfall: 2
Maximum Sustained Winds: 145 mph
Deaths: 35 (23 in Florida)
Estimated Insured Damage: \$4.1 billion

Hurricane Ivan

U.S. Landfall: Sept. 16, 2004 at Gulf Shores, Ala.
Category at Landfall: 3
Maximum Sustained Winds: 165
Deaths: 106 (19 in Florida)
Estimated Insured Damage: \$4 billion to \$10 billion

Hurricane Jeanne

U.S. Landfall: Sept. 25, 2004 near Stuart
Category at Landfall: 3
Maximum Sustained Winds: 120 mph
Deaths: Over 2,000, mostly in Haiti (8 in Florida)
Estimated Insured Damage: \$8 billion

Sources: National Weather Service, Associated Press

Research by: Tampa Tribune researcher, Angie Drobnic Holan

New Members

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Melissa Laico

*Student
Warwick, NY*

Oscar Leung

Hong Kong

Elisa Lewis

Atlanta, GA

Stephen Mayer

*U.S. House of Representatives
Library
Washington, DC*

Julia McCue

*Portland Press Herald
Portland, ME*

Jennifer Miller

*CNN
Washington, DC*

Melissa Nemchin

*ABC News
New York, NY*

Martha Reppetto

*Temple University Library
Philadelphia, PA*

Kelly Robinson

*Student
Washington, DC*

Stephanie Salmon

*Student
Vienna, VA*

Wallace Sanders

*Embassy of Kuwait
Washington, DC*

Diane Schwartz

*Access Intelligence
Potomac, MD*

Jon-Anne Sieffert

*PRN-Premier Retail
Networks
San Francisco, CA*

Alexander Smoljanski

*Integrum World Wide
Woodcliff Lake, NJ*

Ethan Starr

*BizMaven LLC
Bethesda, MD*

Tom Tierney

*Fairchild Publications
Library
New York, NY*

Phebe Tinker

*Chicago Tribune
Chicago, IL*

Snow Zhu

*Anti-Defamation League
New York, NY*