

Telescope

The Newsletter for Northern Star Alumni

Vol. 15

Fall 2012



Northern Star alumnus creates scholarship to honor mother

FELIX SARVER

NORTHERN STAR CAMPUS EDITOR

Although Mike Korcek's mother never had the chance to attend college during her life, in a way she will.

Josephine Korcek dropped out of high school after her sophomore year, but that didn't stop her from valuing education for herself or for her children.

She encouraged her son and her daughter, Debbie, to go to college.

After Debbie died in 1994, Josephine decided to earn a high school GED to cope. She received it at the age of 80.

"I think that says it all," Mike said. "It gave her something to do in those early periods of mourning."

Mike worked with the NIU Foundation to create the Josephine Korcek Memorial Scholarship Fund in honor of his mother, who passed away at age 94 on Oct. 15, 2011.

Mike said the scholarship is meant for students who work for the Northern Star and who are

either communications or journalism majors. The scholarship will award \$1,000 to recipients every fall semester. To qualify for the scholarship, a candidate must be a full-time student who is at least a sophomore and has at least a 3.0 grade



PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE KORCEK

Josephine Korcek with son Mike in 2003. Mike said his mom supported his journalism aspirations and that he was "quite proud" when she earned a GED at age 80.

point average. Candidates must be in good standing with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and must be doing editorial work for the Northern Star.

The recipients of the scholarship will be chosen under the guidance of a Northern Star scholarship committee and approval of the chair of NIU's Department of Communication, currently Gary Burns.

The scholarship committee and the chair of the Department of Communication will create an application, and the deadline for applications will be decided in the spring 2013 semester.

The recipient of the scholarship will be announced toward the end of the semester, and the recipient will use the award for the fall 2013 semester.

Mike said the Josephine Korcek Me-

morial Scholarship Fund is a "win, win, win." The first "win" of the scholarship is going to be students benefiting from it, he said. He wants to help students finish their degrees so they can move into a career in communications or journalism outside of school.

"I want to encourage young people to be in journalism," Mike said. "It's important. It's a noble profession now."

The scholarship is also Mike's way of paying his debt to the Northern Star and NIU, the second "win." Mike and his sister are NIU graduates.

Mike worked for the Northern Star from 1966 to 1969, including two semesters as the sports editor.

His career at the Northern Star led to another career in sports information at NIU in 1973. He worked in sports information for 34 years and spent 22 of those years as the sports information director.

"I will be forever grateful for the opportunities that Northern gave me," Mike said.

The third "win" of the scholarship for Korcek was to honor his mother. While his father, Julius, was more pragmatic about Mike's aspirations to have a journalism career, his mother fully supported him. Josephine was born in 1917 in Chicago. She grew up during the Great Depression and World War II.

She and her husband moved to Mount Prospect to start a family in 1947.

Mike said he has received a lot of bylines during his life, and he still gets bylines occasionally in the Daily Chronicle. He said his mother deserves credit for that.

"Where would we all be without our moms?" Mike said.

About the scholarship

The Josephine Korcek Memorial Scholarship:

- Is for communications or journalism majors who work at the Northern Star
- Awards \$1,000 to a recipient each fall
- Requires candidates be in good standing in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, be full-time students and have a least a 3.0 grade point average.
- Is awarded by a scholarship committee with the approval from the NIU Communications Department Chair.

MARCH 2: HALL OF FAME LUNCHEON AND SCHMOOZEFEST 3

'Welcome home'

Someone recently said I was "living in the past" when I mentioned reconnecting with NIU and Star alums.

The statement wasn't intended as more than a flip comment and blurted out without much thought. But it stung. It couldn't be farther from the truth.

Perhaps like you, I had that "aha" moment a couple of years ago when the Star and my many fond memories there popped up as I began reflecting as a 50-something.

While AI (former Best Damn Reporter class of '75) and I have given generously with time and support to favorite organizations, neither the Star nor NIU was even on our radar.

And then a light went on.

We've managed to do well in our careers and to encourage our daughters to become skilled communicators largely based on our Star experiences.

Then, a few years ago, one dinner with friends who happen to be alums turned into a discussion about a reunion, then into a visit to the paper after several decades, and into my current position as president of the Northern Star Alumni Board.

At that first visit back, the Star's Business Adviser, Maria Krull, greeted me with "welcome home." And, despite the different location — far different from the fire trap we worked in back on Lucinda Avenue — it did

feel remarkably familiar in a good way.

It's been inspiring to reconnect with alums from my Star era, but more so to meet recent grads and learn how their know-how has jump-started their careers.

And while the university continues to battle negative publicity, I can tell you firsthand that the students I've met are amazing and deserve better.

In particular, the editor in chief, Kelly Bauer, is an outstanding journalism leader. Recently she shared some of the challenges facing the paper. Aside from financial constraints, the biggest hurdle is recruiting. Why? One reason is that parents are telling their kids not to go into journalism because they won't get jobs. That's a subject for another long discussion. But, here's

where you come in. We must work together to let students know about you — the grads in careers ranging from law to medicine to sales to you name it — who credit their time at the Star for the talents that helped launch their careers. So, be a mentor.

Volunteer to share your stories with students. Hire interns. Interview this diverse talent pool for jobs. Reconnect at the upcoming Schmoozefest. Donate. Keep the legacy alive.

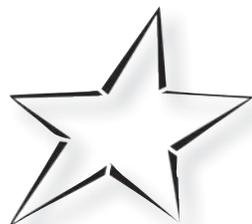
It's what I call living in the now, my friend.

Caron Weil Blitz ('80) is president of the Northern Star Alumni Board. Contact her at 847-204-0755 or prblitz1@gmail.com



Caron Weil Blitz '80

NORTHERN STAR
ALUMNI PRESIDENT



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Telescope is published annually, both in print and online at www.northernstaralumni.org. Our mailing list includes about 1,000 Northern Star alumni around the world. Please contact others from your era at the Star and tell them to get in touch with us.

If you have ideas for articles about Star alumni or would like to get involved in writing articles or planning events, please contact us.

Contacts

Caron Weil Blitz
Northern Star Alumni President
prblitz1@gmail.com

Shelley Hendricks
Northern Star Adviser
815-753-4239/shendricks@niu.edu

Maria Krull
Northern Star Business Adviser
815-753-0707/mkrull@niu.edu

Meet the Northern Star Alumni Board

The board also is eager to create opportunities for alumni to share their experiences with students, improve the database so alumni can reconnect and network with one another, and relive the old days at reunions in DeKalb and Chicago.

President: Caron Weil Blitz, '80

Vice President: Kevin Sheldon, '80

Treasurer: Laura (McHale) Dodd '97

Secretary: Maria Krull, business adviser

President Emeritus: Barry Schrader, '63

Members:

Mark Brown, '77

Matt Bute, '99

Mary Butler, '85

Greg Clemens, '03

Tom Collins, '96

Sabryna Cornish, '92, '95

Jeff Farren, '70

Jack Goldberg, '90

Jerry Huston, '86, '97

Shelley Hendricks, adviser

Mike Korcek, '70

Joelle McGinnis-Rivara, '89

Greg Rivara, '92

Jim Slonoff, '80

Jerry Smith, '72

Zach Smith, '96

Jerry Thompson, adviser, 1971-1995

Dave Timmersman, '77

Mark Polzin, '78

Richard A. Nelson, '58

Alumni Updates

1971

Common Cause Illinois' 2012 Good Government Awards honored **Ray Gibson**. Gibson worked as a Tribune reporter from 1974 until his retirement in 2011. He was a member of the Tribune's investigative reporting team, specializing in political coverage and campaign finance.

r84bs@aol.com

1993

Jim Murphy is senior vice president of sales, Online Division at Catalina Marketing. Previously Jim was regional vice president of sales at Yahoo and sales manager at the Chicago Tribune. Jim lives in Chicago.

Jim.murphy@catalinamarketing.com

David Oliveira is senior vice president and general manager of Marketplaces. Previously David was vice president of sales at Yahoo, Gator; sales representative at the Wall Street Journal and Chicago Tribune. David, his wife, Su, and their children are back in Chicago.

doliveira@mbuy.com

1995

Adam Bain, who majored in film and video, has worked for 15 years in the video games industry. Recently he has ventured into writing and directing movies for ABCQ Productions. His first movie, "The Right Turn," has been featured in nine film festivals and has been picked for online distribution. The next short film project is called "Fowl Play."

squidmon2@aol.com

1996

Laura DeLisle-Doherty is director of national sales at the Washington Examiner, based in Chicago. Previously Laura was a sales representative at the Daily Herald. Laura, her husband and their two children live in the Chicago area.

1997

Chris Belec has returned to the Chicago Tribune as franchise services manager.

Cbelec@tribune.com

1998

Eric Barnes has joined Legacy.com, an online news and information source that focuses on genealogy and obituaries. Previously Eric worked at the Chicago Tribune. Eric, wife, Brenda, and their two kids live in Chicago.

ericdbarnes@gmail.com

Jason Schaumburg in June was named executive editor of Sun-Times Media's 32 Pioneer Press publications. Before his Pioneer Press post, Jason served as senior editor of Shaw Media's suburban division, overseeing its digital content strategy.

Alumni site central source for news, events, sharing

I hope you've had a chance to check out our new Star Alumni website at www.northernstaralumni.org.

It stemmed from the need for a new database but grew into something much bigger. With this website, we now can keep our membership information up to date and also provide a central point of information that members can use to keep up with Star Alum happenings and even reach out to old friends.

The site can be designed any way we see fit, but for now we have implemented the following features:

■ **News:** Stay up to date about the goings on of the Star Alumni.

■ **Events:** Arranged in a calendar format.

■ **Photos:** Upload some from your back-in-the-day Star collection.

■ **Members:** Look up old friends and contact them via email. The email addresses have been purposely hidden to avoid spam and mass mailings. You control your information and can change it as your life changes.

■ **Telescope:** Check out the latest edition of the newsletter and gain access to past ones.

■ **Donations:** An easy way to give to the Star Legacy Fund.

■ **Hall Of Fame:** Check out the Hall of Fame classes from years past.

■ **Star history:** There is some great information about the history of the Star along with great articles written by alums.

■ **Email:** The Alumni Board can send out mass emails in which the recipient email addresses are never visible to others and there is no "reply all" feature that can end up clogging your email box.

Why did we make the switch to this site? Well, we weren't necessarily looking for a new website, but as fate would have it, we ended up with one.

The journey began when it became apparent there were several Star alumni member databases maintained concurrently and by different people.

While each one worked well independently, information often wasn't shared among them and as a result, it was very likely none of them was ever completely up to date.

In addition, each database used a different software technology requiring a certain knowledge level to do the necessary maintenance. Because a solid database is the foundation of any alumni group, it was evident we needed a single, yet easy-to-use database that could be managed by people in different locations.

In our search for such a database tool, we found an online company called GroupSpaces that met our needs by offering an inexpensive and easy way to keep track of our membership on a single database that could be securely maintained online with only a browser and no special software knowledge. Also, we found members could maintain their own information, which is huge because, as we all know, information such as email addresses changes quickly and often.

In addition to the much-needed membership database feature, we found that GroupSpaces offers an easy-to-use, website-building tool that combines with the membership database function to give groups a central information point to reach out to members and keep track of them.

It's a tool that requires no knowledge of HTML coding or any of that other nasty "stuff" so even an inept sales guy such as yours truly could figure it out.

So, that's the long story of how the website came about. We really hope the website is useful to you and that you check it often to keep up with what's happening in the Northern Star Alumni world. We will be sure to keep it fresh with new information as it becomes available and improve the site whenever and however we can. If you have any suggestions, please feel free to contact me at kevinsheldon7@gmail.com.



Kevin Sheldon
'80

NORTHERN STAR
ALUMNI
VICE PRESIDENT

Alumni Updates

1999

Sean Kearney is director of digital advertising sales at The Weather Channel.
Skearney@weather.com

2001

Nate Hardesty is the director of sales and marketing at Hyatt Regency, Maui Resort and Spa. Nate has been with the Hyatt family since graduation and has worked in several locations including Lake Tahoe, Denver and Indianapolis.
Nate.hardesty@hyatt.com

2002

Nate Legue, of Iowa City, Iowa, graduated from the University of Iowa College of Law in May, passed the bar exam in July and was sworn in as an attorney in Iowa in September. He currently works as a law clerk for the honorable judges of the Seventh Judicial District of Iowa in Davenport. More importantly, in September he was married to his law school classmate and the love of his life, Elizabeth Beadle.

2005

Michael Runestad earned his MPA at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University in June. Mike works for the British Consulate-General in Atlanta. Previously Mike worked for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.
Michael.Runestad@fco.gov.uk

2006

Collin Quick spent two and a half years at the Rockford Register Star before moving to Texas to accept a job with the Dallas Morning News. He is now the social media manager and content editor for FareCompare.com, a flight-search website based in Dallas.
Collin.quick@gmail.com

2007

Carl Schweihs has been promoted audit manager at Grant Thornton, LLP, in Chicago.
Carl.Schweih@gmail.com

2008

John Puterbaugh works at Wrappports, a Sun-Times Media company. John was previously the managing editor at the Lake County Journal. John and his wife, Caitlin (fellow Northern Star grad), are expecting their first child in late December. The couple lives in Oak Park.
john.puterbaugh@wrappports.com

2008

Tim Smerz is an account executive at CVS Caremark.
timothy.smerz@caremark.com

Justin Zegar left Sears Holdings in April and started working at Carlson Rezidor Hotels (Radisson, Park Inn, Park Plaza and Country Inns and Suites) as branding and messaging man-

ager for the company's loyalty program: Club Carlson. In June Justin married his girlfriend, Ali, and both live in Minneapolis.
mlbdude21@yahoo.com

2009

Chris Fiordirosa is an account manager at Yahoo in Chicago. Previously Chris worked as media coordinator at Datomi.
cfiordir@yahoo-inc.com

Caitlin Mullen Puterbaugh and husband John are expecting their first child in late December. Caitlin and John live in Oak Park.
cmullenputerbaugh@gmail.com

Tom Salzman is a sales representative at Naked Lime. Tom previously worked at the Chicago Tribune.
tsalzman@nakedlime.com

Brian Termini left Rich Harvest Farms and is working for The Mid-America Club, Chicago as its private event director. The Mid-America Club is a private business and dining club that provides an inspired setting for Chicago's most influential civic and business leaders.
Brian.termini@ourclub.com

2010

Larry Arquilla is a compensation analyst at Allstate. Larry previously worked at Adventist Health System.
Larry.arquilla@gmail.com

Jennifer Whitney left the Chicago Tribune and is the owner-operator of Jenny's Cake Dreams. Jenny will be attending culinary school at Wheaton College.
jennycakedreams@gmail.com

2011

Phil Nardi is a service specialist at Wilson Sporting Goods Co. Previously Phil worked for IKON Office Solutions.
Phillip.Nardi@wilson.com

Dave Thomas graduated from the University of Illinois-Springfield's Public Affairs Reporting Program and works as a reporter at the Daily Chronicle in DeKalb.
Thomas.davidjames@gmail.com

2012

Ben Ernst works in marketing at UpNorthLive.com, NBC7&4, ABS29&8 in northern Michigan.
bernst@upnorthlive.com

Marcy Morris is working for Groupon and lives in Chicago.
marcy.morris@ymail.com

Cameron Pulliam just moved to Florida and joined the St. Augustine Record as an advertising sales representative.
rcameronpulliam@gmail.com

Kim Skibinski is a copy editor at Northwest Herald in Crystal Lake.
kimskibinski@gmail.com

Northern Star needs your time, talents

Have you ever wondered what influenced you to become a part of the Northern Star? What was your motivation?

Think about what the Star experience meant to you and how important a part it played in where you are today in your career. That's exactly what we want to know. Would you be willing to share that information with potential Star staffers?

Here's the deal: Star editors report that they have had difficulty filling positions.

Apparently there has been a decline in this current crop of students toward seeking positions. There appears to be a variety of reasons, but the bottom line is still a staff

shortage.

Here's what we as the board are proposing: Would you be willing to come to DeKalb for a day and sit on a panel of your peers to promote the Northern Star?

We need Star alumni in various career fields to emphasize the multi-tiered values of the Star experience and how those values translate into viable skills in the work force. Are you willing to volunteer your time and give back to the Star?

If so, please contact Richard Nelson at nelsoncnsl@yahoo.com or Maria Krull at mkrull@niu.edu or 815-753-0707.

— Richard Nelson

WANT TO KNOW WHERE YOUR DONATION GOES?

We asked editors to compile a wish list. If you would like your gift to go toward equipment, note "wish list" on your donation.

WISH LIST

- 2 Bloggie Sport HD cameras (\$130 each)
- 2 Bloggie Live HD cameras (\$250 each)
- JVC GY-HM150U Compact Handheld 3-CCD Camcorder (\$1,996)
 - Canon 60d (\$900)
 - Canon t3 (\$500)
 - Sunpak PlatinumPlus 6000PG 61" Tripod (\$50)

Northern Star's strength is its past, future

FOIAs, training sessions, daily critiques, hirings, firings, resignations, staffers in crisis, a convention, officials under fire, board meetings, networking, a banquet, election night, a student's tragic death, MAC championship dreams. Oh, and some great journalism.



Shelley Hendricks

NORTHERN STAR ADVISER

It's been a busy four months.

The spirit of the Northern Star and the support of alumni, advisers, students and friends of the paper greeted me in July on my first week.

Alumni were among the first to wander into my office, sharing stories and offering support.

My predecessor, Jim Killam, has been my constant guide, far beyond any obligation. Business adviser Maria Krull has taken on duties outside her job description with her trademark cheer as I've navigated with varied levels of grace through my first semester of responsibilities and deadlines.

Of course I have the students to thank for their forbearance as I learn my role as adviser. My conversations with Editor in Chief Kelly Bauer will shape my approach to advising for the



City Editor Joe Palmer collaborates with Editor in Chief Kelly Bauer in the Star newsroom on Nov. 27.

rest of my career.

As my first semester as adviser winds down, I find myself getting the hang of what business as usual means for the Star. I feel the urge to take that deep, cleansing breath, but I'm stopped by some big challenges ahead.

It seems the difficulties in the newspaper industry are manifesting themselves at the Northern Star in a couple important ways: funding and staffing.

Reduced revenue is no surprise, and

dropping the Friday edition starting in spring has held funding problems at bay for now. We expect to about break even financially for the semester and will not have to dip into reserves. However, we need to remain vigilant and creative.

The more immediate threat will be surprising to some: staffing. We have had three key editor positions open all semester despite aggressive recruiting. We've also seen serious retention problems among the reporters and photographers. Unlike in college days for many of us, success in the news industry no longer is black and white.

At the Star there no longer is "business as usual."

We're publishing web-first starting in January, which will change our philosophy, our workflow, our advertising potential, our job descriptions and our skills. It will attract more staffers and make our graduates more marketable.

It's always comforting in times of change to look for constants. Great storytelling might take different forms, but the characters, drama and consequences remain.

Another constant is the spirit of the Northern Star itself. The Star has survived numerous difficulties and will find its new normal with the support of you, the alumni.

Contact Northern Star Adviser Shelley Hendricks at shendricks@niu.edu.

Readers are looking at our old craft in new ways



Kelly Bauer '14

NORTHERN STAR EDITOR IN CHIEF

According to the results from a September Gallup poll, 60 percent of readers reported having little or no trust in the mass media to report "the news fully, accurately and fairly."

On Election Day, a follower of the Northern Star's Twitter account accused reporters of following a liberal, Democratic agenda and being biased in favor of President Barack Obama. Only hours later, another reader

posted a comment to an article that covered the presidential election. That reader accused the Northern Star of being biased toward Republicans.

So, which is it?

Looking around my newsroom, I think both readers are wrong. I've seen pundits and politicians, "every men" and millionaires screaming about liberal media biases. They accuse print, TV and Internet journalists alike (as, very often, all three run together). They want the Fairness Doctrine brought back. They scream in joy about the Media Research Center, which bills itself as an organiza-

tion that "fight[s] liberal media bias" and quotes Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity for testimonials. One of the issues is that many of these people — our readers — don't understand how a newsroom works. They don't trust journalists because they think men like Limbaugh or Jon Stewart are telling the truth, when their rhetoric is infused with opinions.

Because my readers are generally college-aged, I have seen this with countless young men and women. One reader attacked the Northern Star for

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THE STAR LEGACY FUND

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

PATRON SPONSOR	\$25 TO \$99	PLATINUM SPONSOR	\$1,000 TO \$4,999
SILVER SPONSOR	\$100 TO \$499	DIAMOND SPONSOR	\$5,000 +
GOLD SPONSOR	\$500 TO \$999		

Northern Star THE STAR LEGACY FUND GIVING FORM

Personal Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Maiden Name: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____ Graduating Year: _____

- I would like to visit The Star and share my experiences with students
- Please send me information on how to make a recurring annual donation
- Please send me information on how to remember *The Star* in my will/trust

Donation Information

(ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE TO THE EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW.)

Check

- Enclosed please find my check in the amount of \$ _____ payable to NIU Foundation (Memo: Northern Star Legacy Fund)

Credit Card

For a secure credit card donation, please logon go to www.niufoundation.org/give and do the following:

1. Where it states **I'd like my gift designated to**, please select **A Specific Area**
2. Select the following options:
 Choose your Area of Support: **University - General**
 Select a Fund to Support: **Northern Star**
 Enter dollar amount: **\$\$\$**
4. Complete personal/billing information and submit form.

- My Company has a matching gifts program
 Company: _____ Contact: _____ Phone: _____
 Email: _____

- This donation is in honor of: _____
- This donation is in memory of: _____
 Please send acknowledgement to: _____
- This is an anonymous donation. Please do not publish my name.

Please Return Completed Form to:

The Northern Star
 Northern Illinois University
 Campus Life Building, Suite 130
 DeKalb, IL 60115

For Further Information contact us at:

The Northern Star
 Northern Illinois University
 Campus Life Building, Suite 130
 DeKalb, IL 60115

Maria Krull, Business Adviser
 phone: 815.753.0707
 fax: 815.753.0708
 email: mkrull@niu.edu
www.northernstar.info/alumni/legacy

Life after the newsroom ‘moves pretty fast’

On the evening of Nov. 6, I was counting the number of times the TV news people said “battleground” when a thought occurred: This was the first election night in my adult life that I didn’t spend in the newsroom of a daily newspaper.

As most of you know, I left NIU in May to pursue a new life in Christian missions work as a journalist.

Politics won’t be much a part of my new beat, so I can just watch the circus now as a bemused or often disgusted taxpayer.

Elections aside, it’s been weird not being at the Northern Star during such a news-filled year on campus – especially since so much of it involves situations and people that the Star has perennially reported on and investigated.

And as I write this, the football team has a slim – but real – chance to go to a BCS bowl game.

I credit the promise of an indoor practice facility, or a water slide, or whatever the latest expensive toy that Athletics can’t live without. But good for them, and good for NIU.



Jim Killam

In the face of everything else going on, the campus needs something to cheer about.

I’ve watched it all with interest, mostly in hopes that this year’s Star staff does a great job in covering, and uncovering, it all.

New adviser Shelley Hendricks barely got to unpack before being thrust into some touchy confrontations over access to sensitive information. So much for a honeymoon period.

Let me encourage Star alumni to do for Shelley what you so graciously did for me: Offer her your encouragement, support, expertise and friendship.

Our alumni group is the envy of just about every other college media adviser across the nation.

In a time of change and challenge, and when the Star’s financial future is as uncertain as every other newspaper’s, let’s make that support system stronger than ever.

A quick update on my new chapter: Lauren and I are still in Illinois, though we don’t live in a shed any more. Our calling is clearer than ever – build an international news service that covers the missions world.

We’ll be based in Costa Rica, splitting time between there and the U.S. but also

doing short-term trips virtually everywhere.

The timing remains unclear and dependent on funding that we have only partially discovered.

This is what’s called living by faith, and it is an absolute adventure.

We celebrated two weddings this fall, with our son Zack and daughter Lindsey both getting married within three weeks of each other.

And our oldest son, Ben, who’s also married, got a job teaching junior-high world history in Oswego. As a great American once said: “Life moves pretty fast.”

Thanks to all who planned and attended my surprise going-away party in April, or who sent cards, letters and emails.

Thanks to those of you who, in the months since then, have given encouragement, advice and financial support.

The absolute best thing about being the Star’s adviser for 17 years is being blessed with so many lifetime friendships.

So please, keep in touch. I will do the same. You can email me at jimkillam@gmail.com, or find my newsletters and links to my current work at www.jimkillam.com.

Readers are looking at our old craft in new ways

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featuring an opinion in a column; he said the entire paper was biased even after I explained the differences between articles and columns.

Consumers don’t know or don’t understand that news producers take great measures to publish unbiased work. They lump us into “media” and set us on the same playing field as political talk show hosts and commentators.

What can we do to combat that?

The first actions must be taken in the office: if you work in the news industry, you must always examine your work.

Question why you are reporting something, why you are speaking to certain sources, what can you do to give another

side appropriate coverage.

Then, speak to your readers.

Ask where they see bias. Ask what they would have done to produce an unbiased piece.

Question their motives.

Once we’re confident in our work, we may move on to questioning the public.

As news producers, we have a vested interest in ensuring our readers, watchers and listeners can tell the difference between a reported work and an opinion piece.

We need to be more active in encouraging critical thinking.

The news industry can do this in a number of ways.

We can write editorials calling for a change in how students are taught to

consume media.

We can fund (ha ha) programs where speakers educate classes, telling them how to spot the difference between a political commentator and a journalist.

We can hold open houses where we explain to visitors our methods, run editorials that focus solely on explaining the processes we go through in fighting bias.

What’s clear is that there needs to be a change in how the public views us.

Right now, we’re waging a war for readership.

If we don’t fight for their trust, we’ve lost the reason for battling.

Contact Northern Star Editor in Chief Kelly Bauer at kbauer2@niu.edu

Northern Star Alumni
Campus Life Building, Suite 130
Dekalb, IL 60115



Telescope

The Newsletter for Northern Star Alumni

2012 ISSUE

Save the Date! Schmoozefest 3

Saturday,
March 2, 2013

For more info, go to
northernstaralumni.org
and the Northern Star
Alumni Facebook page



How's Jim?

Friends gave Northern Star Adviser Jim Killam (at left with Avi and Elizabeth Bass) a proper send-off in April at the Twin Tavern. What's Jim up to these days? See page 7 for an update.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KAREN GRUBB