

**VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE  
Scholastic Publications Advisory Committee  
Wednesday, May 25, 2009**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Shannon Dalton, Beth Hoer, Trish Lyons, Elizabeth Milne, Cindy Wilkins and Lisa Giles (VHSL Ex Officio)

**Absent:** None

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m., introductions were made and the minutes from May 13, 2008 were reviewed and accepted.

**COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

Giles discussed the difficulty of finding advisers to represent SPAC from Regions A and D. Committee members Lyons and Dalton volunteered to help recruit.

**MEDIA MEETINGS/RULES CLINICS**

The 2009 draft schedule and attendance policy were reviewed.

**WRITING/PHOTO/DESIGN CONTEST**

The 2007-08 entry breakdown was reviewed. Committee recommended:

- a CD of winning entries be compiled to serve as an example of quality for those who would like it
- that a single entry may continue to qualify for multiple categories
- requesting (but not requiring) a CD of all entries from a given school publication with entry
- adding space for judges to comment on Outstanding Elements of First Place Winner to the For Judges' Use Only section of application
- adding SPAC contact information to entry packet for advisers who need clarification

Committee did not recommend changing the deadline from June 15 to June 30 as requested by one adviser.

**SPORTS FEATURE WRITING CONTEST**

Committee discussed low entry numbers and recommended eliminating the requirement that entrants be part of a school publication staff and opening up contest to all enrolled students. This could potentially increase the number of entries and also allow advisers to recruit new staff.

**EVALUATION SERVICES**

Committee discussed whether to add online publication evaluation services to offering and recommended surveying advisers to get an idea of how many are already online or plan to be. Lyons volunteered to lead a roundtable discussion on this topic at the 2009 CJW.

Committee discussed two common problems (improper attribution and significant grammar/spelling/proofreading errors) with evaluations this year that frustrated judges and resulted in lower-than-typical rankings. Committee recommended that sessions in these areas be emphasized at the 2009 CJW.

Committee discussed low participation in newsmagazine (12 schools, 3 evaluations) and asked for continued monitoring versus immediate elimination of support.

Committee reviewed the 2007 committee's proposal to revamp the evaluation system in an effort to make it more objective. Field test of results were reviewed and were close enough to actual results, but committee felt that flexibility was still needed for special cases and that "the three-year research process was worth the effort." Accordingly, changing the current evaluation system was not supported.

**2009 CHAMPIONSHIP JOURNALISM WORKSHOP**

Committee reviewed speaker and attendee survey results and recommended bringing back: John "Survivor" Blake, Kelly Furnas, Karen Harden and Lisa Renard-Spicer. John Cutsinger, Judy Coolidge, the Princess Anne poetry slam team, more poets, VCU student-taught sessions (editors) were also recommended. Committee agreed that entertainment, if any, should be held at the hotel versus the convention center. Committee also requested more

chairs in computer labs and to remind presenters to make handouts available. Committee requested identifying badge/clothes/hat for SPAC members so that people with questions could readily identify help; an advisers roundtable; sessions on copy editing, proofreading (Carol Lange?), newsmagazine publication and how to increase readability. Hoer volunteered to help greet first-time guests.

Potential keynotes: Tim Harrower, Luke Russert, reps from Cyprus Bay High School *The Paper* (MTV reality show).

#### **VHSL-JOSTENS REGIONAL JOURNALISM WORKSHOPS**

The 2008 program was reviewed along with dates for the 2009 program. Committee recommended a return of speaker H.L. Hall, sending a Save the Date card after city sequence is determined and offering an advisers roundtable at this event.

#### **JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR / CHARLES SAVEDGE AWARD**

Committee reviewed this year's entries and discussed requests from one judge to (1) restrict entrants to newspaper students, (2) not accept editorials, design pages, poetry or yearbook entries and (3) not accept co-written stories. Committee recommends that both work samples be journalistic writing samples (from any publication type) and agrees that design, poetry and co-written work should not be accepted. Committee also recommends requiring a photo with each application.

#### **VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME**

Committee will consider names to nominate.

#### **DJNF TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

Committee discussed this award and felt VAJTA's taking the lead on nominations is more appropriate than VHSL SPAC doing so, though endorsing a candidate selected by VAJTA might be an option, if requested.

#### **BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Committee discussed the feasibility of VHSL hosting an event that would give yearbook vendors an opportunity to pitch their products to advisers in a single location. This idea was not supported.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.