

2024

WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

Hall of Fame



Banquet & Fundraiser

Thursday, November 7, 2024
The Madison Club



About the Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame

Each year, the WNA Foundation honors industry innovators by inducting them into the Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame. Nominations are open to anyone, living or deceased, who has made significant contributions to newspapers in Wisconsin. This includes publishers, editors, reporters, and other newspaper personnel with at least 15 years of service. The nomination committee may also consider educators, jurists, attorneys, or legislators outside the industry.

Program

MASTERS OF CEREMONIES

WNA Executive Director, Beth Bennett
WNA Foundation President, Scott Peterson
WNA President, Kris O'Leary

WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Rusty Cunningham

Retired *La Crosse Tribune* publisher

Gary Gaier

former Wisconsin newspaper executive

George Stanley

former editor, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and current
Wisconsin Watch chief executive officer

SUNSHINE IN GOVERNMENT AWARDS

Roben Haggart
Town of Minocqua Clerk

Thank you, Sponsors!

PRESENTING SPONSOR



SUPPORTING SPONSOR



Rusty Cunningham

After graduating from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Rusty Cunningham started his career with newspapers in Binghamton, NY and Omaha, NE before joining Lee Enterprises in March 1979 at the Quad-City Times in Davenport, Iowa.



In August 1997, Cunningham became editor of the La Crosse Tribune. He was named publisher of the Capital Newspapers-Portage division in 2002 and returned to La Crosse as publisher of the La Crosse Tribune in 2004. He moved back to the editor's position in 2015 and remained in the role until his retirement in 2020.

During his tenure, Cunningham's notable achievements included youth development efforts, regional economic development and charitable contributions.

Under his leadership, the La Crosse Tribune raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for nonprofits through the La Crosse Tribune Jeans Day program. He also collaborated to develop partnerships with the 7 Rivers Alliance regional development group and the Economic Indicators regional educational series.

Other community involvement included chairing the Great Rivers United Way, the Holmen Area Foundation and serving on a variety of boards.

Under Cunningham's leadership, the La Crosse Tribune earned many WNA Better Newspaper Contest awards, including multiple awards for General Excellence. The River Valley Newspaper Group, which includes the La Crosse Tribune, was awarded the 2011 Enterprise of the Year Award by Lee Enterprises.

Cunningham serves as a member of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation board of directors and the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council.




BRAVO!

**Congratulations Rusty, on your well
deserved induction into the
Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame.**

**We thank you for your many years of
dedication to journalism, the
newspaper industry and especially
your 41 years with Lee Enterprises and
the La Crosse Tribune.**





Congratulations

**Rusty Cunningham,
 Gary Gaier & George Stanley**
 on your induction into the
 Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame

- Dave Zweifel

Congrats!

**Rusty Cunningham
 Gary Gaier and
 George Stanley**

MMC proudly honors your
 outstanding contributions and
 lasting impact on our industry.




Congrats George!

Thank you for your inspiring
 work and for setting such a
 high standard. Here's to the
 impact you've made and to
 many more milestones ahead!

- Your friends at the
 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

**milwaukee
 journal sentinel**
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Gary Gaier

Gary Gaier worked in the newspaper industry for 31 years, beginning his career at the Chippewa Herald Telegram in 1960 as the Advertising Director. He quickly rose to the position of General Manager and later Group Manager for Lavine Newspaper Group.



During his time with the Lavine Newspaper Group, Gaier was responsible for the publication of several Wisconsin dailies, including the *Portage Daily Register*, *Baraboo News Republic* and *Shawano Leader*.

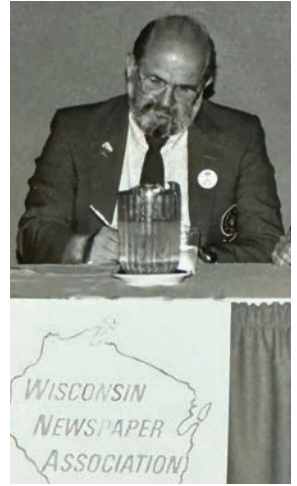
Following his tenure with the newspaper industry he founded a consulting company, Profit Plus, which worked with newspapers in the Midwest and Alaska.

An avid hunter and angler, Gaier enjoyed spending time outdoors with his family and friends. He loved his land, which he proudly enrolled in the West Wisconsin Land Trust.

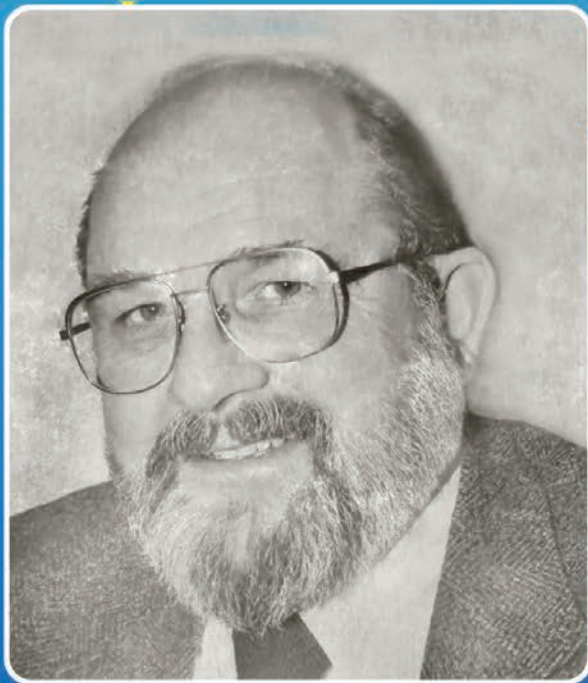
A mentor to many in the newspaper industry, Gaier was admired for his contributions to the management success of many Wisconsin's newspapers.

Gaier was named Wisconsin Newspaper Association Publisher of the Year in 1988. He served as president of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association in 1991.

Gary Gaier died on January 3, 2015, at the age of 77.



Congratulations
GARY GAIER



**on the truly deserved honor
of being inducted into the
Wisconsin Newspaper Hall Of Fame
~ Jim and Pat Clifford**

CONGRATULATIONS GEORGE STANLEY!

Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame
Inductee 2024



The UW-Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication is proud to congratulate alum, 2014 Distinguished Service Award winner, and former SJMC Board of Visitors member George Stanley (BA'79) on his induction into the Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame.

SJMC Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame inductees:

Scott Angus (BA'78) – 2018	Lester Hawkes (MPH'45) – 2001
Robert Angus (BA'43) – 2012	Meg Jones (BA'84) – 2021
William Branen (BS'51) – 2001	Martin Kaiser (CJE Board) – 2017
Jim Burgess (BS'58) – 2008	William Schanen (BA'64) – 2005
Scott Cutlip (MPH'41) – 2005	Robert Wright (BA'40) – 2006
Peter Fox (BA'73, MA'82) – 2022	David Zweifel (BA'62) – 2011
Phil Haslanger (MA'73) – 2021	



School of Journalism
and Mass Communication
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
journalism.wisc.edu

George Stanley

An early love for sports writing opened the door to a life in journalism for George Stanley.

Stanley is a native of Laredo, Texas, where his father flew fighter jets in the U.S. Air Force. After his time in the service, his father's work in the paper industry brought the family to Green Bay.

Stanley's interest in journalism grew after he won an Associated Press sports writing contest at Abbot Pennings High School in De Pere. He went on to study journalism at UW-Madison and began his career at the *Lake Geneva Regional News*, *Ducks Unlimited* magazine and the *Kansas, Wichita Eagle*.

In 1989, Stanley returned to Wisconsin as a state reporter for the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. He became the business editor of the *Sentinel* in 1993 and took over the same position when the *Sentinel* and *Milwaukee Journal* merged in 1995.

Stanley was named editor of the *Journal Sentinel* in 2015 after leading the newsroom as managing editor for 18 years. Under Stanley's leadership the *Journal Sentinel* won every major prize in journalism. The newspaper was named a Pulitzer Prize finalist ten times in the 21st century and won the Pulitzer Prize three times during Stanley's editorial tenure.

Stanley served as president of the News Leaders Association in 2021 and the Wisconsin Newspaper Association in 2023. He was a leader for many years in the Wisconsin Associated Press Editors, the Associated Press Managing Editors and the American Society of News Editors.





Past Hall of Fame Inductees



Robert L. Angus
*Daily Jefferson
County Union*



Scott Angus
*The (Janesville)
Gazette*



Vern Arendt
Ozaukee Press



William R. Barth
Beloit Daily News



Al Bauer, Jr.
Bloomer Advance



William D. Behling
Beloit Daily News



Robert Berglund
*Tribune-Record-
Gleaner*



**Marie Flynn
Berner**
Antigo Daily Journal



Sidney H. Bliss
*The (Janesville)
Gazette*



William E. Branen
*Burlington Standard
Press*



C.W. Brown
*Oconomowoc
Enterprise*



Howard J. Brown
Kenosha News



Emma Brown
*The Wisconsin
Chief*



Jim Burgess
La Crosse Tribune



Virginia Burtness
*Ashland Daily
Press*



**Georgette
'Dickey' Chapelle**



John B. Chapple
*Ashland Daily
Press*



James Clifford
*Watertown Daily
Times*



John D. Clifford
*Watertown Daily
Times*



Scott M. Cutlip
*University of
Wisconsin*



Robert J. Dreps
Godfrey & Kahn



Diane Everson
*The Edgerton
Reporter*



Harland Everson
*The Edgerton
Reporter*



Helen Everson
*The Edgerton
Reporter*



William T. Evjue
The Capital Times



Kent Eymann
Beloit Daily News



Bonnie Fechtner
WNA



Peter Fox
WNA



Charles Gauger
*Trempealeau
County Times*



Ralph Goldsmith
Boscobel Dial



**Charles
Graaskamp**
Leader-Telegram



William Hale
*Grant County
Herald Independent*



Phil Haslanger
The Capital Times



Lester Hawkes
UW-Madison



William D. Hoard
*Jefferson County
Union*



William H. Howe
Courier Press

Past Hall of Fame Inductees



Mark Hertzberg
*The (Racine)
Journal Times.*



Andrew Johnson
*Dodge County
Pionier*



Marshall Johnston
*The (Janesville)
Gazette*



Margaret Jones
*Milwaukee Journal
Sentinel*



J. Anthony Josey
*Wisconsin
Enterprise-Blade*



Martin Kaiser
*Milwaukee Journal
Sentinel*



Bill Knutson
The Post-Crescent



Warren Leary Jr.
*Rice Lake
Chronotype*



Doug Lyke
*Ripon Commonwealth
Press*



Tim Lyke
*Ripon Commonwealth
Press*



Elliott Maraniss
The Capital Times



Jim McLoone
*Lake Country
Reporter*



Nancy Mersereau
Ozaukee Press



Phil Meunch
*Grant County
Herald Independent*



Willis Miller
*Hudson Star-
Observer*



V.I. Minahan
The Post-Crescent



Lucius W. Nieman
*The Milwaukee
Journal*



Carol O'Leary
*The Tribune
Phonograph*



J.A. O'Leary
*The Tribune
Phonograph*



Leo Pesch, Jr.
Peshigo Times



Charles Roethe
Fennimore Times



George Rogers
*Stevens Point
Journal*



**William F.
Schanen, Jr.**
Ozaukee Press



Tom Schultz
*Watertown Daily
Times*



Susan Shemanske
The Journal Times



Wally Smetana
Dunn County News



Palmer Sondreal
Amery Free Press



Larry Tobin
Tomahawk Leader



John Torinus Sr.
The Post-Crescent



Donald P. Walker
Lakeland Times



Robert H. Wills
Milwaukee Sentinel



J. Martin Wolman
*Wisconsin State
Journal*



Frank Wood
*Green Bay News-
Chronicle*



Robert Wright
*Marquette County
Tribune*



David Zweifel
The Capital Times

ABOUT THE

Sunshine in Government Award

The Sunshine in Government Award was launched in 2022 by the WNA Board of Directors. It recognizes efforts by Wisconsin citizens and public officials to protect and strengthen open government. Nominations are open to any Wisconsin individual, including citizens, public officials, educators and others who have made extraordinary efforts on behalf of government transparency. Those efforts may include but are not limited to, facilitating access to information, advocating on behalf of public records or open meetings, exemplifying extraordinary leadership on behalf of the freedom of information and challenging efforts to impede the public's right to know.

Roben Haggart

Roben Haggart was ecstatic when she got the call that she would be getting the Sunshine in Government Award. "I was with my family ironically," she said. "We were on our way to a Redferrin concert. I actually teared up a little bit."

Haggart has been the Town Clerk for the Town of Minocqua for 25 years. The elected position serves an important role that often gets taken for granted.

"I think that there are a lot of laws and rules that are ever changing," she said. "It's not something the common person thinks about."

Haggart's job is necessary as she is a bridge for public employees and Minocqua's citizens. She has earned recognition for her unwavering commitment to transparency and open government. Her role is vital because it fosters accountability in local government. Haggart ensures that town officials are trained adequately in the finer points of open meetings and open government laws.



Photo provided by Lakeland Times



Support the
WNA Foundation

The WNA Foundation promotes newspaper readership in the state, develops the industry's future workforce, and advances awareness and exercise of the public's First Amendment rights.



Donate here:
<https://paypal.me/WNAFoundation>

Congratulations Roben Haggart

on your Sunshine in
Government Award

From all of us at

The LAKELAND
TIMES



Saluting Journalism's Greatest Champion



George Stanley

Thank you, George, for your years of leadership in journalism.

Because of your commitment to quality, your newsrooms have delivered high-impact journalism that has inspired news organizations across the country.

And now you are working to give even more residents access to trustworthy reporting that is free and accessible to all.

-Your friends and colleagues at
Wisconsin Watch & Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service



Congratulations



George Stanley

on your induction into the
Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame

— Diane Everson and

The **EDGERTON**
REPORTER

SAVE THE DATE
MARCH 6-7, 2025



WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

**Annual Convention and
Awards Banquet**

OPEE Awards Dinner - March 6

CONCOURSE HOTEL & GOVERNOR'S CLUB
MADISON, WISCONSIN



**Congratulations,
George Stanley on your WNA
Hall of Fame induction and for
all you do for local journalism.**

- Your friends at the Milwaukee Press Club





Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation
34 Schroeder Court | Suite 220 | Madison, WI 53711

wnanews.com