



Vol. 33, No. 4 • April 2002

an Alaska Press Women publication

Lavrakas opens digital world of photography to APW

by Sherrie Simmonds



Jim Lavrakas, *Anchorage Daily News* photographer, presented a slide show at the Alaska Press Women April luncheon.

Award-winning *Anchorage Daily News* photographer Jim Lavrakas explained how digital photography has changed the face of photojournalism at Alaska Press Women's April luncheon.

Lavrakas said digital has opened up so many more options for remote shoots and extends the actual time available to shoot while still meeting deadlines. Before, when shooting in the Bush, he would give someone \$20 to take his film on the plane, while saying, "Be sure to call my boss before you hit the bar." Now he can send photos live over the Internet within an hour. "I'm not dependent on the last plane out," he said. By going digital, he can now cover two periods of a hockey game and still meet the 9 p.m. deadline. Previously he was only able to cover the first period.

"Photojournalism is a key component of reporting," Lavrakas said, "because effective pictures ensure that good stories are read."

An internationally recognized pho-

tographer, Lavrakas has been a photographer with the *Anchorage Daily News* since 1985. He considers himself part of an award-winning team. "I very quickly realized that I was in a place to support photojournalism and was in a financial place to embrace photojournalism."

While still in high school, his first photographs, a sequence of a local fire, were published. In 1988, he received the Joseph Costa Award for the best courtroom photograph taken nationwide. Lavrakas received national and international awards for his February 2001 *Daily News* photo, "Pike Swallows Rainbow Fingerling." While many thought he was under water taking the photo, he explained the photo was taken through the glass of an aquarium with lighting from the sides.

His presentation to APW demonstrated how the digital revolution has hit the media. "Over the past four years, the *Daily News* has purchased seven Nikon D1 cameras

continued p. 3

Youth contest judge to address winners at May luncheon

Anchorage Daily News features writer Alberto Enriquez, one of the judges of the high school journalism contest, will speak at our May luncheon. Alberto said the caliber of entries varied, but a number of strong entries made it difficult to choose, and led to lively debates among the judges.

About 160 entries (including nearly 50 feature entries) were submitted.

Deb McKinney, another features writer at the *Anchorage Daily News*, served as a judging coordinator. McKinney stressed the importance of attribution, getting more sources, fact checking, and writing as if one were talking to a friend. Alberto will elaborate on these points as well as the flexibility in writing style that the features section offers.

Alberto was born in Cuba and grew up in Portland, Ore. He received a master's degree in English literature from Duke University in 1987. As a reporter, he has traveled to Chile and Romania, and participated in a science internship at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Mass.

Diane Walters

The Prez Says

It's been about 10 years since I've actively worked in the journalism field. After returning to Alaska in 1992, most of my writing and editing has been concentrated in technical communication. Consequently, I've felt out of the loop when it comes to changes in the journalism field.

When I first started writing more than 20 years ago, "Alaskan" was used as an adjective for objects as well people. We had Alaskan harbors and Alaskan rivers; over the past several years, I've noticed the term is only used when referring to people. Recently, I've noticed the word "arctic" is now routinely capitalized, even when not part of a proper noun.

Thus, when I was asked to edit the profiles of new members written by UAA students, I wasn't sure I was qualified because I didn't know what was being taught in journalism classes. The first profile I got started with a quote. I was taught rarely, if ever, start a story with a quote unless it is really powerful. But, was that still true? Then, I received the high school journalism entries from the judges at the *Anchorage Daily News*. As I sorted through the entries I started reading the judges' comments, and there it was, "Rarely should a story start with a quote..." from one of the

judges of the sports category.

I read every single judge's comment in each category from first place to honorable mention. It was nice to know that much of what I learned those many years ago was still valid regardless of the type of writing: be concise, stick to the important facts, try not to repeat words in the same paragraph (although this is hard in technical writing), be precise and stay on topic. I think I learned as much from reading the judges' comments as the students.

Alberto Enriquez, a Daily News feature writer and one of the judges in the features category, will touch on some of these topics as the guest speaker at our student awards luncheon in May. Although his remarks will be geared toward the students, I think all of us can benefit. I know I get lazy in my writing under the pressure to meet deadlines, and seeing what the judges had to say served as a reminder to me what makes good writing.

Diane



Lavrakas

from front page

that are now used for remote assignments," he said. "As recently as last fall, we were doing about 50/50 film/digital, and now it's 20/80." He added that this allows the *Daily News* to cut its film and developing costs in half, while dedicating more of the budget toward upgrading equipment.

Lavrakas still owns a film camera, but said he's going to get better and better digital cameras as they become available. "There's no dark-room in my house. I never thought I'd say that."

When asked what digital camera he currently uses, Lavrakas confessed that he had just ordered a new one that morning, a Nikon Coolpix 5000 for \$900. He said it has less lag time than previous cameras and is known as "prosumer." Lavrakas prints his personal photos on an Epson 740 inkjet. He explained that the drawback is they degrade after a year, but will last five years behind UV protective glass.

The attire was more Alaskan than Hollywood, but APW luncheon attendees were just as excited to be treated to a premier of "The Last

Great Race," a 10-minute production of Lavrakas' Iditarod photos. He will soon be presenting the show in Amsterdam, while accepting yet another international award.

Although the music was unavailable for the premier, Lavrakas said Hobo Jim provided the music to accompany the 140 Iditarod shots that cycle every two seconds. It was a mesmerizing look at the people, animals, and natural beauty of Alaska viewed from the trail: faces, dogs, booties, mountains, frost on beards, goggles, blankets, kisses, sunrise, sleep, steam, clothing, straw, smiles, sky, ski poles, airplanes, rivers, wind, champions, animal hats, sores on faces, and evening lights.

In answering questions following the slide show, Lavrakas explained that digital cameras use the same lenses as film cameras. He said different angles, perspectives, and lenses are the key to award-winning closeup and landscape shots.

For magazines or similar publications, the dpi (dots per inch) of digital cameras is not sufficient. The high-end digital camera creates a large file, which can be re-sampled with software programs such as Photoshop to increase the size of the picture. "We can add 50 to 60 percent to the size of the original," he said.

Lavrakas finished his view of the digital world of journalism by saying that the advantage is the quick turnaround on the front end; but storage and identification could be an issue in the future. The *Daily News* is currently generating 5,000 digital images a month. "Right now we're keeping everything we possibly can," he said.

bio While in high school, *Anchorage Daily News* photographer Jim Lavrakas had his first photographs published – a sequence of a local fire in the *Lowell Sun* in Massachusetts. He received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Massachusetts (Amherst) in 1974.

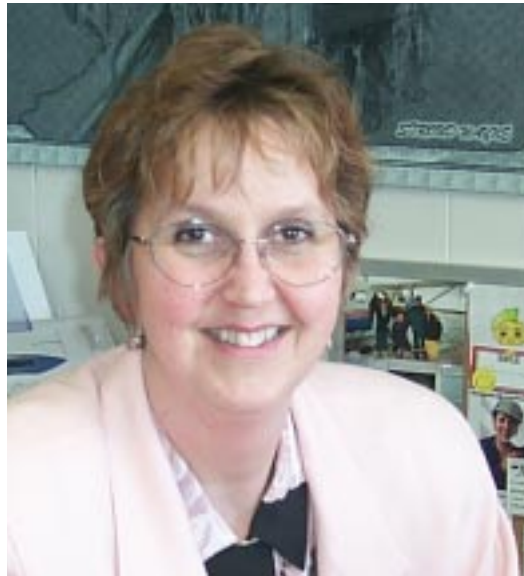
Jim moved to Alaska in 1974 and began a freelance photo business. He concentrated photo work on local performing arts, a fledgling aspect of urban Alaska. Jim worked for both Anchorage newspapers over several years. He was hired in 1981 as a staff photographer for the *Anchorage Daily News*; he became chief photographer in the fall of 1985.

Jim won the 1988 Joseph Costa Award given by Ball State University for the best courtroom photograph taken nationwide. He was also part of the *Daily News'* team effort that won the 1988 Pulitzer Prize Gold Medal for Public Service for a series of stories called "A People in Peril," dealing with alcoholism and self-destructive behavior of Native Alaskans.

A photo that Jim took for the *Daily News* in February 2001, "Pike Swallows Rainbow Fingerling," won several awards in national and international photo contests in the Nature & Environment categories. It took second place in the World Press Photo contest, the most prestigious of international contests.

Four years ago, Jim was given the task of researching and staying abreast of developments in the world of digital photography and its application to photojournalism.

Stacie Stevens



Stevens keeps adding to her “to do” list

by Linda Bustamante

She’s been a professional photographer, a truck driver, a seismologist, owned three of her own companies, served in the Air Force, worked on the Juneau Ice Fields, flown a plane, climbed a few mountains, traveled half-way around the world and back, worked through two college degrees, got married, had two kids, and worked in advertising and sales for the last eight years.

Meet Stacie Stevens. “I had done 90 percent of the things on my list as a kid by the time I was thirty, so I made a bigger list,” she said.

Stacie joined Alaska Press Women last fall but admits it has been hard getting started as a regular attendee. Maybe because also on her list is: president of the Anchorage Business and

Professional Women’s local, co-chair of this year’s ADDY Awards committee, Toastmasters every Tuesday, and her Soroptimists club on Wednesdays.

Stacie is originally from Mt. Vernon, Washington. She attended a nearby community college, where she earned her first degree in photography and graphic arts. “I needed more adventure and travel, so I decided to join the Air Force,” she said. “It was a perfect way to run away from home and see the world. I traveled to Japan, Okinawa, and Guam and toured all around the Pacific. I learned how to snorkel, scuba dive and fly airplanes. It was an amazing time and I made incredible friends.”

Being in the Air Force was an adventure and it also brought a lot

of pressure. She was one of two women in her career field, monitoring nuclear test ban treaties. This involved identifying atomic events worldwide. When an event was located, the monitors would call the Joint Chiefs of Staff to report it. “One night, we reported an event that scrambled every available plane on the east coast to confirm and evaluate our data,” she recalled. “It was really rewarding and interesting because it was very technical, and it was exciting needing a Top-Secret clearance.”

The Air Force eventually brought Stacie to Eielson AFB in 1981. After her discharge in 1982, she stayed in Fairbanks attending UAF and earning a degree in geology. She also met her husband,

continued p. 5

Stacie Stevens

from page 4

Tim, and had two boys while living there. Stacie's description of life in Fairbanks sounds like a Dooganism.

"Our first home was across the street from a parking lot next to a field. The first couple of years I couldn't understand why people would stop and park there every spring. The third year I realized it was because of the geese. The fourth year I was pulling off the road every time I saw a goose. By the fifth year I had purchased a telephoto camera and was awaiting their arrival. That's Fairbanks, it creeps up on you."

So did the bitter cold and the dark. In 1994 Stacie had had enough of Fairbanks's notorious winters and moved her family south.

"Anchorage is great. I like the ocean, mountains, skiing, hiking and fishing. There are a lot of alternatives," she said. Her family likes to snowboard, hike and fly fish. They are Kenai Peninsula enthusiasts and love to hang out on the beach in Homer. She and her husband Tim, a former park ranger, both love gardening. They often work on landscaping projects around the house and have adopted the park across from their home.

Stacie worked for Channel 2 for four years in advertising sales and left there two years ago to make a career change. Since then her career path has been a little bumpy. Next stop? "I'll have to get back to you on that," she said. She knows advertising but at 46 years says, "at this point in my life, I now want to get involved in production, management and writing."

She also wants to start writing nonfiction articles for magazines

Barske artwork to be featured nationally



Dianne Barske, center, is pictured here with APW members Emily McKenzie (left) and Dee Gould (right).

Long-time APW member Dianne Barske was recently surprised to learn that her art work had been selected by the American Diabetes Association to appear on a holiday card for the December 2002 season. She submitted one of her paintings as part of the ADA's Holiday Art Search program. Dianne's was one of 15 chosen from 582 submitted nationally. Her painting, her photo and a brief bio will appear in the million and a half catalogs mailed out by the ADA each year.

Dianne promises to bring catalogs to an APW luncheon when they are available, hoping the sale of her cards will bring in a big profit for the Diabetes Association. She adds, "Each artist was requested to dedicate the art work to someone they know who has diabetes. My father had diabetes for many years, as do a cousin and an uncle, and I know there are some of our APW members with the disease. So it means a great deal to me to be selected."

about gardening. She purchased the domain for a website called zone3gardens. "It will be a northern tier type gardening venue, with lots of good information on perennials that actually winter over in the harsh winters north of the 49th parallel," she said. "I would like to post pictures, articles, products, and tried and true seeds for zone 3 gardens."

Also on her "list" is getting more involved with Alaska Press Women.

Ed. Note: Since this interview, Stacie has accepted the job of general manager at GraphicWorks.

Linda Bustamante is a journalism student at UAA.

Who's got spark? Who's shining like gold?

APW members will soon receive their ballots for new officers, and will be asked to nominate one APW member for each of these awards as well:

Betzi Woodman Spark Plug Award:

This award recognizes a member who energized APW throughout the year. The member used good organizational skills and motivated others to act on behalf of APW. In addition to providing the name of the person you are nominating for this award, you must include a short description of how the member meets the Spark Plug criteria.

Kay Kennedy Gold Nugget Award:

This award recognizes a member for professional and business accomplishments.

Duties of APW officers and board members

You will receive a ballot soon for election of 2002-2003 officers. Officer duties are described to the right.

Please note that there are several committees and projects to which you might contribute. APW always needs active members to help in various areas. Whether your talent is organizing, writing, editing, design, photography or networking, there's something you can contribute.

Previous Winners

Year Award	Spark Plug Award	Gold Nugget
2001	Karen L. Lew	Nancy Killoran
2000	Dalene Perrigo	Dianne Barske
1999	Doris Thomas	Barbara Brown
1998	Carolyn Rinehart	Chrystal Carr Jeter
1997	Doris Thomas	Francine Taylor
1996	Asta Corley	Elise Patkotak
1995	Andrea Veach	
1994	Francine Taylor	Alissa Crandall
1993	Melinda Taylor/ Gloria Maschmeyer	Elizabeth Lauzen
1992	Jan Ingram/ Ella Wright	Donna Gavac
1991	Ella Wright/ Jeanne Johnson	Nancy Cain Schmitt

Visit these sites for more winners:

<http://www.akpresswomen.com/pages/sparkplug.htm> and

<http://www.akpresswomen.com/pages/goldnugget.htm>

President: presides at all meetings and issues calls for meetings; appoints chairpersons of standing and special committees; signs contracts for the organization (This office can only be filled by an individual who has previously served on the APW Board of Directors.)

First Vice-President: acts in the president's absence or as assigned; handles media relations and ensures that APW receives positive publicity.

Second Vice-President: recruits for members outside of Southcentral Alaska; serves as a liaison for those members

Third Vice-President: identifies and arranges for speakers (personalities who motivate, promote, work, and teach journalism and

other fields of communication) to address monthly luncheons.

Secretary: takes minutes during business meetings and at the annual meeting.

Treasurer: collects luncheon fees; manages the financial affairs of the organization; reports to the board.

Leaders also are needed to manage the following committees, projects, and ongoing tasks (these leaders also sit on the board):

Membership • E-mail Express • Nominating • Communications Contest • High School Journalism Contest • Scholarship • History of APW • Archives of APW • Communicator of Achievement • Newsletter • Web Site Design and Maintenance

May luncheon

featuring high school
journalism and college
scholarship awards

Thursday, May 2

Reservations are
due by April 26.

753-2520

Sorry, no late
reservations or walk-ins.

Luncheons are held the first
Thursday of every month,
11:30 a.m.

Golden Lion Hotel, 36th and
New Seward, Anchorage

\$15.00 members

\$16.00 guests



Wanted:

Submissions
for *Articulation*

Got some news, an anecdote,
a grammar point?

Email Diane Walters:

Diane.H.Walters@
poa02.usace.army.mil
753-2640 (work) • 338-1966 (home)

Elected Officers

Diane Walters, *President*Diane.H.Walters@poa02.usace.army.mil
Mariah Oxford, *1st Vice President–Public Relations*m.oxford@usa.net
Carol Gales, *2nd Vice President–Regional Member Liaison*gales@nook.net
Asta Corley, *3rd Vice President–Programs*acorley@adn.com
Barbara Brown, *Treasurer*barbara.brown@akhf.org
Sherrie Simmonds, *Secretary*ssimmond@ahfc.state.ak.us

Appointed Officers (alphabetical by last name)

Connie Graffis, *Scholarship Chair*connie_graffis@KAKM.pbs.org
Judy Griffin, *Immediate Past President*jgriffin@chugach.net
John Killoran, *Web Master*jpnbk@gci.net
Nancy Killoran, *Web Master*jpnbk@gci.net
Karen L. Lew, *Communication Contest Chair*KarenLLew@earthlink.net
Elise Patkotak, *Membership Chair*TheParrot@aol.com
Pat Richardson, *Archivist*patricia.l.richardson@poa02.usace.army.mil
Thetus Smith, *Reservation & E-Mail Express Manager*thetus@gci.net
Doris Thomas, *FAN Liaison*sethomas@alaska.net
Diane Walters, *High School Contest Chair*Diane.H.Walters@poa02.usace.army.mil
Communicator of Achievement Chairvacant
Historianvacant



published monthly (except July) by Alaska Press Women
(an affiliate of the National Federation of Press Women)

P.O. Box 104056, Anchorage, AK 99510-4056

Copy Editor: Diane Walters

Layout: Mariah Oxford

Photographer: Pat Richardson

Proofreaders: Diane Walters and Carolyn Rinehart