

On the Move

To make way for renovations, several departments are moving off the 7th, 8th and 9th floors of the Northwest Building in the upcoming weeks. You should also note that the 9th floor community room is closing and activities should be moved to the 2nd floor auditorium. Call Lisa Bolton at x4-7970 for more information. The following are the scheduled move dates:

Public Relations—Relocates to 3rd floor (L Street side) on April 5

Human Resources—Relocates to 3rd floor (L Street side) on April 12

Executive—Relocates to 4th floor during the week of April 26

Corporate—Relocates to 4th floor of Akridge during the week of April 26

Writers Group—Scheduled to move to 4th floor of Akridge at the end of April (exact date TBA)



Cell Phone Discounts

The Washington Post Company has negotiated new employee discounts for cell phone and other wireless services and equipment from three vendors, AT&T Wireless, Sprint and Verizon Wireless. This is for both company

and personal use. The discounts, ranging from eight to 15 percent on service plans, will apply to both new and existing cell phone customers. For more information on these discounts or to order personal phones go to www.wponet.com. This is the same internal web site used

Marketplace

FOR SALE: Air hockey table complete with pucks and paddles. Dimensions are 6 1/2" x 3 1/2" Practically new condition. New furniture being delivered so it must go. Paid \$300. U-haul it for \$75. Call Donna x4-5823 or (301) 868-3493.

FOR RENT: Cathedral Ave. apartment. Great location, walk to restaurants, walk to Georgetown, beautiful, spacious 1 BA apartment, new appliances, new BR. Only 2.5 miles to TWP, \$1,250/month. Call Enrique at (202) 288-9013 or x-4-6195.

FOR SALE: One ticket to John Prine show at Warner Theatre on April 1. Call Martin at x6-2282 or (703) 866-5464

FOR RENT: Apartment in Kalorama/Dupont/ Adams Morgan area. Large, bright 2BR, 1BA corner apartment, on quiet, beautiful street, mall building features large rooms, big windows, spacious closets. Available May 15. \$2,250/month. Call Mitch at (202) 462-9027.

FOR RENT: Beach home rental - Sandbridge/Va. Beach: Huge, gorgeous home, one block from ocean w/amazing views and direct beach access. 9 BR, 7.5 BA, slps 22. Every imaginable feature from a well-equipped gourmet kitchen w/center island to a spacious game room w/2nd mini-kitchen, foosball/air hockey & access to private pool. Many TVs, VCRs, DVDs, fax, stereo/CD and more, MBR w/jacuzzi tub, plenty of open & covered decking. Avail. weeks: April 10, 17 & May 8 (\$1,360); May 15 (\$2,590); June 12 & Aug. 14 (\$4,620); Aug. 28 (\$3,470). Call Gayle at x4-7679; (301) 570-9032.

FOR SALE: 2000 Honda Accord EX, automatic, 4 door, 4 cylinder, leather seats, sunroof, a/c, CD. Great condition. \$10,500. Call Ellen at (301) 986-4180 or Erin at x4-5839.

FOR SALE: 1995 Nissan Quest XE as is. All offers will be considered. For details, contact Ron at (301) 350-5842.

for open enrollment each year. The same user ID and password apply. If you have technical problems logging onto www.wponet.com, call 877-WPNET4 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern, Monday-Friday.

Post Garden Book

Spring has sprung and it will soon be time for area gardeners to be elbow deep in dirt. A helpful tool before you hit the nurseries and seed catalogs is *The Washington Post Garden Book*, the ultimate guide to gardening in Greater Washington and the Mid-Atlantic region. The Garden Book is written by **Adrian Higgins**, the Home section's contributing editor for gardening. The book retails for \$18.95 and Post employees are eligible to receive a 10 percent discount if they purchase the book at the Front Counter at the Northwest Building.

Employees can also receive a 10 percent discount if they purchase the book online at www.washingtonpost.com/store. For the discount, enter POST in the coupon field at checkout. The 10 percent discount applies to all Washington Post books available at the Front Counter or the TWP online store.

Join the Rec Association!

All full or part time employees of The Post are invited to join the Rec Association. It's only \$5 a year to join and you can buy discounted tickets for Kings Dominion, the Maryland Renaissance Festival, Six Flags, and movie theaters.

The Rec Association needs volunteers that can help with ticket sales at the Northwest Building and the College Park and Springfield plants. Please call Dean Felten for more information at x4-7853.

FOR SALE: Computer w/Windows 2000, MS Office, 64 Meg of RAM, keyboard, mouse, IBM 15" monitor, 200mhz processor, USB, modem, sound card w/speakers. Good for word processing or spreadsheet work, for \$170. Also, 1993 Blue Toyota Corolla, four door, 5-speed stick, air AM/FM/CD, 93K miles, good condition. Asking \$2,500. Call Jim at (703) 256-7128, or after 4 p.m. at x4-4234.

FOR SALE: A pair of season tickets to the Redskins, section 432, row 12, seats 11 and 12, green parking pass. Total cost is \$1,590 (face value). Call Ellen at x4-6627 or (703) 823-3133.

TUTOR AVAILABLE: Have BS in mathematics and Masters in information technology. Can help with subjects including math, computer technology, as well as term papers. Call Ollennu at (301) 442-5233.

FOR SALE: Sevylor Bali inflatable 1-person kayak; great for paddling on lakes or slow-moving rivers. Heavy-duty, PVC-coated nylon, sturdy, tubular I-beam construction provides a rigid floor. Three separate main air chambers provide safety, with 3 Boston valves for fast inflation/deflation. Includes a Sevylor Skag, inflate/deflate pump and carrying case. Used once; trading up for more expensive model. \$110. Call Bill at x4-6900.

MARKETPLACE DEADLINE: Noon Fridays. Please include your name, extension and home phone number. Ads are for Post Employees only. Send ads to Shop Talk, 7th floor, or call x4-6803. To send ads via fax dial x4-4963; via e-mail send to shoptalk. Ads run two issues unless otherwise requested. One ad per employee, please.

ShopTalk

April 1, 2004 Vol. 30 No. 12

Editor, Lisa O'Donnell Connors, x4-6803

News Story Becomes Play

Shankar Vedantam, a reporter on the National Desk, began his journey to becoming a playwright while writing a news story about a paternity dispute when he was working at the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1999. His first play, *Tom, Dick and Harriet*, co-written with Donald Drake, is premiering at the Brick Playhouse in Philadelphia on April 7-25.

Vedantam's article for the *Inquirer* was about a divorced sub-

noticed that the child had different colored eyes from the father and his ex-wife, and told him that it was possible the child wasn't his. After a DNA test proved he wasn't the father, the man went to court in order to stop his child support payments. However, according to Vedantam, the law in Pennsylvania and in many other states is that if a child is born into a marriage it automatically belongs to both parents—despite DNA.

Vedantam and Drake, his editor at the time, discussed the story over lunch at a Burmese restaurant and mused about what it means to be a parent and the importance of genes in deciding who should be a parent. It was then that they decided the story would make a great play and began collaborating on writing *Tom, Dick and Harriet*.

"The play bears no factual resemblance to the story at all," noted Vedantam. "The fundamental themes of the play are the same as the story in what does it mean to be a parent. How important are genes in deciding who should be the appropriate parent to a child?"

Tom, Dick and Harriet became a comedy about two men who both wanted to be the "real" father of a child. It is described in a press release by the Brick Playhouse as "a crackling comedy about politics, parents and the press."

"The thing we wrestled with while writing the play is that we didn't want to have a character who was trying to get out of being a father," he explained. "We wanted to explore the issue, but find characters that actually would be sympathetic and that the audience could sort of say 'I can see how the character could feel this way and I might feel the same in this situation.'"

Vedantam and Drake's comedy won a playwriting competition sponsored by the Playwrights Center of San Francisco in 2002. A revised version was accepted for a showcase at the Lark Theater in New York City in 2003. The next version won a national competition last year and received the 2nd annual Brick Playhouse Award for Outstanding Writing, enabling them to produce the play.

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Shankar Vedantam

urban Philadelphia man who was sharing custody and paying child support for his four-year-old child. The man was dating a nurse who

noticed that the child had different colored eyes from the father and his ex-wife, and told him that it was possible the child wasn't his. After a DNA test proved he wasn't the father, the man went to court in order to stop his child support payments. However, according to Vedantam, the law in Pennsylvania and in many other states is that if a child is born into a marriage it automatically belongs to both parents—despite DNA.

Post Wins Local Press Awards

The Post continues to reap awards for its news coverage in 2003. The Maryland, Delaware, D.C. (MDDC) Press Association and the Virginia Press Associations recently announced several Post award winners during their annual editorial contests.

The MDDC announced the winners of its contest on Monday, March 15. The Post received seven first place honors and 12 second place awards in the category of daily newspapers with a circulation of more than 75,000. In three categories—spot news, sports story and education—The Post took both the first and second place awards.

The first place award winners and the categories included:

The Post Staff
Spot News – “Columbia is Lost”

Judges’ Comments–“An outstanding team effort on a national tragedy.”

Gilbert Gaul and Mary Pat Flaherty

Investigative Reporting– “Pharmaceutical Roulette”

Judges’ Comments–“A chilling description of what can and what does go wrong for the most vulnerable consumers.”

Sewell Chan and Scott Higham
Local Government– “Homes of Last Resort”

Judges’ Comments–“Outstanding research.”

Mark Maske, Len Shapiro, Nunyo Demasio, Tom Boswell, Tony Kornheiser, and Michael Wilbon

Sports Story– “Spurrier Resigns as Redskins Coach”

Judges’ Comments–“This is as comprehensive as you can get on a story.”

Liza Munday
Medical/Science– “The Impossible Dream”

Judges’ Comments–“This package gets to the heart of the quest for parenthood.”

Caryle Murphy, David Cho, Bill Broadway and Phuong Ly
Religion– “On Faith”

Judges’ Comments–“Each story is a commendable effort in explaining the below-the-surface issues affecting contemporary religion.”



Caryle Murphy and Bill Broadway share a first place award in the MDDC religion category with (not pictured) David Cho and Phuong Ly.

Marc Fisher
Education– “Public Schools: Pass/Fail”

Judges’ Comments–“A compelling read from start to finish—an extraordinary tale of inner-city education.”

The second place winners and categories are:

Local column – **Donna Britt**
Spot News – Post Staff
General News Story – Post Staff
Series – **Karlyn Barker, James Grimaldi, and D’Vera Cohn**
State Government – **Jo Becker and Craig Whitlock**

Feature Photo – **James Parcell**
Sports Story – **Steve Wyche, Michael Wilbon, Thomas Boswell, Sally Jenkins,**



Sewell Chan



Scott Higham

Rachel Nichols, and Thomas Heath
Sports Feature Story – **Michael Leahy**
Education – **Amy Argetsinger, Jahi Chikwendiu**
Special Sections – Post Staff (Emergency Preparedness Guide)
Page 1 Design – Post Staff
Art or Illustration – **Lisa Schreiber**

The Virginia Press Association announced its award winners on Saturday, March 20. The Post took

10 first place awards and seven second place awards in the daily circulation category of more than 75,000.

The first place award winners and the categories included:

Sewell Chan and Scott Higham
In-depth or Investigative

Reporting– “Homes of Last Resort”

Judges’ Comments–“This is a model of how a multi-part investigative piece should be done. The research is exhaus-

tive, the organization splendid and the prose compelling.”

Business Desk Staff
Business, Financial or Agricultural Pages – 2003 Business sections of 2/2, 3/30, 10/23, and 12/12

Judges’ Comments–“Good story selection, good use of graphics, story/subject variety (national and local) easy to read and navigate.”

Bonnie Benwick
Art/Illustrations– Outlook cover art of 6/29/03

Judges Comments–“Quick easy read. Very nice style.”

Tom Shales
Home, Leisure and Entertainment Writing– “Bob Hope; Carol Burnett; Reality TV”

Judges’ Comments–“Consummate writing on Bob Hope, Carol Burnett and reality TV. Wonderful grasp of history and perspective. Entertaining as well as instructive.”

Sally Squires
Health, Science and Environmental Writing– “Selling of the Stent; Omega-3 fatty acids; Need for water in the Desert”

Judges’ Comments – “Sally Squires simply excelled at taking complex medical topics—arterial stents and the benefits of certain fatty acids—and making this reader happy to have been lured deep into the complexities.”

Ruben Castaneda, Jamie Stockwell and Paul Duggan
Feature Story Writing– “The Beginnings of a Savage End”

Judges’ Comments - “A stunning tale, full of factual and descriptive detail. The writers build suspense while dropping little hints of what is to come.”

Joe Stephens and David Ottaway
Series of News Stories– “Big Green”

Judges’ Comments – “Great detail, obviously the result of good investigation.”

Tom Boswell
Sports Column Writing– Columns on Steve Spurrier, Chicago Cubs and Washington Wizards.

Judges’ Comments - “Witty, provocative. A master at laying an argumentative foundation and allowing the reader to answer along with him.”

Peter Carlson
Feature Writing Portfolio– Stories on Evelyn Y. Davis, Max Cleland, Dull Congress, Neil Bush, bears in Maryland, quarterbacks, and bank robbers.

Judges’ Comments–“An amazing variety of beautifully written, substantive stories. Mr. Carlson has an infectious, devilish sense of humor that infuses his stories with joy. What fun!”

Donna Britt
Column Writing–Columns “The Mother of All Questions; Arnold’s Vision Is All About Himself; Afraid That Fear Is Here to Stay”

Judges’ Comments - “Writer connects current, larger events to a human scale of understanding. Her feelings are clear, but she opens the reader’s mind to either contradictory or parallel feelings of their own. Timely, yet timeless.”



Donna Britt

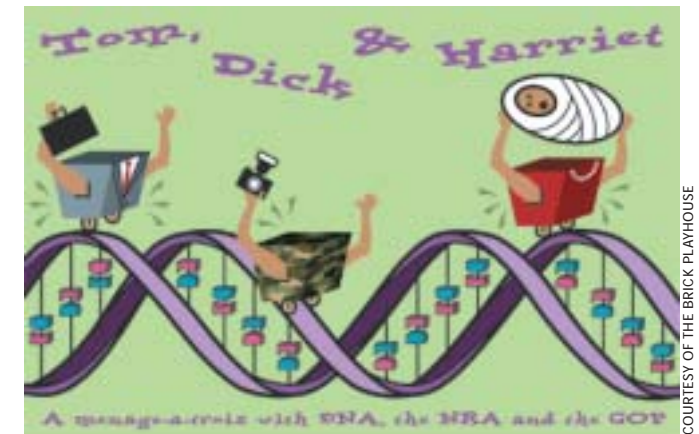
The second place winners and categories are:

Business and Financial Writing – **Neil Irwin**
Home, Leisure and Entertainment Writing – **Stephen Hunter**

General News Writing – **Sari Horwitz and Michael Ruane**
Series of News Stories – **Ariana Eunjung Cha**
General Makeup – Post Staff
Sports Feature Writing – **William Gildea**
Feature Writing Portfolio – **Hank Stuever** ■

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“One of the interesting things about playwriting is that when you write stuff on the screen or on the page it often looks and sounds very different when it is per-



COURTESY OF THE BRICK PLAYHOUSE

formed,” he said. “The actors bring their own personalities to the work...there’s a director who is interpreting the work. It is at once humbling, terrifying and wonderful, because you find the ideas you’ve been playing around with for so long changed by these people, but they also bring out things in the material you had not seen yourself.”

He describes writing plays as “dream like.” “In journalism you are constrained by the facts, you have to be honest and truthful,” explained Vedantam. “With a play, you allow the imagination to go wild.”

Vedantam became involved in amateur theater in his native India. After receiving his undergraduate degree in engineering in India, an opportunity to write an article for a newspaper changed his career path. He received his master’s degree in journalism from Stanford University. He

went on to the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and has also worked for Knight Ridder’s Washington bureau. Vedantam came to The Post in April 2001.

The Brick Playhouse will present *Tom, Dick and Harriet* at 2nd Stage at the Adrienne