

ShopTalk



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Editor, Mario Iván Oña, x4-6803

Len's Legacy

When **Len Downie** stepped up to take the helm from Executive Editor **Ben**

Bradlee, Downie knew he had enormous shoes to fill. So what did Downie do? He brought in his own shoes.

Bradlee turned over a newspaper that had defined how to keep the government accountable and a newsroom with a superb talent pool of journalists. Though Downie continued the newspaper's trajectory and led the

newsroom to an unprecedented 25 Pulitzer Prizes—the most ever under one executive editor—Downie found a perfectly good way to run the paper in a perfectly different way than Bradlee.

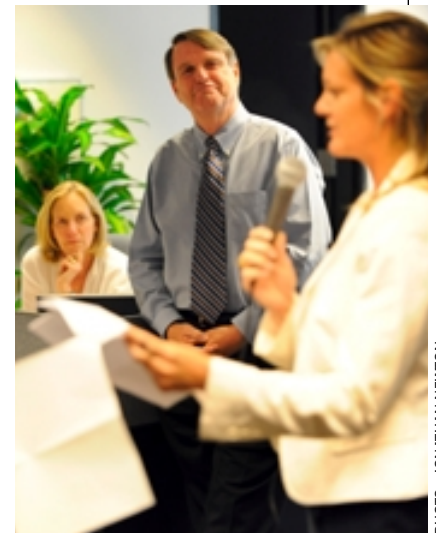
Bradlee's social circles, humor and colorful personality made him a bona fide celebrity. Downie's understated demeanor steered him clear of the spotlight throughout most of his journalistic career. Having attended Harvard and

having started a successful, but short-lived newspaper in New Hampshire, Bradlee moved up the ranks at The Post and Newsweek fairly quickly. Downie, an Ohio State Buckeye, started as a summer intern and slowly worked his way up to the top. Now it's Downie who casts a large shadow.

Marcus Brauchli, the former top editor at the Wall Street Journal, will succeed Downie. Although Downie is retiring, he will stay on at The Post as a vice president at large and focus on a book project, among other things.

Those who have worked closest with Downie, describe his leadership style, work ethic and the legacy he leaves behind.

Associate editor **Bob Kaiser** met



Len and Janice Downie listen to Publisher **Katharine Weymouth's** comments honoring Downie's career at The Post, after Downie announced that he would be stepping down as executive editor.



New Face at The Post (c. 1964): Intern **Len Downie**

WASHINGTON POST ARCHIVES



Newly minted Executive Editor **Len Downie** with Managing Editor **Bob Kaiser** (left of Downie) presides over one of the thousands of story conferences he attended throughout his time at The Post.

PHOTO - BILL O'LEARY

Downie in June 1964. Kaiser was returning to The Post for his second summer internship, while Downie was arriving for his first. "He was reserved and cautious in an environment that was new to him," Kaiser recalls. "He seemed then, as now, a straight-talking Midwesterner with no affectations. He was more determined to succeed at The Post than he let on at first."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

PHOTO - JONATHAN NEWTON

Post Softball Tourney Returns to D.C.

The year was 1972 and it seemed like a good time to embrace the family fun version of America's favorite pastime: softball. What with The Post deep into Watergate, the war in Vietnam plowing through its 12th year and not too many things to smile about, enjoying a Sunday with family, friends and co-workers in the heart of D.C. seemed like a welcome escape from the very serious newspaper business.

Thirty-six years later that healthy distraction hasn't skipped a year yet. Soon-to-be retiree **Marty Kady**, Advertising, who organized the event from 1972 through 1987 and picked it back up this year, points out that although the

softball tournament took place in the heart of D.C. for nearly



The face (and beard) of Post Softball during its inaugural 1972 season. While smoking a cigarette, **Tom Huth**, News, winds up and pitches underhand.

20 years, the construction of the Franklin Roosevelt Memorial forced then "tournament commissioner" **Mike Bahr** to push the tourney out to Wakefield Park in Annandale, Va. For the first time since 1994, Kady brought the tournament back to D.C. this year, where the Production Mailers pulled off the win at West Potomac Park on the banks of the Potomac and with the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument in view (summary of tournament on back page).

Kady, who explains that **Chris Farrell** will manage the Advertising team and has volunteered to run the tournament next year, says, "The tournament was a collective idea that a bunch of us 'old



Marty Kady, longtime Advertising softball team manager and "tournament commissioner" from 1972 until 1987, takes a swing.

jock wannabes' had to bring everybody together on the softball diamond. It's never been a Post officially-spon-

WPNI Training Multimedia Journalists

By **Katherine Jones**
ShopTalk Staff Writer

In the new media age, it's all about being a well-rounded, multimedia journalist. Being able to write is no longer enough. The new journalist needs to write, edit, record audio, tape video, snap photos, blog and maybe even dab in design and layout.

Educating and empowering students with knowledge, as well as quenching their thirst for journalism is the goal behind washingtonpost.com's annual High School Online Journalism Workshop.

Community Editor for *LoudounExtra.com* **Amy Kovac**

coordinated the second annual workshop in collaboration with *washingtonpost.com*'s **Chris Hopkins**, **Emily Freifeld**, **Whitney Shefte**, **Liz Heron** and **Jessica Plevy**. There were more than a dozen people from *washingtonpost.com* who volunteered their time to help the eight selected students with their projects. The students were split into three teams.

The workshop introduced the students to story-telling through multimedia journalism. They learned that stories can be written through pictures, video and audio. Programs like Final Cut Pro and Sound Slides were used daily

to give the students hands-on experience.

"This workshop immersed me into the field of multimedia, the wave of the future for journalism," said Arvin Ahmadi, a junior at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (Fairfax County, Va.), who participated in the workshop. "I'm a newspaper kid. I read The Washington Post every morning and I'm an editor for my high school paper, but the *washingtonpost.com* workshop showed me that video, audio and interactive features are powerfully capable of enhancing a story."

Students scheduled their own interviews and recorded

and edited their footage. They learned practical multimedia skills, which they can add to their journalism skills.

The students also had the opportunity to hear from *washingtonpost.com*'s graphic designer **Sarah Sampsel**, senior producer **Jen Chaney**, senior editor **Pierre Kattar** and Post Managing Editor **Phil Bennett**. They all spoke at the workshop luncheons.

At the end of the week, the students premiered their final products to their *washingtonpost.com* mentors and their parents.

Kovac hopes that the students can take the tools they learned and share them with

sored tournament, just something for our mutual enjoyment." Kady says that although there were also Post touch football and basketball leagues back then, those "sports are more difficult to continue playing when you get older, so they dropped by the wayside."

Over the years, Post Co. Chairman **Don Graham**, Chairman **Bo Jones**, President and General Manager **Steve Hills** and washingtonpost.com Vice President and Executive Editor **Jim Brady** have all spent their time on the diamond. ■

their school paper and advisers. "The student's enthusiasm for journalism is very infectious," said Kovac. The students' final projects can be viewed at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/high-schoolworkshop/2008/>.

The students represent the future of where journalism is headed. Kovac concluded, "Give a kid a camera, teach them something and their opportunities are endless. I wanted to give students field experience and open their eyes to a different style of journalism." ■

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A friendly rivalry began that summer. "We were both city staff reporters," Kaiser says. "An assistant City editor named **Steve Isaacs** saw that we were both highly competitive guys, and he declared a contest to see which of us would get the most front page bylines that summer. Len thinks he won, and I have decided that he must be right. We had a great time."

"As he would be the first to tell you, Len is not a colorful person," Kaiser continues. "I can't think of any stories that begin, 'Remember the time Len did such and such...?' But it's easy to be fooled by what's going on inside. Len is one of the smartest and most intense people to work at the paper in the 45 years I have been here. I remember realizing this a long time ago when he was pursuing the perpetrators of home repair and home mortgage fraud in one of his first great investigative reporting projects in the late '60s. He reported that story more thoroughly than I had ever done anything in my life, and I remember complementing him on how much he knew. He seemed pleased about the compliment, but he made absolutely nothing of it. As a lifelong self-promoter myself, I have always been impressed by Len's inability to play that game. Len is a classic example of a self-contained man."

Sports columnist **George Solomon** met Downie in 1972. "Right away you could sense this was a professional journalist who meant business," Solomon says.

"When I became an assistant managing editor for Sports in 1975 [through 2003], I believe he was already the



*Executive Editor Len Downie congratulates and thanks his longtime executive assistant **Pat O'Shea** during the recent farewell ceremony for O'Shea and over 200 Post employees who retired or are retiring this year.*

assistant managing editor for Metro," Solomon recalls. "We worked together on a number of stories and general coverage. In that capacity, Len tried to hog everything (slightly kidding) for his own section, so we began fighting over the small and large issues more than 30 years ago—a state of contention that lasted nearly 30 years."

Downie became managing editor in 1984. Solomon recalls Downie being "hard-charging and smart" and says, "While Len knew about a lot of things, had opinions and strong beliefs, he would listen to others and be open to opposing views. Sometimes."

Solomon also explains that Downie read just about every story in The Post for the past 24 years and always had a suggestion on how to make each story better. Downie also monitored other papers closely and if The Post missed a story, Solomon says, "He would come down the hall with that newspaper rolled up in his hand, and share that story with those of us beaten that day. But on the days that we had prevailed, no one enjoyed the momentary triumph with you more than Len."

Managing Editor **Phil Bennett** first met Downie in 1997 and their working relationship became closer when Downie named Bennett man-

aging editor in November 2004.

"By almost every measure," Bennett says, "Len is the pre-eminent American newspaper editor of the last 25 years. He has

an extraordinary gift that enables him to be utterly dispassionate about the news and wonderfully passionate about newspapers. To watch Len manage a big, chaotic, urgent story on deadline is to understand the excitement and joyful energy that helps keep the lights on in the newsrooms. Len has transferred this vitality to our journalism and ultimately to our readers. I've enjoyed every day working with him."

Kaiser simply describes Downie's leadership style over the years as "straight, open, no games." When asked what some people may not know about Downie, Kaiser jokes, "He is lousy at golf. He hates the use of parentheses (he thinks they are almost always unnecessary). He has spent more hours in the newsroom than in any of his homes over the last 40 years. He has one of the most infectious, loudest laughs of anyone I know."

Solomon says, "If you lived and died each day trying to make The Post better, you knew at least one person [Downie] always shared that goal with you."

Pat O'Shea his longtime executive assistant concludes, "He's a fabulous, smart boss, who just lets you get on with your job. Incredibly generous, too. I hope he lasts forever." ■

Mailers Win Post Softball Tourney



COURTESY OF JAN PASTOR

The 2008 Post Softball Champs: the Production Mailers (names listed on previous ShopTalk).

By **Joel Barefoot**
Special to ShopTalk

The Production Mailers won the 36th annual Post Softball Tournament on Aug. 3 at West Potomac Park in D.C. The team comprised of Springfield Mailroom employees led by **Jan Pastor** and **Tom Foley**, who used their experience, guile and some good ol' softball play to win the six-team tourney with a 3-1 record. Teams from Circulation, WPNI-Express, Advertising, News, Production IT and the winning team competed during a day of fun, old friends and great games.

The Mailers opened the double-elimination tourney

with a 9-6 win over a feisty Circulation team led by **Charles "Bags" Bagwell** and Post retirees **Harry Westwood** and **Ted Lutz**. The Mailers battled them three more times during the day. The Mailers then trailed a faster, younger and talented Newsroom team 3-0 in the 5th inning before waking up and pulling off the win.

In the first game of the finals, the Mailers lost 11-8 to Circulation. The one-hour lay-over seemed to affect the Mailers. The championship game began at 3:10 p.m.—six hours after the tournament began. Both teams were tired, sore and starting to show fatigue. But somehow

the momentum from the Mailers' late-game rally that proved short in their 11-8 loss to Circulation, carried over to the deciding match, where the Mailers broke out to an early lead and never looked back, winning the championship 11-3.

The win was dedicated to longtime friend, co-worker and teammate, **Joe Fiedler**, who experienced a serious neck injury two weeks ago while on vacation. He is doing well and was on the phone between games pushing the team to keep it going.

Express Web Site Relaunch

Express daily tabloid paper relaunched its Web site on July 22 under the name: *expressnightout.com* to reflect its emphasis on local events and nightlife. Check it out!

PostPoints Feedback

Do you have any suggestions on how to make the PostPoints program even better? Simply e-mail shoptalk@washpost.com.

In the Green Corner

FACT: The Post recycles its waste ink to make additional black ink.

GREEN TIP: Ride the Metro whenever possible.



Free Tickets to Freddie Mac's Hoops for the Homeless

Catch Magic Johnson, Gilbert Arenas and others at the Verizon Center on Sept. 13 for free. Employees can request up to four tickets per person. Contact **Aurora Gonzalez** at x4-7973 for tickets. Please bring canned goods to the event.

eMentoring

Interested in mentoring elementary school students from the convenience of your own computer? The In2Books national campaign kicks off this month. To find out more information visit: www.in2books.com or contact shoptalk@washpost.com.

Marketplace

FOR SALE: Crate & Barrel 1999, olive drab sofa in terrific shape. Accommodates three people sitting down or one dude laying down watching football. It's not a sleeper. There are no stains, rips or tears. Asking \$450. Contact Frank at x4-5158.

FOR SALE: Moving sale! Pecan-colored wooden dining room table with six matching chairs. Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired design. Like new. \$600. Call Don at x4-9293 or 202-213-1399.

FOR SALE: Two items: B40 Yamaha Electone Organ—in great condition with instructions. Asking \$400.00 obo. BMW car cover with brand new lock for 3 series for \$75.00. Contact Rita at copelandvb@washpost.com or 301-499-8921 before 11:00 a.m. or after 8:30 p.m.

FOR SALE: Condo in Cleveland Park for \$339,000. Between two Metro stops, has hardwood floors, lots of light and plenty of closets. Office nook in bedroom and screened-in porch off living room. Dining area, updated kitchen. Extra storage and new fitness center in basement. Low condo fee. Cats welcome. Generous street parking (or nearby spots available for rent or sale). Contact Lisa Rein at reinl@washpost.com or at 202-821-3120.

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