



NORTHERN ILLINOIS NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION



The problem with the Internet is that you never know whether what you're reading is true or not.



Abraham Lincoln

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Wrestling with weather's worst

Banquet features award-winning editor, annual awards

In a year of blizzards, tornadoes, earthquakes and hurricanes, it's only natural to focus NINA's Fall Conference on disaster coverage.

Kevin Wendt, editor of the Hunstville (Ala.) Times and a 2000 graduate of Northern Illinois University, will serve as keynote speaker for the Oct. 20 evening event. Wendt's paper provided acclaimed coverage of this year's tornadoes in northern Alabama.



Kevin Wendt

In 2005, while with the San Jose Mercury News, parent company Knight Ridder sent Wendt to Columbus, Georgia, to help the Biloxi (Miss.) Sun-Herald cover Hurricane Katrina. From Columbus, Wendt helped organize the

desk operation that remotely published the paper for 11 days. The coverage received a Pulitzer Prize for Public Service.

In 2001, with Wendt as a key designer, the Mercury News was named one of the five "World's Best Designed Newspapers" by the Society for News Design. He later would serve as the paper's assistant managing editor before departing for Huntsville in 2008.

The Oct. 20 event at NIU also features NINA's annual awards dinner, with honors announced in 28 individual categories, plus newspaper sweepstakes awards for

NINA 2011 Fall Conference and Awards Dinner

Date: Thursday, Oct. 20

Schedule:

5:30-6:30 p.m.	Social hour / cash bar
6:30-7:15 p.m.	Dinner
7:15-8 p.m.	Keynote speaker
8-9 p.m.	Awards presentation

Where: University Suite, second floor of the Holmes Student Center, NIU-DeKalb. For a map, see www.ninaonline.org.

Cost: \$30 a person. Includes dinner and program.

Parking: Please park in the NIU visitor lot, off Lincoln Highway and Carroll Avenue. Cost is \$5.

To register online: www.ninaonline.org

To register by phone or email: Contact Jim Killam, 815-753-4239 / jkillam@niu.edu.

Registration deadline: Monday, Oct. 10. Payment may be made at the door.

dailies and nondailies. Judging has been completed and contest results now are being compiled, said contest coordinator Jim Killam.

Last year's sweepstakes winners were the Moline Dispatch/ Rock Island Argus (dailies) and the Evanston RoundTable (non-dailies).

Network with other creative minds Oct. 8

Leaders in journalism, media and academia will gather for lively conversation

Please join us for a prestigious social gathering of prominent journalists, authors, filmmakers and academics.

The Saturday-afternoon party on Oct. 8 is sponsored by the Northern Illinois Newspaper Association and Northern Illinois University.

This is informal. No speeches, no panels – just a way for people connected to the media arts to socialize on a Saturday afternoon in Sycamore.

As it turns out, there is a free lunch: chili, cheese, crackers, etc... And yes, there will be beer, along with wine, water and soda.

This is a chance to mingle with high profile media professionals, including a Pulitzer Prize winner, a best-selling author, a top Chicago newspaper columnist, a Chicago Tribune editor, an award-winning filmmaker, a Chicago Sun-Times Opinion Page editor, a WLS-TV traffic reporter and former radio show host; and a New York Times and Newsweek writer.

We also will be joined by distinguished academics at the collegiate and high school levels.

Among the media celebrities coming to the party:

- **Jack Higgins**, the Pulitzer Prize winning editorial cartoonist
- **Mark Brown**, columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times
- **Eric Krol**, editor at the Chicago Tribune
- **Mark Vancil**, publisher and Michael Jordan biographer
- **Don Terry**, former New York Times bureau chief and writer for the Chicago News Cooperative
- **Anna Madryzk**, reporter in DuPage County for the Daily Herald
- **Jim Ritter**, former Sun-Times writer

“The Media Conspiracy’ gathering

When: 3 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 8 (for those going to the NIU Huskie football game that afternoon, please stop by afterward).

Where: 413 Somonauk St., Sycamore (Dirk Johnson’s home).

Cost: Free.

Why: Meet interesting people in the media and academic world.

RSVP by Oct. 1 to sycamoredirk@aol.com) Questions? Call Dirk at 815-761-6579.

now in public relations

- **Michael McMillan**, nationally prominent graphic artist, author, filmmaker and inspirational speaker
- **Tom McNamee**, Opinion Page Editor at the Chicago Sun-Times and winner of the Studs Terkel Award
- **Monroe Anderson**, former journalist for Newsweek and Essence magazines, as well as a former Chicago mayoral press secretary
- **Tom Johnson**, a traffic reporter for WLS-TV and former radio show host
- **Susan Hope Engel**, an award-winning filmmaker who has directed more than 100 films and 80 television commercials.

The gathering will be at the Sycamore home of **Dirk Johnson**, an author and journalist for the New York Times and Newsweek, who is the Writer in Residence/Outreach Ambassador at Northern Illinois University.

The social will include distinguished professors and other scholars from Northern Illinois University, as well as teachers and advisers from selected high schools and community colleges.

Please bring spouses, friends, students, anyone who might be interested.

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