

Accents

College of Mass Communications
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CALENDAR

Feb. 4

SIPA convention registration deadline for early bird fee (\$65). After Feb. 4 deadline, registrations is \$85

March 4-6

SIPA Convention & Competition at the Adam's Mark Hotel and the USC School of Journalism in Columbia, S.C. This year's theme is "Southern Shindig."

May 20

Carolina Journalism Institute registration deadline

May 27

Carolina Journalism Institute non-refundable deposit of \$100 due for commuting participants and \$150 for participants staying on campus

June 15-19

Carolina Journalism Institute

July 1

Yearbook and magazine evaluation postmark deadline for spring delivery (entry form online)
www.sc.edu/cmciis/so/sipa

Former dean reflects on journalism experiences

Leslie Dennis

SIPA Assistant



Sitting in front of a bookcase lined with Gamecock statues, Albert Scroggins, former dean of the College of Journalism, talked about his 20 years as dean, the future of scholastic journalism and even Tom Brokaw's retirement.

"It's sad that tonight is Brokaw's last broadcast. [NBC Nightly News] is one of our favorite programs," Lilla Scroggins, Dean Scroggins's wife, added.

Dean Scroggins and Lilla have been married 57 years, "so far" Dean Scroggins said with a chuckle.

"We met on a blind date, so they turn out good sometimes," Lilla said.

As they reminisced about the past and discussed the future, the couple sat in front of a wall covered with plaques and honors

awarded to both of them over the years, displaying only a part of what they have done for journalism and scholastic journalism.

Among Dean Scroggins's awards are The Order of the Palmetto, one of the highest honors bestowed on a civilian in S.C., and numerous scholastic journalism honors.

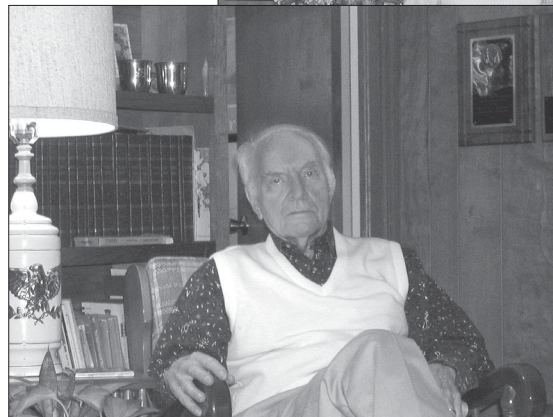
A native of Alabama, Scroggins began at Auburn University where he earned a bachelor's degree. After graduation he went into military service in the Navy, but worked as an editor with the U.S. Air Force.

"I was in the Navy (in World War II) in the South Pacific. After I got out of the service I wrote a letter to University of Missouri [for graduate admissions]," Scroggins said.



Above: Lilla and Alber Scroggins stand in front of their numerous honors.

Left: Scroggins remembers his 20 years at USC.



He earned a B.J., M.A. in English and Ph.D. in Journalism from the University of Missouri. After earning his graduate degrees he went on to head the mass communication and campus publications program at the University of South Florida and hold academic positions at the University of Missouri, Southern Illinois University, Mississippi College and Howard College, now Samford University. At Howard College he was also the director of Public Relations.

In 1965 Scroggins became the journalism dean at USC. Only seven years into his term as dean, he was the leading force in obtaining SIPA.

◆ Scroggins , Continued on Page 4

First Amendment rights may depend on future journalists with integrity

Brenda Gorsuch

DJNF Teacher of the Year



The First Amendment is very precious to us and to all Americans, but it seems to be in peril. When I began my career, I loved discussing the Tinker decision and challenging my students to rise to the challenge of responsibly exercising their freedom of the press. I was devastated by the Hazelwood decision and the lack of faith it showed in young Americans.

Last summer, I heard Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist Doug Marlette say something that really disturbed me. He said that when he began his career 30 years ago, the censorship efforts aimed at his work were from the political right. Today, he said, he experiences frequent attempts at censorship from both the political right and left. If he is correct, who will be the defenders of the First Amendment? We will always need journalists who practice their craft with objectivity, integrity and zeal as if the First Amendment depends upon them. I am afraid it may.

The 2004 State of the First Amendment report from the First Amendment Center reported that almost one third of Americans believe the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees, and that was good news because following the Sept. 11 attacks 49 percent of Americans said the First Amendment goes too far. Four in 10 Americans believe the press has too much power. Every time a reporter plagiarizes a story, falsifies a source, or fails to fully research a story serious harm is done. When our work doesn't exhibit fairness and credibility, censorship threats usually follow.

Every semester I have my students sign a contract that states: "The First

Amendment right to freedom of the press is vital to the well being of each and every American. It is so important that the right must be constantly and diligently protected by those who would practice it. Journalists cannot afford to behave in an unprofessional or irresponsible manner because such behavior threatens one of our country's greatest freedoms. For this reason, student journalists must be held to the highest standards of responsibility and professionalism."

It seems to me that Americans today view freedom as having lots of options about where to live and what to do. They see freedom as having multitudes of choices – 145 varieties of cereal, dozens of brands of toothpaste, hundred of models of cars – rather than the rights and responsibilities guaranteed by our Constitution and Bill of Rights. This current view of freedom is too limited and may explain why so many Americans are ready to surrender their freedom to politicians who promise safety and security.

If the recent election season proved anything, it proved that freedom can be very messy and very painful. Last year my *Wingspan* staff members found out just how painful it can be when a group of their peers started an underground newspaper called the *Wangspan*. Their goal was to poke fun at school personnel and to parody our publication. My students were hurt by the criticism, but they realized that the same First Amendment that we claim also protected their peers. If we teach our students about ethics, integrity, rights, and responsibilities, along with good writing and exciting design, they will rise to our expectations. My students have exceeded my wildest expectations for more than 20 years, and I am most grateful to them.

(Excerpt from Gorsuch's speech at JEA convention, Nov. 20.)

Scroggins

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"SIPA was [originally] at Washington and Lee University, and when they wanted to give it up. They gave it to the University of Georgia. Georgia had it for three years but wasn't excited about it, so the Dean from Georgia called me and asked if we wanted it. We jumped at the chance. That was in 1972," Scroggins said.

A year later, Scroggins brought Beth Dickey, now executive director, in to be the assistant director, which he and Lilla both claim to be one of the best decisions he ever made. As for his role in SIPA, Scroggins decided to take on the position of executive director of SIPA.

"As Dean I wanted to show we were serious about SIPA, so I became the Executive Director," Scroggins said. "The first year the Executive Committee went to Stone Mountain, G.A. We later went to Myrtle Beach, Gatlinburg (Tenn.), Disney World, and Asheville (N.C.). We started to bring people in to do workshops, people (high school teachers) prominent in the field."

While he was dean, Scroggins headed

numerous organizations such as president of Kappa Tau Alpha, national honor society in journalism, 1972-1974; governor of the Third District, American Advertising Federation, 1976-78; and president of Columbia Advertising Club, 1973-74.

In 1985, the fall after he retired, he became the director of a program for NASA that would put a journalist into space.

"The groups that did it were accredited journalism schools. A lot of people applied, about 7,000 if I remember correctly, and we narrowed it down to a few hundred."

But when the Challenger exploded in February 1986, the project was halted.

"When we heard about the Challenger explosion we were in Florida. We were looking up flight information because he was on his way to Washington for a meeting about the program," Lilla said.

Now, 20 years into retirement, Scroggins and

Lilla still try to attend every SIPA convention. Scroggins even remembers the names and personalities of today's SIPA members.

Because of the contributions he has made to SIPA, Dean Scroggins was honored with the Distinguished Service Award in 1979, the first year of the award, and SIPA has a special award named after the dean who first brought SIPA to its present home and who helped develop the association into what it is today.

To qualify to receive the Scroggins Award, a publication (newspaper, yearbook, literary magazine, or broadcast) must

receive an All-Southern rating and the adviser and at least one staff member must be present at the convention. An entry from each of the four divisions is chosen as the best publication or broadcast tape in SIPA and is awarded the Scroggins award, the highest honor in SIPA.

"Every organization needs an advocate like Al and every person needs such a mentor," Dickey said.

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Beth Dickey,
SIPA Executive Director