



# COVERAGE OF HURRICANE SANDY SWEEPS 2013 SILURIANS EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS

Coverage of Hurricane Sandy by an assortment of news organizations swept the 2013 Silurians Excellence in Journalism Awards for outstanding work last year. A blue-ribbon group of judges cited Sandy-related entries in the print, photo, radio, television and online categories.

Named to receive the 2013 Peter Kihss Award is JoAnne Wasserman, Brooklyn bureau chief of The New York Daily News, for her work as an outstanding reporter and her dedication to helping young journalists, in the tradition of the legendary New York Times reporter.

The awards will be presented at the Society's annual awards dinner May 22 at The Players Club.

The judges of the prize competition were Myron Kandel, chairman; Allan Dodds Frank, co-chair; Jerry Eskenazi; Herb Hadad; Barbara Lovenheim; Ben Patrusky; Wendy Sclight, and Joseph Vecchione.

The winners are:

## PRINT JOURNALISM

### **Breaking News**

The prize for breaking news in print goes to The New York Times for the paper's comprehensive in-depth coverage of the devastating impact Hurricane Sandy wreaked on the city and on coastal areas in New York and New Jersey, as well as of the aftermath of the storm. That coverage, by virtually every department of the paper, was augmented by outstanding photos, graphs and maps and was accompanied by a massive live interactive feed. The 13-day coverage grew to 643 news posts and represented the most ambitious multi-platform operation in the paper's history.

#### ***MERIT AWARD***

To The New York Post for the paper's gripping deadline coverage of the shootings outside the Empire State Building, when a gunman shot and killed a former co-worker. The Post published crisply written articles and sidebars on the event, including incisive portraits of the shooter and his victim and testimony by eyewitnesses.

#### ***MERIT AWARD***

To The Record for its wide-ranging coverage of Hurricane Sandy and its impact on northern New Jersey, including individual reports on two dozen towns in its area. Its reports were accompanied by a number of striking photographs showing the effects of the storm.

### **Feature News**

Winners of the prize for feature news are William K. Rashbaum, Wendy Ruderman and Mosi Secret of The New York Times for their thoroughly-reported and sensitively-written article on the life and death of Cecilia Chang, a dean at St. John's University in Queens, who committed suicide the day after testifying at her federal trial on charges of fraud and embezzlement. They unearthed notes and documents that helped them chronicle the bizarre events concerning her career and the details of her grisly death.

#### ***MERIT AWARD***

Daniel Bases, a reporter at Thomson Reuters, wrote a fascinating, well-written and diligently researched article on a little-known expert who influences how nations run their finances, emerge from defaults, pay their debts and re-enter the international financial markets. He illustrates how a complex and often-obscure corner of global finance can be brought to life by focusing on one key individual.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

Jay Levin of The Record is one of the best-read writers for this northern New Jersey paper. His specialty is death, and his obituaries and special features on the subject ring with authenticity, sensitivity and reality. Among his other work, he is cited for one gripping piece for which he spent months interviewing four hospice patients about their feelings about death and the nature of their lives. Rather than dwelling on pathos, his articles reflect what one patient said shortly before his death: "I am at peace."

## **Investigative Reporting**

The prize for investigative reporting goes to Sam Dolnick of The New York Times for his fiercely reported exposé of the horrific conditions that prevailed at New Jersey's privately-run halfway houses for newly-released prison inmates. In his dogged, 10-month pursuit of the story, he tracked down and interviewed current and former officials, facility workers and inmates (there's not one anonymous quote to be found in the three-part series). He fashioned a devastating account of unrelenting violence, widespread drug use, rampant gang activity, unmitigated mismanagement and lax oversight. The series led to the introduction of 14 reform bills, huge fines and the resignation from the \$100-million-a-year company that ran the system of a top official and close friend of Gov. Chris Christie.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

Newsday reporters Keith Herbert and Jennifer Maloney win a Merit Award for their investigation into the deaths and injuries that have turned Hempstead Turnpike into Nassau County's "16 Deadly Miles." Their work resulted in a host of government actions to try to make that heavily-traveled highway safer for pedestrians and drivers.

## **Sports Reporting**

Members of the sports staff of The New York Daily News win the sports award for their reporting of the bizarre case of Melky Cabrera, the baseball star who was suspended after testing positive for elevated levels of testosterone, including his machinations to avoid any sanctions and some of his shady associates.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

Bloomberg reporters Curtis Eichelberger and Elise Young receive a Merit Award for their article showing that Rutgers University pours more money from taxpayers and student fees into sports than any other large U.S. university. Their hard-hitting reporting, based on a financial data base built from documents obtained using public records requests, found a sharp contrast between spending on sports and rising tuition and fees.

## **Business/Financial**

The prize for business/financial reporting goes to Susan Pulliam, Rob Barry and Jean Eaglesham of the Wall Street Journal for their exhaustive six-month investigation that uncovered insider trading by a thousand corporate executives who traded stock in their own companies ahead of potentially market-moving corporate news announcements.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

After Hurricane Sandy devastated homes on Long Island, Newsday reporter Joe Ryan delved into the complexities and limitations of flood insurance with a series of well-researched articles that elicited widespread reader response and earn him a Merit Award.

## **Science/Health**

The award for science/health reporting goes to Delthia Ricks of Newsday for three crisply reported stories that address both the majesty and the darker side of modern medicine, including how high-tech artificial limbs have enabled a young woman who lost all four limbs resume her life; the danger of infection resulting from hip-replacement surgery, and the threat posed by the growing influx of counterfeit medications.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

Lindy Washburn of The Record wins a Merit Award for her compelling and wide-ranging coverage of the health beat that eloquently brings to life the people and issues involved. Her articles range from abuses in the medical field to inspiring examples of organ donations.

## **Arts/Culture**

The arts/culture award goes to Thane Peterson for his wide-ranging and intensively researched investigation into the questionable production and sale of posthumous bronzes stamped with the signature of Salvador Dali. His influential article, published in ARTNews (with additional reporting by George Stolz and Charles Rump), revealed a detailed picture of a flagrant abuse in today's art market.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

An arts/culture Merit Award goes to Pia Catton for an engaging series of her Culture City columns in The Wall Street Journal, in which she visited each of three museum shows of Caribbean art with a different New York-based Caribbean-American artist. Her creative approach to a sprawling, 500-work city-wide exhibition offered new perspectives and made intriguing connections.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

Philip Boroff of Bloomberg is honored for his groundbreaking coverage of the business side of the Broadway theatre, notably his article on the huge sums earned by the creators, investors and producers of the blockbuster musical "Wicked," which he found by analyzing nearly 1,700 pages of documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Law. Boroff shed new light on the profits and compensation of hit shows, which are usually closely-guarded secrets in the theater world.

## **Editorial Writing**

Newsday's editorial board wins the prize for editorial writing for its powerful and continuing series of editorials in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. In the 62 days from the arrival of the devastating superstorm to the end of 2012, the paper ran 32 editorials on the subject, among them demands that the Long Island Power Authority be privatized; exposing failures in the local emergency-response system, and questioning the wisdom of building in dangerous shoreline locations.

## **News Analysis**

Susan Antilla wins the prize for commentary for a series of eye-opening Bloomberg columns that illuminate how abuses by financial firms, lax regulation and unfair industry practices harm investors, consumers and even employees.

## **Community Service**

The award for community service goes to a penetrating series of articles by Mary Beth Pfeiffer in The Poughkeepsie Journal that explores the extent of Lyme disease in the paper's area and exposes the shortcomings and conflicting interests of the medical and governmental communities in dealing with the ailment. Her groundbreaking reports vividly demonstrate how a public health crisis has been mismanaged and minimized. A Merit Award is also given to John Ferro for his contributions to this series.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

New York Post reporter Josh Margolin receives a Merit Award for his coverage of shortcomings in the city's 911 response process and the Bloomberg Administration's efforts to suppress a report critical of the emergency-dispatch system.

### ***MERIT AWARD***

Sophia Hollander of The Wall Street Journal receives a Merit Award for a thoroughly-researched series of articles on divorce that uncovered the toll that shoddy legislation has taken on families as a result of muddled court rulings and lopsided alimony awards.

## **Magazine Reporting**

Bloomberg reporter Esmé E. Deprez wins the prize for magazine reporting for her sensitive and finely-tuned piece on income inequality and its ramifications on social mobility. Titled "Poor Forever? Connecticut's Ribbon of Hardship," it chronicles two families as they struggle to move up the financial ladder against great odds. She poignantly brings to life the reality of the growing gulf between rich and poor.

## **PRINT PHOTOGRAPHY**

### **Breaking News**

The winner in the breaking news photograph category is Richard Harbus of the New York Daily News for his evocative photo of the brunt of Hurricane Sandy as it hits a seawall in the Pennyfield section of the Bronx near the Throgs Neck Bridge.

#### ***MERIT AWARD***

Todd Maisel of the Daily News receives a Merit Award for a striking photo taken during the height of the massive fire that destroyed more than 100 homes in Breezy Point, Queens, during Hurricane Sandy.

#### ***MERIT AWARD***

Winner of a Merit Award is Corey Sipkin of the Daily News for a photo taken from Greenpoint, Brooklyn, showing the southern half of Manhattan without power in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

### **Feature News**

The award for the best feature picture goes to Robert Sabo of the Daily News for his amusing shot of Michelle Paulin of California and her dog Storme, a Dogue de Bordeaux, waiting for their turn at the 136th Westminster Kennel Club Annual Show at Madison Square Garden.

#### ***MERIT AWARD***

Showing his versatility, Robert Sabo also wins a Merit Award for his photo of New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter fracturing his ankle during the 13th inning of a playoff game against the Detroit Tigers.

## **RADIO**

### **Breaking News**

The staff of WCBS Newsradio 880 worked around the clock before, during and after Hurricane Sandy to keep the New York area informed about the progress of the superstorm and the damage, power outages and transportation difficulties it inflicted.

### **Investigative Reporting**

It started with a conversation with ex-NBA star Chris Herren and his addiction to drugs. Reporter Irene Cornell knew an important story when she heard it. She spent two months tracking prescription drug traffic in the metropolitan area, resulting in a 24-part series that shed light on doctors, addicts and the families caught in a painkiller epidemic.

## TELEVISION

### **Breaking News**

NY1 News wins the breaking news award for its consistent, authoritative and restrained coverage of Hurricane Sandy before the storm arrived, in the midst of its havoc and in the days, weeks and months that followed. Its continuous live coverage provided New Yorkers with a vital lifeline during a time of unprecedented hardship and anxiety.

### **News Feature**

When Al Campanis, then the Dodgers general manager, stumbled in a 1987 “Nightline” interview in trying to explain why blacks did not have managing or coaching jobs in baseball, the moment turned into a national discussion. On the 25th anniversary of that show, ESPN’s Jeremy Schaap and producer Willie Weinbaum put that event into perspective, talking to major figures involved and discussing the impact it had on baseball.

## ONLINE SERVICES

### **Breaking News**

Web-only [DNAinfo.com](http://DNAinfo.com) became a vital and reliable source of information during the days and nights of Hurricane Sandy and its aftermath, with reportage, pictures, maps and graphics. It helped New Yorkers keep up with the latest developments and enabled them to find such basic necessities as food, shelter and water and kept them abreast of transportation problems.

#### ***MERIT AWARD***

NY1’s political director, Bob Hardt, rode out Hurricane Sandy from his home in Rockaway Beach. He kept readers aware of the impending storm and then its rolling effects as he posted blogs and videos during the worst of it. Then, when it was over, he wrote about the aftermath in a deeply personal way, giving the reader a sense of having survived it.

### **Investigative News**

Nicole Hannah-Jones of Pro Publica receives the award for her penetrating examination of why segregated housing patterns have persisted in the U.S. five decades after the passage of the landmark Fair Housing Act. Focusing on both historical and present-day issues, including the situation in Westchester County, her startling findings showed that both Democratic and Republican presidents have chosen not to enforce one of the nation’s most important civil rights laws.

### **News Commentary**

John Sandman receives the award for shining a light on the abuses of payday- lending services that charge exorbitant fees for customers who can least afford them. His work was published in the online journal City Limits and was reported in partnership with The Investigative Fund at the Nation Institute. He found that some unscrupulous payday lenders are circumventing usury restrictions by using the internet.

#### ***MERIT AWARD***

Murray Weiss, criminal justice editor of [DNAinfo.com](http://DNAinfo.com), receives a Merit Award for his commentary, reporting and analysis of the controversial policy of “stop and frisk” by the New York City Police Department. He found that the mounting number of such actions had little impact on improving crime statistics.