



Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation

Happy Holidays! I hope this December newsletter finds you well. From the Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation, we wish you the happiest of holidays.

We want you to be the first to receive exciting news.

Last month, we announced that CVJF was creating a [Coachella Valley Media Hall of Fame](#) to recognize and celebrate the talented journalists who have contributed so much to our community. Today, we're announcing the first inductees—**Karen Devine, Bruce Fessier and Milt and Frank Jones.**

These talented individuals have been part of the local media for decades and are richly deserving of our thanks. They will be inducted at an exclusive in-person event featuring former *Washington Post* editor Martin Baron on **Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2024, at Thunderbird Country Club in Rancho Mirage.**

Baron will discuss his new book, *Collision of Power: Trump, Bezos and The Washington Post*, his time leading the Post during the Trump presidency, and insights into the future of journalism.

Emmy Award-winning journalist Hank Plante will emcee the event. All proceeds will support local newsrooms via grantmaking by the Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit.

The luncheon runs from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets can be purchased from our website --- www.cvjf.org. Individual tickets are \$200, and include lunch, beverages, valet parking and a copy of *Collision of Power*. Tables of 10 may be purchased at a discounted price of \$1,750. To inquire about sponsoring a table, please send an email to cvjournalismfoundation@gmail.com.

Here is more information about the Hall of Fame inductees:



Karen Devine

Karen Devine is celebrating more than 30 years as a broadcast journalist in the Coachella Valley. She is the evening anchor and investigative reporter for KESQ News Channel 3, which encompasses the ABC, CBS and Fox affiliates.

Karen is a multi-award winner for her in-depth and investigative stories, including an Emmy Award for “Teens and Prescription Drug Abuse: The Epidemic.” Former U.S. Congresswoman Mary Bono shared with Karen the struggles she faced as a mother with her son’s addiction to opioids. The story included another valley family who had their son kidnapped and taken to a rehabilitation facility in Utah. The story aired and more families in the desert came forward with similar challenges.

Karen was able to connect the families and Bono started a nonprofit, Mothers Against Prescription Drug Abuse, or MAPDA. Karen received the nonprofit’s Humanitarian Award in 2023 for her work educating the public about the dangers of drugs including fentanyl.

She has won several regional Edward R. Murrow Awards and was recently recognized by the National Academy of Television, Arts and Sciences with its Silver Circle award for excellence in broadcast journalism.

Her sons are her pride and joy. Her eldest, Zach, has followed in her footsteps and is a news reporter for the Fox affiliate station in Sacramento. Her youngest, Tony, wants nothing to do with journalism and is determined to make millions in the world of finance.



Bruce Fessier

Bruce Fessier wrote a people and entertainment column, as well as news and feature stories, for *The Desert Sun* and a host of other publications for 40 years, from 1979 to 2019. He continues to engage in various writing and speaking opportunities.

His *Desert Sun* career was celebrated with a State of California Assembly resolution, a CV Music Lifetime Achievement in Journalism award sponsored by the *Coachella Valley Weekly* newspaper, and an internship fund in his name at the College of the Desert Foundation to support *Desert Sun* internships.

Fessier has covered every Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, Stagecoach country music festival and Palm Springs International Film Festival since their inception.

He has interviewed a range of celebrities, from Frank Sinatra to Sonny Bono. He was roasted by a panel including Bono and jazz artist Georgie Auld in 1987 to raise funds for the Desert Theatre League, which he co-founded with actor Steve Meek. He served on Bono's founding committee in 1987 to establish the Palm Springs International Film Festival, and he co-founded the Jazz Celebrity Golf & JAMS Session in 1997 with his wife, Jane Fessier, and singer Frankie Randall.

He has received multiple journalism writing awards over the course of his career. In addition to his extensive impact on the entertainment scene in the Coachella Valley, Fessier is deeply involved in Amy's Purpose, a local nonprofit dedicated to pet safety and predator awareness. In 2022, he produced the benefit "Pet Love and Rock & Roll" to help Amy's Purpose put more veterinary workers in the field in the Coachella Valley.



Frank Jones

Frank Jones has been in the media and marketing profession for the past 40 years. He is president and owner of Desert Publications, Inc., which publishes *Palm Springs Life* magazine.

He is also the owner of the Jones Agency Advertising and Public Relations. He succeeded his father, Milton Jones, in running these successful businesses, which have been a force in the Coachella Valley for seven decades.

Palm Springs Life celebrates the Southern California desert lifestyle by offering sophisticated content to an affluent audience of residents and visitors. *Palm Springs Life* stands out as "California's Prestige Magazine."

Jones is the founding owner of Sunrise Media Outdoor Advertising; Fashion Week El Paseo, the largest fashion week on the West Coast; the Palm Desert Food + Wine Festival, one of the largest food festivals in California; and the Oasis Music Festival. A portion of the proceeds from the musical festival were donated to the Save the Plaza Theatre renovation campaign.

Jones was producer, writer, and director of the Emmy Award-winning environmental documentary, "Voices of Santa Rosa & San Jacinto National Monument," released in 2008. Jones was born and raised in Palm Springs and is a graduate of the University of San Diego.



Milton Jones (posthumous)

Milton Jones arrived in the Coachella Valley in 1957 when he opened Center Pharmacy in Cathedral City before quickly realizing his passion was for publishing and communications.

He launched the Taylor/Jones Agency, the predecessor of today's Jones Agency, in 1959 after initially selling radio advertising. The parent company, Desert Publications Inc., produces more than 20 publications annually, including *Palm Springs Life*. Jones purchased the magazine in 1965 and *Palm Springs Life* became the centerpiece of an emerging empire.

During the 1960s, *Palm Springs Life* promoted the Desert Classic golf tournament, using Bob Hope on its cover 34 times. Frank Sinatra covers publicized his celebrity golf tournament on 13 covers, and Dinah Shore smiled from more than 20 covers, showcasing her popular LPGA Mission Hills tournament.

Jones was a president of the now-defunct Desert Press Club, a vice chairman of the board of Palm Springs Savings Bank, a member of the Committee of Twenty-Five and O'Donnell Golf Club, a founding member of Palm Springs Economic Development Corporation, a founding member of Indian Wells Desert Town Hall, and a founding board member and secretary of Canyon National Bank in Palm Springs. He was the first recipient of the Dolores Hope Perpetual Guardian Angel Award from St. Theresa School in 2011.

Jones was married to his wife, Rita, for more than 50 years. He died in 2014.

Update on our Year-end Fundraising Goal

Last month, we told you that we had set a goal to raise \$25,000 by the end of the year. We are still a little more than \$10,000 from reaching our annual fund-raising goal. I hope you will see the benefit of supporting our cause and consider a year-end charitable donation.

Board member Joe Wallace has generously donated an expensive bottle of champagne. Valued at several hundred dollars, this bottle - a 1996 Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin La Grande Dame Brut - would make a terrific way to celebrate the new year! And celebrate local news!

Between now and the end of the year, anyone who donates \$500 or more to CVJF will be entered into a drawing for this tasty prize. **Go to www.cvjf.org and click the donate button using a credit or debit card or send a check to the Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation to PO Box 207, Palm Springs, Calif. 92263.**

Thank you and happy holidays.

Randy Lovely
Board President, Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation