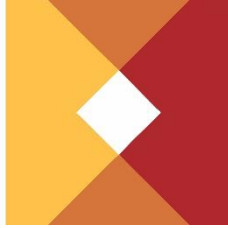


**Coachella
Valley
Journalism
Foundation**



July 2024 Newsletter

Last month, this newsletter focused on the growth of the Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation, from its year-after-year fundraising gains to the successful launch of the Media Hall of Fame. This month, we want to talk about another kind of growth – the expansion of our board of directors.

CVJF is delighted to welcome three newcomers to the board, each bringing amazing skills in the realms of media, marketing, fundraising, and finance.

We introduce you to each of the new board members below, but first we want to acknowledge the departure of director Joe Wallace, who retired as CEO of the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership in late June.

It was Joe, along with board member Ricardo Loretta, who formed the Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation in the fall of 2020 with the goal of raising enough money to fund an editor for the opinion pages of The Desert Sun. The CVJF has maintained its sponsorship of that position ever since, preserving a platform for Coachella Valley residents to exchange their views on issues of the day. We applaud Joe for his foresight and his drive to get the job done.

Formerly the board's secretary-treasurer, Joe now moves to director emeritus status. Director Julie Makinen has been elected the new secretary-treasurer.

Welcome to new board members: Christine Hughes, Erin LaCombe and Pam Watson



Christine Hughes worked as a marketing and communications executive for more than 30 years, including vice president roles at Xerox, Novel, the software services company, and Gartner, a research and advisory company, before retiring.

Since 2018, Christine has served on the Rancho Mirage Library & Observatory Foundation board and was chair from 2021-2023. She has chaired the Lincoln Club of Coachella Valley since 2022 and was previously president of the club in 2019. She joined the board of the World Affairs Council of the Desert in 2024. She also is on the

executive board of ConservAmerica, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of sound environmental and conservation policy.

Previously, Christine served on the Pacific Research Institute (PRI) Board of Directors. From 2015 to 2020, she was president of CalWatchdog, a non-profit, non-partisan journalism organization that conducted and produced research for the public on California policy issues.

She and her husband, Abe Ostrovsky, are full-time residents of Rancho Mirage.



Erin LaCombe is the founder and chief executive officer of CV Strategies, a Southern California strategic communications and public engagement firm with corporate, government, and non-profit clients. CV Strategies has offices in Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Park City, Utah.

She also serves on the board of directors of FIND Food Bank in the Coachella Valley, the California Club in Los Angeles, and the Jim Murray Memorial Foundation, now located in Cooperstown, N.Y.

Previously, Erin worked as an Emmy-winning journalist, leading newsrooms at network television affiliates such as KESQ, KDFX, and KUNA in the Coachella Valley. She also worked for KFWB news radio in Los Angeles, and KROQ-FM.

Erin is a graduate of the University of Southern California's School for Communication and Journalism, and she has three children, a daughter in Seattle and twin boys who attend college in Southern California.



Pam Watson enjoyed a career in corporate finance before retirement, working for a number of companies and ultimately being named the chief financial officer of a couple of them, including Kleinwort Benson Cross Financing.

She ultimately left the corporate world and opened her own bookkeeping company, Account Care LLC, which primarily served non-profit clients.

Pam holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Lehigh University and an MBA from Claremont Graduate University. She and her wife, Becky Eustice, lived in Manhattan Beach before relocating to Rancho Mirage in 2014.

Board expansion is not complete

With Joe's departure and change to emeritus status along with the addition of Christine, Erin, and Pam, there are now eight active directors of the CVJF board, and we're still looking for a few more. Our revised bylaws allow up to 11 members.

Our goal is to create a board that reflects the diversity of our community, and we are particularly interested in recruiting individuals from the east valley. If you have ideas on individuals we should consider, send me an email to cvjournalismfoundation@gmail.com.

For the record, other members of the board include:

- Randy Lovely, former vice president of local news at Gannett, as president.
- Ricardo Loretta, executive director of the Dr. Carreón Foundation, as vice president.
- Julie Makinen, former editor of The Desert Sun, as secretary-treasurer.
- Cary Brazeman, a marketing agency chief, as board member.
- Ken Chavez, director of community and media relations at Sunnylands, as board member.

We will update you with how the search is going in the months to come.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation.

Randy Lovely, Board President
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To donate go to our website 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, CA 92263.