



Spotlight

Scene Spotlight highlights events advertised in this issue.

El Paso Live! — El Paso Live events: Page 2.

- **Through July 28:** Viva! El Paso at McKelligon Canyon Amphitheatre
- **July 1:** El Paso Ice Cream Festival in Convention Center Plaza
- **July 4:** Frank Ray Music and Fireworks
- **July 8:** Gedeon Luke & The People
- **July 15:** Chicano Batman
- **July 22:** Queen Nation (Queen Tribute)

Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino — July tribute bands. Page 2.

- **July 6:** Javier Enrique, Juan Gabriel Tribute
- **July 14:** Rio, Duran Duran Tribute
- **July 28:** Wanted, Bon Jovi Tribute

Showtime! El Paso season — Early bird season subscriptions for the 2018-2019 season available through July 31. All performances at Abraham Chavez Theatre. Page 2.

- **Oct. 30:** Derik Nelson & Family
- **Jan. 25:** Vocal Trash
- **Feb. 7:** Saxsational: The Next Generation
- **March 28:** Sergei Teleshev and Veronika Shabashova
- **May 11:** Beginnings (Ultimate Tribute to Chicago).

El Paso Art Association — Showing June 29-Aug. 4 at The association's Crossland Gallery is "Star Spangled America" Award Show and sale. Page 29.

- Showing **July 8-Aug. 1** is International Eye of the Camera at International Museum of Art. Reception is **July 8**.
- Entries taken **through Aug. 1** for Arts International, both at International Museum of Art.

'Next to Normal' — EPCC Theater Ensemble presents the play **July 5-22** at Transmountain Forum Theater, directed by Michael Bakes. Page 23.

Magoffin Home State Historic Site July events: Page 8.

- **July 7:** Cooking Class (Lemon Ice)
- **July 11-13:** Kids Camp: 19th Century El Paso
- **July 18-20:** Kids Camp: Victorian Science
- **July 21:** Victorian Sci-Fi Book and Tea Club.

Eckankar events — Eckankar: The Path to Spiritual Freedom hosts a Light

and Sound Service **July 7**, and a Spiritual Book discussion **July 21** at El Paso Public Library's Memorial Park Branch. Page 11.

Arabesque 2018 — Snake Charmer and the Belly Dancer's annual gala performance is **July 14** at Scottish Rite Temple Theatre featuring Moria Chappell and Helena Vlahos. Workshops are **July 14-15**. Page 5.

Rio Grande Cancer Foundation — The foundation hosts Saturday classes in July and August: Page 28.

- **July 14:** Essential Oils
- **July 28:** Breathing and the Body
- **Aug. 4:** Self Healing
- **Aug. 11:** Intro to Homeopathy.

'Unforeseen Journey' — EPSMF hosts "A Night of Marimba" with Andy and Amy Smith, percussion **July 14** at UTEP's Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall, presenting the 2018 Young Musicians Awards. Page 9.

'Past Life Odyssey — The workshop on past lives is **July 21** at The Meditation Studio hosted by Dr. Bruce E. Kaloski. Page 15.

Hal Marcus Gallery — An ARTtalk "4 Amigos," works by Padilla, Romero, Mora and Marcus, is **July 26**. Exhibit runs **through Aug. 24**. Page 22.

'Musical Comedy Murders of 1940' — El Paso Playhouse presents the comedy **Aug. 3-19**, as its season opener of 2018-2019. Page 25.

El Paso Leadership Academy — Classes begin **Aug. 13** for the academy that prepares students for a college degree and community leadership. Page 13.

Learn English Classes — UTEP P3 hosts several courses through it English Language Institute for both youth and adults. Page 10.

Southern New Mexico

Zia Kaya Outfitters — Summer and fall events in Truth or Consequences. Page 3.

- **July 7:** Hobie Demo Day
- **Sept. 7-9:** Elephant Days.

Alto Artists' Studio Tour — The annual tour of Lincoln County artists run **Aug 3-5** at various studios and galleries with a preview **Aug. 2** at Spencer Theater. Page 14.

Fountain Theatre — Mesilla Valley Film Society's theatre on the Plaza in historic Old Mesilla shows independent, art, foreign and other non-mainstream films. Page 27.

I've written professionally for more than 35 years, but one title I've never bestowed on myself is that of "writer." Even when I was working full-time as a reporter, writing took up less than a quarter of my time. As an editor, writing takes up even less of my time — I spend far more time working on others people's writing than on my own.

However, if you add up all the time I've spent writing, all the time I've spent editing other writers and maybe toss into that all the time I've spent reading what others have written — then you come up with a total amount of time that surpasses almost any other waking activity of mine.

Like I said, I never refer to myself as a writer, simply as someone who writes. In school, writing seemed like a chore. I did well enough at it, but never focused on it as if it were my calling in life. Writing was more about technique for me.

Looking back, my best stories as a reporter weren't the ones I spent the most time on writing. They were the ones I spent the most time on reporting.

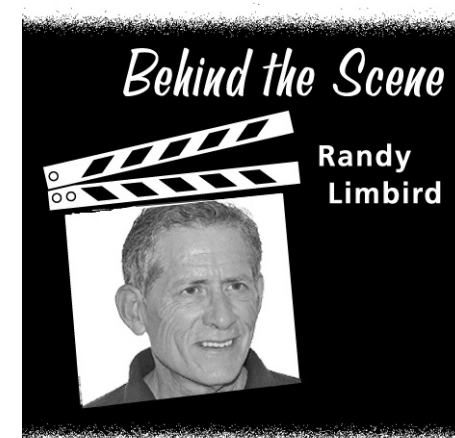
As an intern at a major newspaper, I had rewritten a feature story several times but my editor kept handing it back as not good enough. Finally he told me, "Randy, most writing problems are really reporting problems."

That piece of advice echoed throughout the rest of my newspaper writing career. If I invested enough time gathering information and interviewing sources, the writing was always easier. In fact, it felt more like editing than writing. I spent more time deciding on what to leave in or out than the actual crafting of words.

Bad writing usually results from not having enough to say, or not having thought about it long enough.

The hardest writing I ever did for a newspaper was just before I entered graduate school in journalism. A friend of mine was working as the arts and culture editor for a weekly paper and asked me if I wanted to do some reviews. Despite my utter lack of qualifications, I agreed.

I could fake my way doing reviews of community plays, but then I was given an assignment to review a Fourth of July



concert by the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Given my total lack of musical expertise, there was no way I could pretend to give an opinion on the performance.

Ultimately I gave up trying, and wrote a review extolling the overall ambience of the occasion. I wrote about the pre-concert tailgate picnics and fireworks finale, and threw in just enough details about the music performed that readers might overlook the obvious fact that I had no idea of what I was writing about.

I was never much of an investigative writer either, although I stumbled into some stories that turned into investigations. My favorite example was the case of Heritage Baptist University near Youngstown, Ohio. The college president and founder invited me to do a story on his school, which I happily accepted.

The school was a small Christian campus, hardly what I would call a university. So I had to wonder if there were any criteria required to label such a modest institution as a college or university. A few calls to state officials revealed that yes, there were, and this school did not meet any of them. In fact, the school's founder had been threatened with legal action before, left town, then re-opened the school under a new name at a new location. My stories ultimately led to the school being shut down. The most amazing part of the story is that someone who called himself a university president was stupid enough to invite a reporter to do a story in the first place.

July 2018

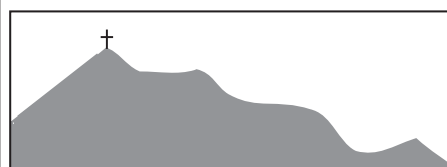
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