



News release

Contact: Kathryn Cooper
Communications Manager
2525 Bay Area Blvd., Suite 640
Houston, Texas 77058
Phone: 281.486.5535
Fax: 281.486.5068
Email: kathryn@bayareahouston.com
Visit: www.bayareahouston.com

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Jim and Lynda Guidry

Guidry News Service fills unique niche

BAY AREA HOUSTON, TEXAS – On July 8, 1996, Guidry News Service first appeared on the journalistic scene with the inception of its daily newsletter, *Galveston Fax*, delivered appropriately to facsimile machines in a fairly low tech community. Soon, owners Lynda and Jim Guidry recognized the unique advantages of the Internet and added email distribution to their services, making the newsletter interactive with *GuidryNews.com*, their Online News Station. Audio was added in 1997, and Lynda coined the term “**Webio**” to describe their “radio on the web” capability.

Jim’s extensive experience with both the spoken and written word includes more than 40 years in broadcast journalism in Houston and Galveston. The credibility he earned as a radio news man was the launching pad for Guidry News Service, now the umbrella company for *Gulf Coast E-news*, the name of the transformed *Galveston Fax*, as well as for *GuidryNews.com*.

When Lynda moved to Galveston in 1993, she contracted to perform marketing research for several oil and gas companies. She later served as director of Membership Services for the Galveston Chamber of

Commerce. Lynda became a journalist in 1996 when she and Jim were married and has been handling the management and marketing of Guidry News Service since 1999.

Public meetings, community news and special events covered

Gulf Coast E-news is a daily subscription newsletter providing comprehensive coverage of posted public meetings of governmental entities. The report includes the agenda of each: what passes, fails or is tabled. *Gulf Coast E-news* also covers school boards, community colleges and institutions of higher education, regional bodies such as port authorities, councils of government and others, serving constituencies that cross city limits and county lines.

The area of coverage, at first limited to Galveston Island, proved to be of immediate value to engineers, attorneys and other professionals who were doing business with municipal and county governments. Coverage quickly expanded to cover all 13 cities in Galveston County and later to the Clear Lake area, including southern Harris County. In early 2009, the Guidrys will open an office in downtown Houston, which will, they note, provide a better springboard for activities both in Houston and the Clear Lake area. When events in Washington or Austin affect southeast Texas, GNS reports on these as well.

GuidryNews.com also posts reports on government meetings, as well as community news and special events, documenting those events with photos, video and audio. Jim explained that one of their greatest challenges concerns the immediacy of the medium. “You have to be careful of what you are saying as you are saying it. We take that part of it very seriously,” he stated. Unlike *Gulf Coast E-news*, a subscription-based newsletter, the Online News Station is supported entirely by advertising.

Lynda added, “While *GuidryNews.com* began as an Internet extension of the daily newsletter, it has evolved into a full service news publication with feature pages including Obituaries, Education, Weather, Business & Industry, Forum, Arts & Entertainment, Faith & Values, Brenda’s Garden, Pat Patton Interviews and Victor Lang Remembers, as well as Cartoons by Al Mainwaring.”

GNS provides valuable services

According to Lynda, one of the most rewarding aspects of their work has been publishing the obituaries at no charge. “We consider this to be a service to our audience and to the deceased. We are very careful with them, and people are so grateful for that,” she said.

Residents of the region were also very grateful to Guidry News Service in regard to the vital role it played for the Galveston County Office of Emergency Management following Hurricane Ike. When it was apparent that Galveston was going to take a direct hit from Ike, Jim and Lynda loaded up their computers, and 40 minutes later they were set up at the Emergency Management Center in Dickinson. Galveston County Judge Jim Yarbrough had asked them to help relay important information to the public and media, which they did for the following two weeks. Their web site still has a page dedicated to archived news from activities surrounding Hurricane Ike.

Guidry News also provided comprehensive coverage in November of elections in the region. Tabulations of election returns were posted with the immediacy of radio or television, but remained online for later review. Jim reported that their site averages 160,000 to 200,000 hits per day. During the election, the hits increased to over 250,000 per day.

Jim credits part of their company’s success to having been positioned to take advantage of the Internet 13 years ago when Guidry News Service was still in its formative stages. He also feels that their unique service of reporting on public meetings is an important niche that no other news service provides. Lynda also recognized Jim Reinhartsen, then president of what is now the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership, for “pulling us across the county line” in 2002 when they joined the organization. She stated, “BAHEP has provided fantastic networking opportunities that have helped our business to grow.”

Bob Mitchell, BAHEP president since January 2008, commended Guidry News Service for the ongoing support it has given to BAHEP. He stated, “Jim and Lynda do an excellent job of getting the news out about our many initiatives. They were an especially important part of our annual trip to Washington, D.C., this year when they published daily reports on our advocacy efforts in Congress to support a fully funded NASA. We certainly appreciate all that they do for our Bay Area communities.”

Both Lynda and Jim stress the importance of reporting the news without bias or opinion. Many would agree that this is another unique niche that Guidry News Service fills for the public officials, businesses and residents of Bay Area Houston.

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