

ADDENDUM

Content task force - proposed beat list

We worked with the following reporter numbers to come up with a proposed beat list: 28 people on general news, including bureaus and Voices (the number goes to 30 if two strictly op-ed positions are included); 10 sports people; and seven Features/7 people. These are the numbers we have right now.

We came to rough agreement on most of the following beats, with a few qualifications listed afterward:

» GENERAL NEWS

1. Metro columnist
2. Olympia bureau
3. Boise bureau
4. HBO –Idaho online
5. Spokane city government
6. Spokane County / growth and development
7. Politics/database
8. Day cops
9. Night beat/ night cops
10. Courts
11. Investigative reporting.
12. Social services / aging
13. Environmental / natural resources
14. Education / seasonal beat
15. Higher education / GA
16. Military / GA
17. Health Care/ GA
18. Biz / Ag / resources
19. Biz / GA
20. Biz / GA
21. Idaho government / Idaho GA (including some Voices)
22. Idaho-Valley GA
23. Voices / GA
24. Voices / GA
25. Voices/ GA
26. Voices / GA
27. Voices GA
28. GA

There was a strong feeling that we could gain another three positions in general news (see explanation below). In that case, we would add three more slots as follows:

29. Second metro columnist/ blogger
30. American Culture beat / GA (we were split evenly on whether to swap this with No. 28, above)
31. GA

» FEATURES

1. Columnist
2. Features GA
3. A&E / regional history / “This Is Your Life” (profiles)
4. 7 section – music / features GA
5. 7 section – movies / books / features GA / pop culture
6. 7 section – Food writer / features GA / pop culture
7. Food editor

» SPORTS

1. WSU
2. Gonzaga
3. EWU
4. Chiefs / Shock
5. Washington preps
6. Idaho preps /UI
7. Columnist
8. Outdoors
9. GA
10. Videographer /blogger

This list reflects the current sports beats; the labels are simplified as each beat includes a number of other responsibilities.

Here’s where we think we can get the three extra positions (the ones marked 29-31 under general news): One or two reporters from the editorial page; one or two from flattening of management; and possibly one from sports.

The consensus was that we must reduce the op-ed staff so that those considerable talents can be used for general news slots. We were split down the middle on whether to take only one or both writers from op-ed (the latter of which would, admittedly, leave only the editorial page editor to produce a seriously truncated editorial menu). Yet there was consensus that having two senior writers in op-ed is a luxury we can no longer afford.

The group also believed that it might be possible to condense sports to nine

positions by deleting one position and sending it to the general news list. We felt this might be the videographer / blogger position, which could be absorbed by the other sports beats, the existing video and online producers or by teaming with KHQ or another TV station, as we discussed in the main report.

We also anticipate that the promised streamlining of management will create at least one or two slots that can be given to general news.

» A FEW OBSERVATIONS/QUALIFICATIONS

- We deliberately combined many beats with a GA beat to reflect the reality that many reporters will have to be available for anything. The Voices positions are also marked GA because of our belief that there should be – and will have to be – considerable crossover from Voices to city desk and vice-versa. The same goes for Biz beats. The “turf” lines will have to be blurrier.
- If we need to gain more straight GA positions, we would recommend combining beats further to create another GA slot or two. Some options we considered: A social services/health beat, a higher ed/military beat.
- Any of the extra beats we suggested – such as the animal beat – can be added on as a second or third beat for a willing and enthusiastic reporter.
- We do not list a “mojo” because that is more of a reporting style than a beat. The GA beat or cops beats could easily be designated as mojo beats.
- We still strongly recommend a web re-write person, but we operated from the assumption that this would come from the online/copy desk ranks, which are outside the staff numbers we were working with.
- We were told to leave photo and radio alone. That’s why you will not see them in this addendum.