

WIFV People in the News - December 2025

Sara Barger, Phelps Kelley, Emily Cohen, Dan Gutstein, Geoff O'Gara, Sheila R. Brooks PhD, Kathy Nguyen Li, Roland Millman, Laura Seltzer-Duny, Tod Hopkins, Felicia Barlow Clar, Anna Reid Jhirad

Barger Edits Film Headed to Dances With Films

Sara Barger edited the feature doc, DAD GENES, that will be premiering at Dances with Films festival on Friday, Jan. 16th at 5pm. You can watch the trailer below. [You can get tickets here.](#)

Synopsis: A former sperm donor's discovery that he's fathered dozens of children thrusts him into the global spotlight and transforms him from anonymous donor to unconventional family man.



Kelley and Pups

For the past two years, **Phelps Kelley** has mixed Stanley Pup for Monumental Sports — a playful, puppy-filled parody of a hockey game that airs during the Stanley Cup Finals (think Discovery's Puppy Bowl). The show celebrates rescue puppy adoption and is a joy to be part of, even with its fast-paced production schedule and footage arriving from multiple sources.

"This year's mix was especially intense: Due to supplier delays, my delivery deadline became the broadcast air date. Working from my home mix suite, I delivered a 72-minute broadcast-ready mix in just a day and a half. The show aired on truTV, NHL Network, and Sportsnet — a reminder that with experience, focus, and the right setup, even the tightest deadlines can sound great." [Learn more about his work here.](#)

LIZA JANE Films on NOLA

For five days in early November 2025, the team of **Emily Cohen** (co-producer), Alyson Sperry (cinematography), Brian Graves (director of

photography), and **Dan Gutstein** (co-producer) raced around New Orleans all on behalf of a certain Poor Gal, “Lil Liza Jane.” The team HQ’ed at a mega hotel, with the ladies in one room (524) and the blokes in another (526), although someone, mysteriously, lived in between us in 525. (Who dat? Dunno. Never saw.) We gulped coffee, dreamt of po’ boy sandwiches, told the mostly-true tales of our lives, wept, dried our eyes, weathered numerous cases of the sillies, and marveled at the fabulous hospitality of a truly great city, The Big Easy, while instruments and voices — “O, Eliza, Lil Liza Jane!” —soared.



"From Preservation Hall to the Dew Drop Jazz & Social Hall, from Tulane University to the Jazz & Heritage Foundation Academy, from WWOZ Radio to the Louisiana Music Factory, from atop the riverboat Natchez to a sidewalk outside Willie Mae’s restaurant, from a second line parade to the murals, streets, and orange cats of the Seventh Ward: we captured music performances, interviews, and iconic images of NOLA. And, once we edit this mayhem, I do believe **an epic film** full of heart and warmth will issue forth. Because the characters in the film *love* that poor gal “Lil Liza Jane” and *love* their great city of New Orleans. *A lot.*" ~Dan Gutstein

Read the full story and see more photos here. WIFV is honored to be the fiscal sponsor for this documentary. **Help Liza Jane on her journey with your contribution here.**

Photo Caption: After an all-day film shoot at the Dew Drop Jazz & Social Hall. Back row, L-R: Alyson Sperry, Dan Gutstein, Chris Finney, Brian Graves, Emily Cohen. Front: Dom Flemons, Joy Clark, Don Vappie, Washboard Chaz. Credit: John McCusker

Caldera Doc in 250 Timeline

Geoff O’Gara of **Caldera Productions** is pleased to announce that THE STATE OF EQUALITY will be part of NETA distribution for the Public Media Making History at 250 Timeline series that begins in January. No firm broadcast date in our region yet, but March looks promising.



The documentary is about how women in the West (and Wyoming first of all) got the vote before the Constitution was amended. Could be perfect timing to remind people that an Equal Rights Amendment also needs some formalization!

For decades, public media has documented the history of our communities. In honor of the upcoming US semiquincentennial, stations across the country are sharing stories that shape our nation’s identity. Explore documentaries, education resources & more at **publicmedia250.org**. Don't forget, your public broadcaster does respond to audience demand and NETA makes it easy for them to access programming.



Brooks Inducted into National Capital Public Relations Hall of Fame

PRSA National Capital Chapter (PRSA NCC) announced that **Sheila Brooks, Ph.D.**, and Shonali Burke have been selected as the 2025 inductees into the National Capital Public Relations Hall of Fame. The induction, states PRSA NCC, “recognizes their extraordinary leadership, innovation and lifelong dedication to excellence — and to advancing the public relations and communications profession.

“Dr. Sheila Brooks and Shonali Burke exemplify the highest standards of leadership, innovation and service in our profession,” said Crystal Borde, 2025 PRSA NCC President. “For nearly five decades, Dr. Sheila Brooks has used communications to expand opportunity, elevate underrepresented voices, and mentor hundreds of emerging

practitioners. Since the start of her career, Shonali Burke has advanced and reshaped modern public relations through her pioneering integration with social media, ethical, data-driven approach, and her generous commitment to educating, developing and supporting communicators worldwide. Together, their dedication and impact have elevated not only the National Capital communications community, but the global field of public relations.”

Nguyen Li Prizes and Option!

Kathy Nguyen Li's drama short, **TO BE SEEN OR NOT TO BE SEEN**, wins Best Screenplay in Space Dream Productions' Short Film Screenwriting Competition...with the grand prize being they'll produce her short film! Her screenplay is officially optioned and in development.



Kathy was a 2023 WIFV Narrative Script Development Fellow, where she workshopped her drama feature **REFUGE**, which placed Semi-Finalist in the 2023 Academy Nicholl Fellowship Competition. Kathy's dramedy feature **NGUYEN OR LOSE** won the 2025 Virginia Screenwriting Competition.



Millman Documents Millman

A new Instagram project from **Roland Millman**

Creativity is about being active but also about being mindful. This is something I've been witnessing in technicolor as I've supported and witnessed the birth of my father's latest project - the making of @Aging_Isaac.

I have been producing/shooting and creating film, video and photography since 1983 - that's a long time, wow! 42 years and they flew right by. I spent 15 of those years working with my father, Isaac. I was an in-house video producer and called on my father's art department to collaborate. He spent his career as an illustrator turned art director and then went on to write and illustrate children's books. Personally and professionally, my father has always impressed me. His drive, his focus and how he churned out material without regard to whether it was perfect or not. He mastered the art of "just get it on paper". I always wished I could do that too. I try.

They say creativity is "one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration". Heck yeah, but also patience, looking for a spark and then acting on it.

There was a period of time when my father stopped drawing. At 91 he felt like he hit a wall. He shakes, everything hurts, and he is often dizzy. My mom once said, "The machine is grinding down to a halt." That's a little dramatic but we are a creative family. My mom ordered him to, "Get back to work!" And so he did.

Over the past few months, my father has been churning out a cartoon every day - sometimes two. Initially posting them to the family text chat. They were rudimentary - wobbly text, the penciling was done over and over and the inking sometimes went awry. They told the story of his struggles and fears. We have a dry sense of humor in our family and the cartoons reflected it. Eventually, he refined the cartoons a bit. His old style poked through in the old familiar way he used to lose himself in his work - his survival instincts.

One afternoon I was inspired to film my parents, sitting in their dining room, talking about "the work". I wanted to make it part of this greater project. It carried a story on its own. A new Instagram channel was born: @Aging_Isaac.

What I learned, I always kind of knew: Creativity doesn't happen in a vacuum. Creators aren't gods, we're hunters. What we create is simply a repackaging of how we experience the world: fear, love, beauty, strife, everything that touches us. We pluck it from our

environment and tell the story.

As creators, we're sometimes blessed with inspiration and other times digging deep to craft sound, images, and words that open a door, a moment for people to connect with something inside themselves or with the wider human experience. That's the gift of connection. Please visit and subscribe to [@Aging_Isaac](#) on Instagram.



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Thank You!

We appreciate everyone who took time to write a testimonial about WIFV at Great Nonprofits. We remain a Top-Rated nonprofit on their site consulted by donors and volunteers. You don't need to wait for a call for testimonials, [you can add your insights anytime throughout the year here.](#)

An Informal Coffee

Laura Seltzer-Duny was coming to DC for a conference so she let **Tod Hopkins**, **Melissa Houghton**, **Felicia Barlow Clar**, and **Anna Reid Jhirad** know and they gathered for coffee and conversation in early December!



Thanks to the WIFV Sponsors



News Deadline

The deadline to submit your information for the monthly Members in the News e-publication is the 10th of the month. Send your article (100 words or so) and a jpg-format photograph or link to your video project to director@wifv.org.



About WIFV

Women in Film & Video (WIFV) provides educational and networking opportunities for screen-based media makers, celebrates women's creative and technical achievements in media, and advocates for parity both in front of and behind the camera to ensure that all voices can be heard.



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