Report to the Board
Texas Student Media
Gerald Johnson, Director

Happy New Year – we are happy to have you back! Here are bullets since our last meeting.

**Business and Operations:**
TSM has been finalizing its presentation for the Student Services Budget Committee (SSBC). SSBC represents our largest budgeted allocation, which has amounted to $430,000 annually. A select team will present to the committee on Monday, February 9.

Frank has uncovered an opportunity to save budget dollars by pulling the subscriber mailing in-house. This move took effect January 20th when the Daily Texan resumed publication. The annual savings is estimated to be $4,000+ before postage savings are factored.

Erik Belanger was a valued member of the Daily Texan staff in the late nineties when he passed away. His parents, Annette and Roland, established an annual $500 scholarship for an artist on the DT Comics staff. When Roland recently passed, Frank and I worked with Annette and the Moody College to set up a $10,000 endowment so that this act of kindness will continue.

**People.**
Lindsey Hollingsworth, Account Executive, resigned January 16. This position has been posted. Estimated start date of March 1.

Administrative Assistant is vacant as of January 9. This position will be filled and upgraded to Administrative Associate. Candidates are currently being interviewed. Estimated start date of March 1. Frank is managing daily business operations with assistance from a UTemp and generous support from Bob Cross and the KUT crew.

Advertising Manager position has been filled. Denise Twellmann begins February 23 and will be introduced at the board meeting.

Advertising Assistant position has been filled. Shukree Shabazz started January 28 and will be introduced at the board meeting.

Print Media Advisor position has been filled. Peter Chen started January 5 and will be introduced at the board meeting.
Advertising
Quarterly reports and monthly progress will be shared at the meeting.

TSM Advertising has begun their efforts to sell advertising in the Cactus. This effort was managed by an outside vendor in the past. The new arrangement will help us to establish better relationships with Cactus supporters and an increase in revenues. An email has been sent to former advertisers of the Cactus soliciting 2015 ad placements. Ten years of advertisers have been catalogued and assigned to the advertising staff.

The student staff retained 7 sellers who were here in the Fall. Rohan and I are in the process of recruiting new students to participate. Two have been added this week and are currently training on the TSM portfolio.

Our annual Housing Fair event is on deadline as of the board meeting. This is our largest event of the year. Last year’s revenue was $87,000 and current year will be flat or even a slight increase.

Digital
Progress is being made on a request for pricing for The Daily Texan print archive/digitization project. This has been an initiative that was started with Friends of the Texan. TSM/KUT worked closely with the UT Libraries to draft the RFP language that is now in process with the procurement team.

Media kits are available online and include lead generation reporting – this is a first for TSM. These are also being promoted through the Daily Digest.

Daily Digest subscribers increased 12% - much thanks to Riley for this outcome. There are currently 5,200+ subscribers and the Daily Digest has become an integral and important part of our digital advertising portfolio.

In conjunction with ITS, our interim advisor and Texan staff members, articles at dailytexanonline.com contain larger imagery.

Marketing, Creative Services and Production

Assessment and rehiring of Creative Services student staff (designers, associate editor and writers for Longhorn Life) was conducted.

Fundraising. December included a collaborative brainstorm to devise our story, identify successful alumni and identify ongoing needs. The first draft of our story is in the works and will help TSM to do a much better job of fundraising in the future.
Other projects have included: Cactus Yearbook sales materials, Student Seller ads and creating the presentation for the SSBC meeting.

**Advisor**
In his short time with us, Peter has brought in professors from Moody College to discuss assignment of editors and how to manage staff and work loads. In addition, two professors have participated in critiques and will return after tryouts to conduct a basic news writing primer.

Peter’s expertise is multi-media and he has worked with the photography staff to improve environmental portraits.

Karen Tumulty is an esteemed alum who is a Senior Political Reporter at the Washington Post. She worked with Riley, Jordan, Peter and Gerald to identify opportunities in social media and changing the culture of our newsroom to digital first.
To the board:

January has been an incredibly hectic month for Cactus, as we finally have a publisher and are now submitting pages and adhering to deadlines.

Here are the highlights:

- We submitted the cover and endsheets to Walsworth on January 23.
- We submitted the first 81 pages of the book to Walsworth on January 30. That was 45% of the book!
- We are still having issues with staff turnover, but they're not as bad as we expected. Until our writing staff grows, the copy editors have taken on story assignments. We also had to pull some Daily Texan coverage to meet our first deadline.
- We have decided to move on from trying to create a sales partnership with Texas Parents. Currently, our marketing editor is reaching out to spirit groups around campus to see if they would be interested. We also just ordered new marketing material like posters to put up around campus. We are looking into hiring a new a second sales editor so that we have more help in sales initiatives.
- We have another 60 page deadline due on February 27, so we will be busy at work on that!

We are very excited because of all the progress that has been made this month!

Stay prickly,

Tess Cagle

*The Cactus* Editor-in-Chief
February 1, 2015

To the Members of the Board:

The semester is off to a good start. The opinion department started out with a strong field of returning and pre-selected writers. Tryouts have been a low-key and leisurely affair, with ample opportunity to be discriminating in filling the few remaining positions available.

As always, I’m proud of the commentary we’ve offered on the editorial page as well as the guest opinion on the Forum page. We’ve lauded Gov. Abbott for his first picks for the UT System Board of Regents and criticized the religiosity of his inaugural address. Although most of the editorial board left at the end of last semester, the new members have learned the ropes quite quickly and we are already working quite efficiently.

I’m particularly pleased to share some results from outreach efforts. In early January, I started a relationship with one of the editors of the @Texas newsletter, which goes out to hundreds of thousands of alumni every month. Together we have been curating Daily Texan content for the newsletter’s readers. In January, @Texas highlighted a story we ran in December on where UT students come from. This, along with its later being disseminated via the UT Facebook page, led to around 13,500 new page views on a story more than a month old.

I followed up this success later that month with a campus-wide email advertising the Daily Digest which netted us 569 new subscribers. Again, this was made possible by a relationship I had previous forged with a member of the provost’s office.

This month’s @Texas, which went out this week, features a recent story about a lecture series recognizing Hank Aaron. Readership numbers are not yet in for this issue.

These outreach successes underline the importance of relationship-building, and future editors should look to repeat or exceed them.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Riley Brands
Editor-in-Chief, The Daily Texan
To: The Texas Student Media Board of Trustees  
From: Jordan Rudner, Managing Editor, The Daily Texan  
Date: Feb. 6, 2015

Hello all,

I hope the spring semester is going well for everyone. At the Texan, we definitely got off to a running start — and I am happy to say we show no signs of slowing down. Here’s a look at where we stand:

- **Recruitment** to bolster our staff roster got off to a very strong start. We received over 200 applications across 10 departments, largely as a result of an aggressive advertising campaign we launched in person and online. Associate managing editor Jack Mitts organized tabling on the West Mall during the second and third weeks of tryouts, which increased the scope of our applicant search — and boosted our visibility on campus.
- In terms of **written content**, we’re working hard to cover all that merits covering — while anticipating the needs and interests of our audience. The news department always has its hands full, but never more so than during a legislative session, and all our senior reporters are working hard to provide inclusive and informative coverage across the board. The sports department has been thorough in its basketball, tennis and track and field coverage, and writers are preparing for baseball season. Life & Arts is working on a total section reconfiguration — continuing its focus on campus characters while undergoing a major expansion to cover local entertainment, with a focus on music, television and books.
- Our **multimedia coverage** is also incredibly strong — our photography team has especially benefited from our new adviser’s photography background. The video department is working to become increasingly flexible and creative. Meanwhile, multimedia editor Dan Resler is taking on an ambitious new approach to DT podcasts — heading to iTunes soon.
- **Social media promotion** is hitting an all-time high. Thanks to major efforts from our new social media team, led by Sydney Rubin, we’re hitting new levels of engagement across all platforms. On Twitter, our average “link clicks per day” is reaching new heights, and readers are actually responding to the questions we pose. We recently launched a weekly Storify feature where we gather readers’ responses to the most exciting news of the day, which will hopefully reinforce our audience’s newly-adopted engagement behaviors.
- Finally, I am very excited to announce our brand-new department, **Special Projects**. The team, captained by Amanda Voeller, is dedicated exclusively to improving the inner-workings of The Daily Texan and setting up structures that will benefit the whole
organization in the long-term. Amanda’s team is working to preserve institutional memories, smooth transitions between semesters, and make small improvements to our website with the goal of maximum impact. The digital projects team, led by Miles Hutson, is simultaneously working to create interactive content to complement and enhance our online coverage.

As we head further into the spring semester, The Texan is finding new ways to best serve our community, while working equally hard to improve organization within the basement — and across the board, Texan staffers are handling each new initiative with enthusiasm and aplomb.

All the best,
Jordan Rudner
Daily Texan Managing Editor
Planned Events for the Semester:

• On April 7\textsuperscript{th} we’ll be screening the cult classic The Room in the Union theater. The room and equipment have been booked, and this will help us maintain a presence on campus in between our second and third issues.

• On April 25\textsuperscript{th} we’ll be co-sponsoring a Moontower Comedy Festival showcase in the Cactus Café (shout out to Gerald for organizing this event).

Valentine’s Day

• Several projects are in the works, as none of us have anywhere to be on Valentine’s Day anyway. We’ll be making special order, custom Valentine’s Day cards for couples too lazy to write them to each other. We’re also considering doing a ‘Win a Date with a Travesty Member’ contest.

Student Government:

• As per usual, we’ll be involved in student elections, i.e. running candidates and doing video interviews. This is usually when the most buzz and publicity is generated for the Travesty, so we’re going to take advantage of it.

Staff Training:

• Travesty members who hold upper staff positions are choosing some of the younger folks to shadow them this semester so they’re ready to take the reigns come next fall. These positions include Distribution Director, Social Media Director, and Interview Coordinator.

Miscellaneous:

• Our Bill Powers t-shirts are currently in the design stage.

• First issue comes out on February 10\textsuperscript{th}, make sure to grab yourself a copy.

• I wish we had more to report to the board right now, but until the first issue comes out we’re mainly planning out the rest of the spring semester.

Chris Gilman
Texas Travesty Editor-in-Chief
Productions

- Confirmed for ISOJ later this semester
- Housing Fair later this month. Big revenue for TSM.
- Booked again for convocation at the end of the semester.

General Station Things

- Comm Council money has been spent on ordering sorely needed new equipment for a growing volunteer base. For $2,250 we ordered: 3 new tripods, 2 Sennheiser cardioid mics, 2 Xoom audio recorders, 8 new XLR cables, 8 new lav mics, 2 LED camera lights, a lav mic that records audio onto phones, mic flags, and more.
- A lot of people are looking forward to 24/Seven and I need info on when the TSM fundraising initiative in April will be, to solidify the dates.
- The transition to the college has caused some bureaucratic glitches that are frustrating.
- Nearly (or, by now) complete on establishing a system for Daily News Updates from TSTV that will go up online.
- I will be producing one station promo a week.
- The General Meeting will be (was) Thursday, February 5th and will be (was) a huge success.
- New members of TSTV staff were hired or replaced other members, and things look positive for the semester.
- VGHL recently had three Rooster Teeth TSTV alums on for an episode, and it resulted in their largest online audience.
- The Entertainment Department is mentally and physically gearing up for SXSW.
- Increase in amount of commercials aired on TSTV recently has been great.
- Social media continues to grow each day.
- In talks with two potential applicants for station manager next year. They’re both really great, and they’re working out if they want to apply or pursue a different course.

If you have any further questions or concerns, or ideas, please don’t hesitate to ask. I look forward to trying to make TSTV the best it can be before I am forcibly removed from office.

Here’s to 2015,

Edward Stockwell
Members of the board,

Happy 2015 and welcome back! KVRX has been up and about over the winter break and we’re thinking the spring semester is off to a good start.

**New Schedule**
- A (mostly) painless transition into a new semester and new schedule. We had to play nearly no catch-up in scheduling each hour of programming. I don’t know how much that means to most, but to me it’s a sign of improved interest in retaining/gaining DJs.

**New Staff**
- I’ve managed to hire for the first time in my time as Station Manager what I deem to be a fully staffed… well… Staff.
- Looking back, I don’t think we have done this since two years ago?

**New Volunteers**
- We held our first spring General Meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 28\textsuperscript{th}. We’ve already signed up 40+ new students to come in for a session of Saturday DJ training.

**Live Events**
- Free week shows went splendidly. Each show got a sizeable turnout and we got a chance to talk about KVRX with more than a couple people/students.
- We hope to keep bolstering our relationships with Holy Mountain and the Empire Control room for future endeavors.
- My Booking/Music Directors are a buzz/planning for SXSW. We’ve got a couple things lined up that I can further detail at a later date.

**20 Year Anniversary Aftermath**
- KVRX reached it’s goal of raising 20K towards a new transmitter.
- Gerald, Stewart, Frank, and myself met with Sara Beechner for a thank you lunch and to discuss KVRX’s present and long-term relationships with alumni.

**Looking Ahead**
- We are looking forward for the next board meeting to discuss acquisition of the new equipment.
- I know Edward has mentioned this in the past for TSTV, but KVRX is also always keeping it’s eyes and ears open for some news and/or developments on the search for a new Broadcast Advisor.

Happy February – go buy a lot of overpriced chocolate and cards / take it easy at Mardi Gras / and definitely take it easy on Chinese New Year

Rodrigo Leal