

**Nancy Black**  
**Continuing the Fight**  
**UNT Oral History Project**  
**Interview facilitated by Brianna Moore**

In an industry that has traditionally been dominated by men, women everywhere have struggled and fought to leave their mark in the world of journalism and claim their place among their contemporaries. Like her hero Vivian Castleberry, Nancy Black is working to continue the fight to ensure that women no longer have to struggle for a seat at the table.

Black, is the owner of the *White Rock Lake Weekly*, a local newspaper that serves the residents of East Dallas. She never planned on owning a newspaper. As a young girl, she was interested in a career in acting. After graduating in 1982 from the prestigious performing arts school, Booker T. Washington High School, Black briefly attended Brookhaven College before moving to Hollywood to pursue her acting dreams.

After 12 years in California, Black moved back to Texas and had a change of pace. She re-enrolled at Brookhaven College and, on a whim, fulfilled an elective credit as editor of the school paper, the *Brookhaven Courier*. Discovering she had quite an affinity for the news, Black completed her associate degree and was awarded a scholarship from the Association for Women Journalists to study journalism at Southern Methodist University. While there, she interned at KERA and once again followed in the footsteps of Castleberry, as Editor in Chief of SMU's student newspaper, *The Daily Campus*. In 2002, she graduated from SMU with a bachelor's degree in journalism.

After graduating, Black promptly took a job writing the morning news for WFAA. She later worked as Director of Development for Lone Star EMMY, chartered by the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. Black remained at Lone Star for two and a half years before she was laid off during the 2008 financial crisis. However, as the adage goes, "when one door closes, another opens." After taking a brief job as an editor at a local subscription-based paper, Black moved on to her most significant endeavor yet. With the help of her business partner Andrew Simpson, Black decided that she would start her own paper. On June 19, 2009, the first issue of the *White Rock Lake Weekly* was published.

As owner and editor in chief of the weekly, Black serves in a role that few others will ever find themselves in. She works hard to establish the voice of the paper and uphold the standards of a free press. While she is dedicated to her work, the journey has not always been easy for her. Despite the challenges, Black is focused on producing a quality paper anchored in truth and focused on the community. Black is currently working toward becoming a part of the Texas Press Association. She says she prints up to 10,900 copies of the paper per week. Based on distribution data, she estimates that around 30,000 residents read the paper. In 2013, the Greater East Dallas Chamber of Commerce awarded the *White Rock Lake Weekly*, the Live Local Award.