

DEATHS ELSEWHERE

# James Naughton, former PD writer

From staff and wire reports

James M. Naughton ran the Poynter Institute for Media Studies; he was the pranksterish executive editor of the Philadelphia Inquirer; he reported from Washington for the New York Times.

But before all of that, he was The Plain Dealer's uniquely well-liked chief political writer.

Naughton, 73, died Saturday in St. Petersburg, Fla., after a battle with cancer.

The Philadelphia Inquirer's obituary said:

*An impish man with a disarming smile, Naughton was irrepressibly mischievous. As chief of newsgathering operations when The Inquirer won more than a dozen Pulitzer Prizes, he injected the newsroom with a puckish spirit that he believed stimulated creativity and cohesion.*

*Naughton was born in 1938 in Pittsburgh and raised in Painesville. When he landed at The Plain Dealer in 1962, he was a seasoned and confident 24-year-old.*

*"His copy was impeccable," said Don Bean, The Plain Dealer's former police reporter who became a reliable co-conspirator upon whom Naughton would call in later years to obtain farm animals to plant in reporters' hotel rooms when the campaign passed through Cleveland.*

*As political editor at The Plain Dealer, Naughton's electoral predictions showed such prescience that he was invited to speak at the City Club of Cleveland. He showed up wearing a turban and cape and toting a crystal ball, Bean said. Though the newspaper's brass was displeased with Naughton's irreverence, the young reporter had discovered his "swami" persona, which became a recurring role for the rest of his life.*

*Naughton came to the attention of the Times during his coverage of the 1967 Cleveland mayoral election, in which Carl Stokes became the first black mayor of a major U.S. city. When Naughton left for the Times' D.C. bureau in the summer of 1969, it was a major public event. From the Plain Dealer story by Robert Stock:*

*The way this thing for Jim Naughton got going, you expected them to have a robbed choir gathered at sunset on Public Square and singing: "Fare thee well, O Moxie Naughton." Naughton (James M.), this paper's politics writer, was cheered on his way by an extraordinary assemblage of 470 persons at lunch yesterday in Hotel Sheraton-Cleveland. He is going to Washington to work for the New York Times.*

*YOU SHOULD have seen that crowd. It included more different kinds of politicians and office-holders, not to mention lawyers and PR guys, than anybody ever caged in one room before.*

*The CTS board was there. The Cleveland school superintendent. The police chief. Councilmen and state legislators. A veritable outpouring of judges.*

*Various aspects of the Board of Elections. Party officials. Labor leaders.*

*George Condon, introduced as a "distinguished" columnist, was toastmaster. ... Condon mentioned Albert S. Porter, county engineer and Democratic chairman.*

*"THEY HAVE had a strange relationship in that Jim has been trying to reach Porter by phone for four years now."*

*At that point, a cleverly planted phone rang. Condon picked it up and said, "Jim, he's returning the call."*

*But he wasn't really.*

*When Naughton left the Poynter Institute — a key training center for the industry — in 2003, he said covering the '67 election still was one of the high points of his career. And he still loved the business:*

*"I love being in the company of people who care about the written word, the oral word. I love the dark humor and a mix of skepticism and a self-effacing understanding of the role," he said.*

*He still loved pranks, too. And that can be traced back at least to The Plain Dealer times as well.*

*In John H. Tidyman's book "Gimme Rewrite, Sweetheart," a collection of anecdotes from Cleveland journalists, Naughton tells of a practical joke he and Don Bean pulled on Cleveland Press reporter John Hernandez when all three were working the police beat out of the old Central Police Station.*

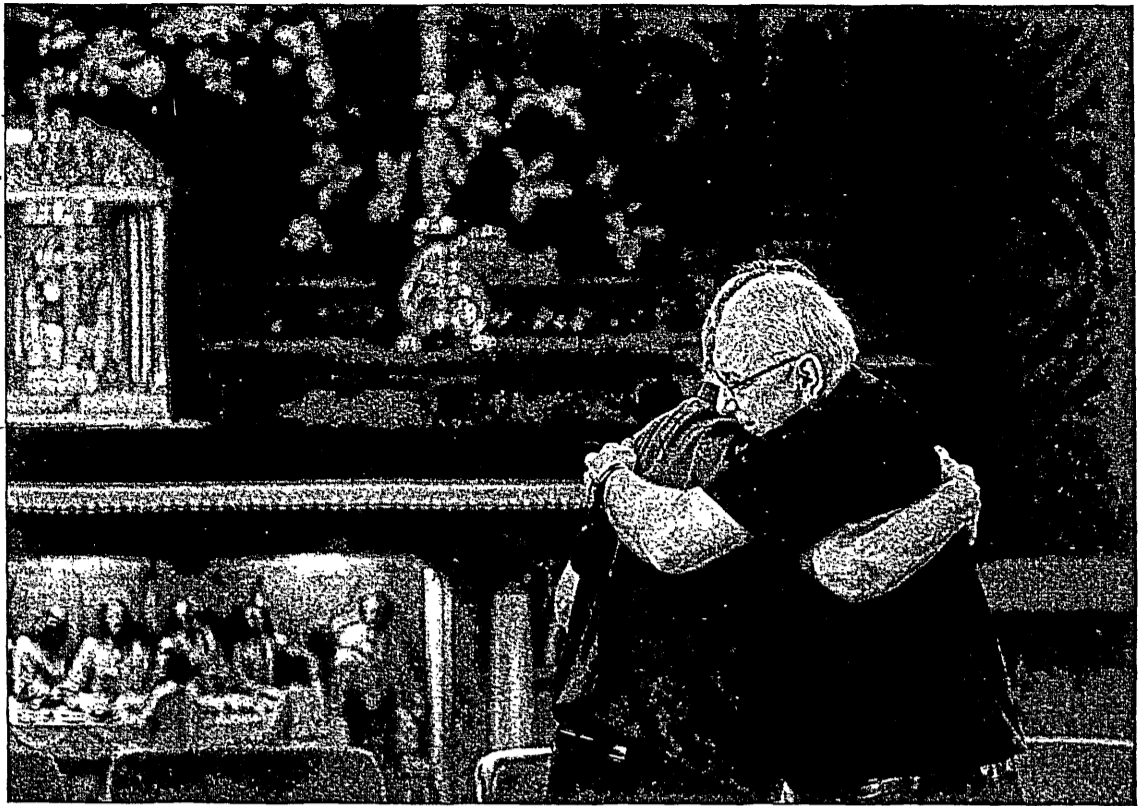
*They cooked up a phony story of a big plane landing on the Shoreway and called it in to Hernandez, in his separate office at the station. They even got their copy boy/photographer, Dick Conway, to pretend to pack up his camera gear for the big story:*

*Then Conway jumped out our window onto the parking ramp and got in the PD police beat car and revved it. Hernandez jumped into his car and tore off toward the scene. Well, Conway came back in, and we had figured we'd let Hernandez get part way there and then phone him on the newfangled phone in his Press car and tell him we'd found out it was a hoax.*

*It turned out he was so eager to beat us there, he did not take the time to use the key that unlocked the phone — which by then was dangling with the other keys from his car's ignition — so we couldn't reach him. As time elapsed, we figured he'd cruise around and come back. Then we heard a call on police radio that, as I recall, was like this: "This is car 596. We've got a Press reporter who says there's a plane down on the Shoreway."*

*All hell broke loose. Sirens everywhere. Coast Guard checking the Lake Erie shore. Police driving over Bratenahl golf course. We lived in fear for months that we'd be found out, but so far as I know, neither the authorities nor Hernandez ever traced it to Bean and Conway and me.*

*Go to cleveland.com to read more about Naughton, including one of his final columns for The Plain Dealer.*



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GUS CHAN | THE PLAIN DEALER

The Rev. Gary Chmura, the new pastor of St. Adalbert Catholic Church, and the church's former pastor, the Rev. Ken Pleiman, greet each other with a hug before the church's reopening Mass on Sunday. Go to cleveland.com/metro for a photo gallery.

## MASS

FROM B1

### St. Adalbert parish celebrates rebirth

They then burst into song: "We've come this far by faith ... Can't turn around. We've come this far ..."

St. Adalbert's new pastor, the Rev. Gary Chmura, during his sermon, told the story of the late Nell Mary Shealey, a black Roman Catholic who settled in Cleveland 85 years ago:

One Sunday, she attended Mass at the now-defunct St. Agnes Catholic Church on Euclid Avenue. She was the only black person among the white worshippers.

After the Mass, the priest approached her, escorted her out the door and, pointing down East 79th Street, told her "the colored church" is down the road.

He didn't know the name of the church. He just said "the colored church."

"So here we are," said Chmura. "Descendants of faith-filled African-Americans and the grandson of Polish immigrants.

"Together we have something to celebrate.

"The good news we share is that the church for African-American Catholics is not down the road anymore. The church for immigrants and refugees is not somewhere down the street.



Three women, Jane Skinner, left, Rebecca Blair and Frances Cummings, were among a standing-room-only crowd at the reopening of St. Adalbert Catholic Church on Sunday.

It is here."

Nell Shealey's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren are still parishioners of St. Adalbert.

Last Thursday, one of Shealey's daughters, Joyce Sanders, joined a dozen parishioners in cleaning the church for Sunday's reopening Mass.

"It's been a long two years," she said, wiping pews and kneeling with Murphy's Oil Soap. "Our prayers are answered, our faith never faltered."

But Chmura cautioned the

congregation Sunday that putting the parish back together is going to be difficult. It was struggling before the closing and has since lost a lot of parishioners.

"I will struggle along with you and for you," he told the congregation. "I will work side by side with you as hard as I can to make this a success.

"St. Adalbert-Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament will not be a good parish, it will be a great parish. So are you with me?"

"Yes!" shouted the jubilant congregation.

"Then," said Chmura, "let's begin."

For the service's closing hymn, the congregation, keeping tempo with clapping hands, sang a gospel tune, "Oh Happy Day," in perfect harmony.

Chmura, his face beaming with joy as he joined a procession down the center aisle, reached for the hand of parishioner Linda Gamble in a pew.

"We did it," he said.

To reach this Plain Dealer reporter: momalley@plaind.com, 216-999-4893



PLAIN DEALER HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

This March 4, 1969, photo shows, from left, Cleveland Mayor Carl B. Stokes and, seated from The Plain Dealer, James Naughton and Robert McGruder. Naughton, 73, died Saturday in St. Petersburg, Fla., after a battle with cancer.

### ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Alzheimer's Association Cleveland Area Chapter serves people with memory loss and those who care for them. 24/7 helpline: 800-272-3900 or 216-721-8457.

### RED CROSS

Call 216-431-3010, Ext. 2141, 2138, 2137.

## INNOVATIONS

FROM B1

### Local inventor likes tinkering

His accomplishments include:

- Developing a battery pack booster that doubled the range of military radios in the early days of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The boosters were used until the 1990s.

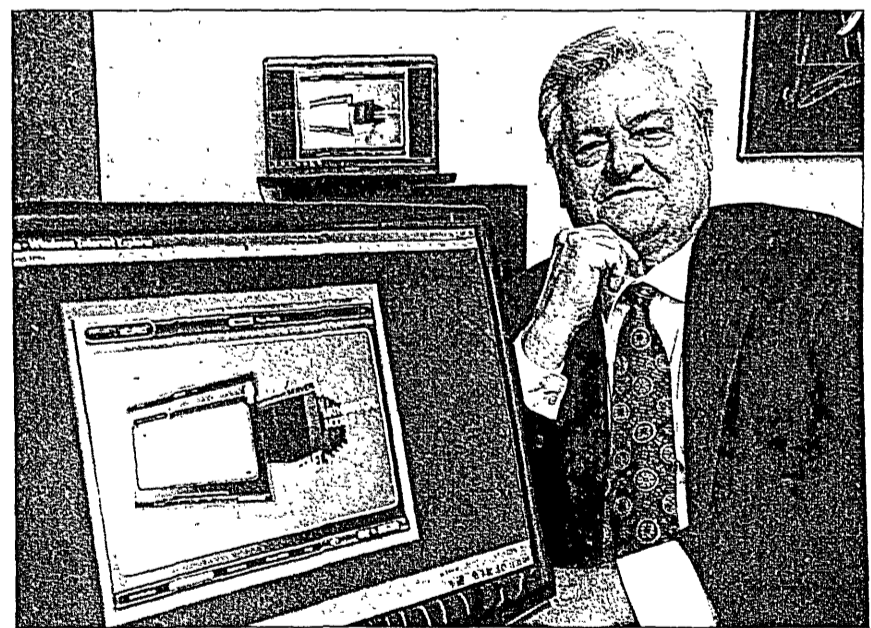
- Coming up with sophisticated controls for adjusting thermostats to evenly heat homes and businesses. He did this while working for General Electric in 1968.

- Helping develop the first electronically guided vehicle that runs on tracks in mills. The vehicles are used in semi-automated mills and eliminate the need for someone to drive them from place to place. The vehicles can be operated remotely. He did this while working for Yale Materials, a division of Eaton, in 1971.

- Managing a team at the Picker Corp. in Highland Heights that in 1977 put together the first low-cost, high-quality X-ray machine.

"That machine is still in use in hospitals," Penkalski said of the X-ray machine. "Before that time, X-ray machines were very expensive. We figured out a way to manufacture one for \$20,000, and we sold \$16 million worth the first year."

In 1988, he co-authored "Protecting Engineering Ideas and Inventions," which he describes as "probably the most popular



JOHN KUNTZ | THE PLAIN DEALER

Thomas Penkalski of Broadview Heights is still in the inventing business, working on a "financial literacy project." The project would operate over the Internet and allow people to use the program to run all aspects of their finances.

book ever written for engineers: 500 pages without a legal word in it."

The book explains how inventors can use patents, copyrights and trademarks.

These days, inventing is not out of Penkalski's system, although he has adapted his interest to modern technology. His new idea deals not so much with wires and meters, but involves the more theoretical realm of cyberspace.

He is working on a "financial literacy project" that he predicts

could turn around the nation's economic slowdown.

Penkalski is seeking \$5 million in funding for the project, which will operate over the Internet and allow people to use a program to run all aspects of their finances.

"People have a hard time managing their finances. Our product constructs a model which incorporates the finances of a person or a business. You insert everything into it: bills, taxes, income and financial goals. The program will advise you on which finan-

cial moves you should make. It will do everything, including investigate stocks and balance your checkbook."

He said if he gets the funding, he will employ 3,000 in the Cleveland area to run the business.

Penkalski and his wife, Noiretta, have five daughters and a son.

To reach this Plain Dealer reporter: msangiacomo@plaind.com, 216-999-4890

### EMERGENCY AID FOR DEAF

Deaf people in Northeast Ohio can call an ambulance by dialing 216-771-1368 on their home telegraph or TTY machines. For other emergency aid, such as police or fire, call Cuyahoga Emergency Communication System, 216-771-1368, 24 hours a day.