

# His journalism career is about moments

By David Dorsey

When Joe Posnanski's hometown newspaper sports columnist died, it prompted the fellow scribe to write an obituary, not just of his friend but of their shared occupation.

Posnanski, like the late *Cleveland Plain Dealer* columnist Bill Livingston, spent decades as a newspaper sports columnist, most notably from 1996 until 2009 with the *Kansas City Star*. The Great Recession combined with the internet disrupted the business model of newspapers; the days of sending local columnists across the country to Final Fours and Super Bowls and the Masters pretty much ended. This sent Posnanski scrambling to continue making a living doing what he loves to do: writing about sports.

Posnanski, who went on to write for *Sports Illustrated* and NBC Sports, also turned to writing books, writing for his own newsletter/blog and doing podcasts.

At 9:15 a.m. Monday, Feb. 2, Posnanski will talk about his career trajectory and his books at the Friends of the Library of Collier County at Hilton Naples event series. Posnanski will be followed by Jonathan Eig on Feb. 16 and Hampton Sides on March 17.

"Bill Livingston — who was the

longtime Cleveland columnist — died, and I wrote about him," Posnanski said. "But what I really wrote about was this era we lived in. When you could write daily columns for the local newspaper, they would send you to the Final Four, to the Super Bowl, to the big college games and the big pro games.

"I don't necessarily miss that. But I miss that we all had local newspapers that we loved — or hated — that actually spoke to the community. I really miss that. I was at *Sports Illustrated*. I loved it. I miss it. I miss that so much has changed in our business. That breaks my

heart. As far as the writing itself goes, I'm just incredibly happy with every stage. I was very happy as a columnist in Kansas City. I love that city. I still consider it as home. I miss my time at *Sports Illustrated*. I loved my time at S.I. But I also love what I do now."

*Why We Love Football: A History in 100 Moments* is Posnanski's most recent book. It's one that he will be signing after the event.

"Originally, it was going to be just like the baseball book," Posnanski said, referring to *Why We Love Baseball: A History in 50 Moments*.

But Posnanski needed room for more moments. Baseball tends to be more personality-driven; football tends to be more moment-driven.

"Football is entirely about

moments," Posnanski said. "Every game has a moment. That we're constantly working for. The other thing is this is both an NFL book and a college football book. Fifty just didn't feel like enough.

"I definitely picked them all. I did a lot of work on building the list, as I always do for these things. There were some moments that were just obvious. You knew they were going to be in the book. You knew the Immaculate Reception was going to be in the book. You knew The Catch was going to be in the book. The Play — the Cal-Stanford Play — was going to be in the book. The Drive was going to be in the book, even though as a Browns fan, it breaks my heart. It's the shortest chapter in the book. Let's just say that."

Posnanski interspersed the big-moments with some lesser-known ones.

"There was a Miracle in Mississippi," Posnanski said. "And there was a game with 27 or 28 laterals. The Butt Fumble is in here. I wanted it to be a funny, entertaining book. You can read it from front to back if you want, or you can just turn to any page, and hopefully you'll find something there that will bring back memories or make you laugh or remind you of why you love the game."

Up next: On May 19, Posnanski's next book releases. He and Michael Schur co-wrote *Big Fan: Two Friends, 81,589 Miles, and the Wild, Wonderful*

*Sports We Love*. Schur, a sports blogging pioneer, previously wrote *Fire Joe Morgan*, a blog under the pen name Ken Tremendous.

"We traveled around the world," Posnanski said of the research. "We

went to a bunch of sporting events. We wrote about fans and what it means to be a fan and how we're connected. Michael is the guy who created 'Parks and Recreation' and 'Brooklyn Nine-Nine.' He's a writer, and he's a showrunner. He conceived those shows and ran them. One of the chapters of the book is him getting a Hollywood star."

Posnanski's first book, *The Soul of Baseball: A Road Trip Through Buck O'Neil's America*, was released in 2007.

In 2019, Posnanski stepped away from sports in publishing *The Life and Afterlife of Harry Houdini*.

"I really like magic," he said. "But it was much more for me. I was fascinated by the fact that we still think about Harry Houdini. Here's a guy who more than 100 years ago escaped from handcuffs. And yet he's still very much a part of the language, very much a part of culture. In many ways, he's still the most famous magician in the world. I wanted to keep his name alive. That was really fun. It was definitely a departure."

Posnanski has two more books in the works. One of them he declines

to disclose; the other will be a children's version of the baseball book. He's co-writing that with his wife Margo at their home in Charlotte, North Carolina.

"She's a reading tutor," Posnanski said. "She works with a lot of kids on their reading, on their writing. She was the perfect person to team up with. I'm doing most of the writing, and she's doing most of the shaping of the book."

Posnanski said he's looking forward to the Friends of the Library event.

"I have very good friends who live in Naples," he said. "It'll be great to see my friends. And I love libraries. I'm so happy that libraries are still — they're struggling in a lot of places. So an opportunity to come and do something with the library means a lot to me.

"I also have a library story that I'm going to tell." ■

## Hearing the writers

**What:** Joe Posnanski is making one of four author presentations with a breakfast and a book signing to raise funds for the Collier County Public Library

**When:** Breakfast at 8:30 a.m., talks at 9:15 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 2

**Where:** Hilton Naples, 5111 Tamiami Trail N., Naples

**Tickets:** Purchase at [collier-friends.org](http://collier-friends.org) or call 239.262.8135. A portion of the ticket purchase can be tax-deductible.

## BEHIND THE ARTIST

# Talent, outlook fuel her work

By J.C. Amodea

Like many who have had fulfilling careers, artist Karen Culver found that the quiet of an empty nest beckoned her to explore creative endeavors that had long taken a back burner to the ordinary demands of life.

"Although I have always been interested in art, I never had the time in my younger years to pursue it," Culver said. "When my kids were raised and I had retired from a nursing career, I could feel art calling me. I immersed myself in the arts and took as many classes in as many mediums as I could."

Culver's inspiration emanates from her love and passion for the creative outlet and the tranquil beauty and movement found in nature. While she has a proclivity for working with alcohol inks, Culver also enjoys working with other mediums including acrylic paints, resin and mixed media.

"Using acrylic paint, alcohol ink and resin, I build layered surfaces that reflect organic forms and natural rhythms," she said. "I'm drawn to the way these mediums interact — flowing, blending and sometimes resisting control, much like the world around us."

Originally from central Vermont, Culver relocated to Naples with her husband Jim, part-time in 2013, then full-time in 2025. We sat down to learn more.

**The Naples Press:** Tell us about what drives you to create.

**Karen Culver:** The inspiration for my work is found in the vibrant colors of the ocean, sunsets, sunrises, trees and the sky — everything in nature inspires me in some way. My muse is Paula Brody, the owner of the gallery that I am associated with. I took many of her art classes years ago. She inspired me and helped me to realize that we all have an inner artist just waiting to emerge.

**TNP:** What challenges have you faced in your work?

**Karen Culver:** As a self-taught artist, I struggle with certain techniques and certain concepts, but I am always learning and am always willing to try new ideas; I'm a work in progress.

**TNP:** How long does it take for you to complete a piece, and what are your most popular pieces?

**Karen Culver:** Some of my largest works are 36 by 36 inches. These art pieces take about 30



Artist Karen Culver works on art decorations with alcohol inks and butterfly resin molds.

Photo courtesy Donna Hope

to 40 hours to produce. My most popular piece is "Mosaic Oceans," along with other works in alcohol inks.

**TNP:** You work with tiles — do you make them?

**Karen Culver:** I make the tiles used for my alcohol ink pieces. They are pieces of NARA paper that I cut into 4-by-4-inch square "tiles." I then lay them out, align them and incorporate more inks to allow the colors to flow from one tile to the next. I sometimes attach them to 4-by-4-inch wooden tiles before I assemble my piece onto a wooden canvas. I then paint each tile individually, and then assemble them onto the canvas or wooden canvas.

**TNP:** You also work with resin. How do you incorporate it into your work?

**Karen Culver:** I make holiday ornaments and other resin pieces. I prefer to use it in my alcohol ink pieces because the resin makes the colors pop and look very vibrant, as if they were still wet.

**TNP:** Do you teach classes?

**Karen Culver:** I teach four different beginner art classes. I teach an acrylic pouring flower class, an acrylic ocean-wave pouring class, an introduction to alcohol inks class and a mixed-media geode class that involves stones,



"Ocean Waters" (24 by 36 inches, 2023) in alcohol inks on canvas by Karen Culver.

Photo courtesy Karen Culver

cut glass, rocks, paint and sparkles, finished with a coat of resin.

**TNP:** Have you exhibited your work, and what is the price range of your pieces?

**Karen Culver:** I have not exhibited any work yet. I am a new artist at Inspirations Artists and Design Gallery, having joined last year, but I do have an upcoming show in the Pelican Bay Art show, March 6, 7 and 8 at The Pelican Bay Community Center. My prices range from \$10 to \$2,500. ■

## Karen Barberi Culver

**To view or purchase works:** Inspirations Artists and Design Gallery, 5450B Shirley St., Naples

**Gallery hours:** 1 to 5 p.m. Thursday and Saturday, or by appointment

**Upcoming show:** March 6 to 8 at the Pelican Bay Art show, The Pelican Bay Community Center, 8960 Hammock Oak Drive, Naples  
**Contact:** [karenbarberi.com](http://karenbarberi.com) or 802.279.0541 or [karenculver@yahoo.com](mailto:karenculver@yahoo.com)

## One-day painting workshops:

**Workshop:** Alcohol Inks

**When:** Noon to 3 p.m. Jan. 30

**Fee:** \$125 per person

Location below

**Workshop:** Acrylic Flower Trio

**When:** Noon to 3 p.m. March 13, April 24

**Fee:** \$125 per person

Location below

**Workshop:** Acrylic Ocean Waves

**When:** Noon to 3 p.m. Feb. 6, March 27, May 8

**Fee:** \$95 per person

Location below

**Workshop:** Mixed Media Geode

**When:** Noon to 3 p.m. Feb. 20, April 10, May 22

**Price:** \$125 per person

Location below

**Where:** Inspirations Artists and Design Gallery, 5450B Shirley St., Naples

**To register:** Call or text 802.279.0541 or email [karenculver@yahoo.com](mailto:karenculver@yahoo.com) to reserve a spot

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