

Updated 4/18/05

PRINT

BEST BREAKING NEWS STORY

Large publications

1st: Ta Brant, Anchorage Daily News
2nd: Matt Volz, The Associated Press
3rd: Tom Miller, Ketchikan Daily News

(The judge provided no headlines, but comments indicate that Ta's story concerned a plane crash, Volz wrote about a helicopter crash, and Miller covered a "matricide.")□

Small publications

Judge: Eric Newhouse, projects editor, Great Falls Tribune

1st: Drew Herman, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "First blue whales seen in Alaska in 30 years"

No second or third.

BEST GENERAL NEWS

Large

Judge: Eric Newhouse, projects editor, Great Falls Tribune

1st: Don Hunter, Doug O'Harra, Joel Gay and Megan Holland, Anchorage Daily News, Selendang Ayu stories

No second or third.

Small

Judge: Bill Lueders, Isthmus, Madison's weekly newspaper

1st: Jon Grover, The Tundra Drums, "Official says church aware of sex abuse"

Comments: This solidly reported piece draws on court documents as well as primary and expert sources to put the terrible topic it concerns into context. It frontloads the most recent developments and pulls readers first into the back-story and then into the larger issue. Very well done.

2nd: Amy Armstrong, The Alaska Star, "The teachers who stole Christmas"

Comments: Straightforward and thorough, this piece reports on a school dust-up without overstating or sensationalizing the situation it reports. There were a couple of other entries I almost picked for second place (what the hay, I'll tell you: a story on a newly built qayaq by KJ Lincoln of the Delta Discovery and the sad discovery of the body of a missing girl by Sarah J. Birdsall of the Talkeetna Times), but the clarity of the writing put this one ahead of the competition.

3rd: Larry Persily, Petroleum News, "Propane-air project running out of time"

Comments: Persily manages to take a massively complicated issue and render it intelligible, while at the same time reporting important recent developments. Clearly, he has a deep understanding of his subject matter. But I wonder: shouldn't a reporter this good be writing on more popular topics for a larger audience?

BEST USE OF STORY AND PHOTOS BY A REPORTER

Judges: Director of Photography Patty Reksten; Features picture editor Mike Davis; Senior Editor/Visuals Randy Cox, The Oregonian

Large

1st: Marc Lester, Anchorage Daily News, "Alaska fighting championship"

Comments: The clear first place winner in this category, this combination of very strong photography and an appealingly written feature story on all-star wrestling provides the reader with a revealing look at this "sport." By carefully pairing the writing with the photography (especially with the lede anecdote and two front sports-cover pictures), this package maintains an effective combination of words and pictures working well together, instead of separately as is so often case in similar such packages. Nicely told! (The judges assume this is really a photographer who also wrote a story rather than the reverse, which the category title seems to suggest.)

2nd: Joseph Robertia, Peninsula Clarion Newspaper, "Can you dig it?"

Comments: Also an effective pairing of strong and varied photography with this feature story. By varying his camera-to-subject distance and using cropping and sizing contrasts to boot (particularly on the cover), this reporter/photographer has done a fine job of taking the reader into this world. Particularly liked the photo, on the back cover, of the "squirts" of the littleneck clams.

3rd: Alex DeMarban, The Tundra Drums, "Coming out party"

Comments: What an interesting story and what a strong set of photos. They just don't work nearly as well together as did first and second places. Sure do wish we could have seen photography of the dancer so interestingly described in the lede of the story. Sure do wish the photography on the inside doubletruck had been edited tighter and less redundantly. When editing a combination story and multiple-picturepackage, the integration of the editing is essential to tell a tale that will keep the reader as interested as possible. Not as effectively handled here as it should have been despite individual elements that were quite strong.

Small

Judge: Tony Overman, The Olympian, NPPA

1st: Kelly DuFort, CatholicAnchor, "Perilous Journey"

Comments: Wonderful variety of photos that reflect life in rural Philippines. Lead photo of the rickety bridge worked well with the title. Inside photos featured beautiful light and natural moments. (The family photo could have been replaced with a "real" moment.)

2nd: Brian Lepley, Alaska Post, "Tomahawks tangle with terrorists"

Comments: Tension-filled photos - especially the lead image - helped recreate the event in a way that words cannot. Good variety of images.

3rd: Randi Somers, Homer Tribune, "Collision Injures Two"

Comments: Up-close and action-filled news photo once again provides the viewer with an experience that words cannot convey. The photo brings a routine story to life.

BEST SHORT FEATURE

Large

Judge: Gail Hill, The Oregonian

1st: Tom Moran, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, "A Cultural Crash Course"

Comments: With a flash of red and a crunch of snow, Moran transports the reader to the Yukon and the experiences of the Tokyo troupe. Clean, sharp writing and a tight focus keeps this feature story true to a theme of understanding and discovery.

2nd: Debra McKinney, Anchorage Daily News, "Popular Flowers Forbidden at Nursery"

Comments: Through colorful, concise writing and skillful dashes of dialog, McKinney makes this feature story insightful and fun. She weaves a local story into national and international issues and successfully juxtaposes the significant and the silly.

3rd: Doug O’Harra, Anchorage Daily News, “Sealife Octopus Considered Armed and Extremely Dangerous”

Comments: O’Harra succeeds in writing a short, sweet, compelling — and certainly offbeat — story about octopus love. Bright, enjoyable and funny. PG-13, perhaps, but appropriate — and educational. I hope the union produced. The story certainly did.

Small

Judge: Joseph Rose, Crime & Justice writer
The Oregonian

1st: McKibbin Jackinsky, Homer Tribune, “Homer Gives Big Support to Little Celebrity”

2nd: Amy M. Armstrong, Alaska Star, “Mother of Disabled Woman Needs Both Courage and Love”

3rd: Wes Hanna, Kodiak Daily Mirror, “Chinese Have Long History in Kodiak”

BEST LONG FEATURE

Judge: Paula Span, Washington Post contributing writer; Associate, Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

Small and large papers compete together

1st: Toby Sullivan, Anchorage Press, “Lost Season”

Comments: Haunting rendering of the Exxon Valdez spill by a fisherman who remembers it in all its complexity: the pride and profiteering, the struggle, the loss.

2nd: Cynthia Ritchie, Anchorage Daily News, “A Crown of Hope”

Comments: Following a teacher and onetime beauty queen through breast cancer: diagnosis, chemotherapy, surgery, aftermath. You-are-there journalism.

3rd: Debra McKinney, Anchorage Daily News; Two stories by the same reporter: “Happy Little Brewery” and “Freeing Up Time for Fox’s Free Beer Fridays”

Comments: Two rollicking accounts of breweries, their founders and aficionados. Congratulations to McKinney for cornering the beer beat.

BEST BUSINESS REPORTING

Large

Judge: Becky Bisbee, Seattle Times business editor

1st: Wesley Loy, Anchorage Daily News, “Extreme exploring”

Comments: Wesley Loy’s take-you-there writing showed what extreme conditions oil drillers face in the National Petroleum Reserve. He provided context on the challenges the oil companies face and the promise the oil field holds. Reader gets a strong sense of the people on the scene. Excellent marriage of text, story, pictures and graphics.

2nd: Richard Richtmyer, Anchorage Daily News, “Aces High”

Comments: Richard Richtmyer did a splendid job shedding light on a local franchise that has its work cut out for it. Good explanation of the business challenges the new owners face and their strategy for making money. Use of player cards for owners an attractive way to provide bios.

3rd: Scott Christiansen, Kyle Hopkins and Press staff, Anchorage Press, “Fundopoly”

Comments: Highly readable and attractively displayed. Lots of nice detail. Lively writing, some attitude.

Small

Judge: Bob Drews, retired Business copy chief, San Jose Mercury News, San Jose, California

1st: Margie Bauman, Alaska Journal of Commerce, “Firm may help longliners end orcas’ free lunch”

Comments: The subject of killer whales is not one that would normally attract me, and if I had to guess I would say it was unlikely I would go beyond the first paragraph. Yet Margie was able to tell this story with such creative writing, good quotes and solid background and facts that I read – and enjoyed – it from start to finish. This was an informative and interesting report.

2nd: McKibben Jackinsky, Homer Tribune,

“International scam artists target Homer”

Comments: This subject was not an easy one to cover. Many loose ends had to be tied together. And stories about the Internet and e-mail sometimes fall into the trap of presuming readers know more than they really do. Yet McKibben was able to weave these elements together in a story that was understandable and complete. The four paragraphs leading into the report were very nicely done in drawing the picture for the reader of what the scam was all about.

3rd: Naomi Klouda, Tundra Drums, “Napakiak weighs safety, jobs of coal power plant”

Comments: Having been both a reporter and copy editor, I believe it is fair to say that few stories are dreaded more than those covering a conference or hearing. The comments can be boring and obtuse, the meetings long and the outcomes inconclusive. And boring meetings often yield boring stories. This did not happen to Naomi. She gave context, interesting quotes and good background to make this “listening conference” report well worth reading.

POLITICAL OR GOVERNMENT

Judge (large and small): Dan Hortsch, former politics/state government reporter and public editor for The Oregonian, now retired

Overall comments: I did my best to stick to three places in each category, but I could not in good conscience avoid a two-way tie for third in the large newspaper category, which fielded a number of strong entries. One common problem, of course, is judging both daily news stories and their purpose in the same ring with the long, big-issue or profile treatments. Both have their place and I recognized both. In a couple of cases I decided that perfectly good entries belonged in another category. In any event, I enjoyed being part of the always difficult puzzle. I hope my comments will explain the outcomes.

1st: Sean Cockerham and Tom Kizzia, Anchorage Daily News, “Alaska’s most powerful (unelected) official”

Comments: This extensive profile of Jim Clark, chief of staff to Gov. Frank Murkowski, explores not just the man and personality who is the governor’s chief advisor, but also a man who appears to wield an influence and power beyond what most Alaskans might expect — comments from Clark and the governor’s press aide to the contrary. At the same time, the story provides enough information that readers will decide whether they are comfortable with Clark’s role and influence. Certainly, comments by Susan Clark, his wife, about the differences in political and social views between her and her husband, help readers see the complexities of this key figure in their government.

2nd: Tom Moran, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, “Little support for fiscal, tax plans”

Comments: The story is a clear rundown of a legislative special session with a sense of the dynamics behind the outcome, not just the results (or, as the governor would see it, lack of results). Legislative reporting too easily can fall into a she said/he said, boxscore kind of account. The writing in this story indicates an understanding of the players and the strategies, as well as of the workings of a legislative body and its relationship with the governor. Such stories can draw readers to subjects and even they might avoid without good writing to draw them in.

3rd: A two-way tie. Judge said: The two stories, both well researched, represent two disparate areas of coverage easily overlooked or given less attention than they deserve: one the working class/working poor urban neighborhood, and the other the desolate and poor regions populated by a state's natives.

Sheila Toomey, Anchorage Daily News, "A new view"

Comments: The story spotlights a troubled neighborhood in the relatively early stages of transition into an area more stable with reduced crime, a situation welcome to both the longtime resident and the newcomer in the affordable home. The article is a good example of government reporting at the community level, which often lacks the razzle-dazzle of the state capitol or city hall. In relating the history and recent developments of the neighborhood — Mountain View — the writer weaves both the facts and figures inevitably part of such a story and the personalities of the residents, new and old, as well as the government officials who play a role in the changes. Good writing and organization hold together a lengthy, but not wordy, story that gives life to an Anchorage neighborhood developing a new sense of itself.

Kyle Hopkins, Anchorage Press, "Do Tony and Lisa give a crap?"

Comments: The alternative weekly approach in story title and in illustration — a young native child using a Hills Bros. coffee can as a toilet — might depart from the mainstream way, but it brings attention to a village in Southwest Alaska, Kipnuk, and other areas that lack plumbing of any kind (Kipnuk has a sewage lagoon where residents haul their buckets of waste). Former governor Tony Knowles and U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, candidates for Murkowski's Senate seat can help bring federal attention to the problems (Murkowski won, as it turned out). The detailed story also brings in the agencies that work with such rural areas, bringing the story beyond the promises of Senate candidates and their records on such issues. In this case, too, organization and writing make the many facets of the story work together.

Small

1st: John Roscoe, Catholic Anchor, "Bishops join efforts to put controls on payday loans"

Comments: The reporter provides a thorough explanation that included not only the voices of the bishops and their supporters but also the voices in the payday loan industry. The thoughtful, fair, well written discussion indicates that the reporter and the Catholic Anchor know the best way to serve their readers is through good journalism, not by leaning, in this case, toward diocesan sources. (The first comment from someone in the industry might have been included a bit higher in the story, but that is a minor matter. The writer gives good space to those who disagree with the bishops.)

2nd: Nate Raymond, Sun Star (University of Alaska/Fairbanks), "Sen. Stevens brings home the bacon for UAF"

Comments: The writer, avoiding a dull list approach, uses a relaxed but still detailed picture of the many financial blessings to fall upon the university through the efforts of U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens. The supporting quotes and examples — \$6.28 million to assess "new uses for wood" — illustrate how well the school did and writer's style. He also remembers to add some detail to such examples to help explain the potential for substance behind what might first appear to be a frivolous use of money. Readers can decide the merits on their own.

3rd: John Crowder, Homer Tribune, "Gas lease buyback 'will not happen'"

Comments: The story is a timely explanation and update of legislation that could cost the state millions of dollars. The controversial topic — related to coal be methane development — is complicated (at least to a reader from Outside), but obviously is of importance in the Homer area. The story includes varied perspectives as well as both the basics to satisfy some readers and added details for those who want more.

EDUCATION REPORTING

Judge (large and small): Christopher Broderick, education editor, The Oregonian

Large

1st: George Bryson, Anchorage Daily News, "War of the Word"

Comments: Well told and well researched. Universal topic with a sharp focus. The reconstructed scene at the top of educators deciding whether to use the word ‘evolution’ was compelling. I didn’t see the second part to this, but the first part had balance yet also retained an edge. As a result, the story stayed away from the mushy “he said, she said” approach to this topic that I’ve seen elsewhere. Strong enterprise — in fact I learned a lot from this story about a topic that I thought I knew well.

2nd: Marmian Grimes, Fairbanks News Miner, “Making the grade”

Comments: Well-organized package that gave students a front-and-center voice not only on the high-stakes graduation test but on the quality of their high school education. Refreshing departure from the usual quotes from parents, teachers and various experts. The range of students reflected the effort of the reporter to go deep on this important subject. Left me wanting to read more.

3rd: Katie Pesznecker, Anchorage Daily News, “Bullied boy brain-damaged after suicide attempt”

Poignant tale of boy who tried to kill himself after repeated harassment by other students. The story was sensitive in detailing his current state in contrast to what he was before the suicide attempt. The anecdotes from the court documents were a good use of showing not telling the reader what happened. Plus the story raised the right questions whether the school should be held responsible for mean kids and what can and should be done to intervene.

Small

1st: Carey James, Homer News, “Culture or religion?”

Comments: Interesting, big-picture perspective on a universal issue for educators — when does a cultural program cross the line into promoting religion? Story was complete, although it could have been helped with a sharper top that got to the point more quickly and clearly.

2nd: John Crowder, Homer Tribune, “High school students walk out”

Comments: Nice color and description on deadline covering the high school protest. Also had balance and context of the bigger budget picture facing the governor and the Legislature.

3rd: McKibben Jackinsky, Homer Tribune

“Groundbreaking student prepares to leave Old Believer village”

Comments: Fascinating story subject with nice details about her family and her future. The writer could have done more with this story, though, such as go deeper into her beliefs and show scenes from Vascelisa’s life rather than just quote her.

BEST PROFILE

Large

Judge: Paula Span, Washington Post contributing writer; Associate, Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

1st: Debra McKinney, Anchorage Daily News; Two artist profiles by the same reporter: “Colorful Spirit” and “Funny Business”

Comments: Two lively profiles of Alaskan artists. Different generations, different personalities, different media. Brought to life by the same fine writer.

2nd: Haden Polseno-Hensley, Anchorage Press, “Shall Be Released”

Comments: A carefully reported and quietly rendered account of a Homer refugee’s short, troubled life and violent death.

3rd: Kyle Hopkins, Anchorage Press, “A Midwinter’s Dream”

Comments: Compelling portrait of a daredevil Fairbanks businessman whose latest high-risk venture may flourish. Or melt.

Small

Judge: Len Reed, Northwest Editor, The Oregonian

1st: Jon Grover, The Tundra Drums, “Busy achiever continues California dreamin”

Comments: Mr. Grover takes a standard-issue candidate for the “Our Neighbor” profile and elevates it to textured portrait in which Odilia Tomas’s challenges, dreams, and life context are made clear and engaging. To read this is to get to know Ms. Tomas, as well as her community, well.

2nd: Jeff Benzak, Kodiak Daily Mirror, “New history prof brings environmental approach”

Comments: A mere faculty appointment occasions this involving portrait of Mark Schreiter, whose lifelong passions and uncommon appetites make him show up where he does, when he does, how he does. The story is telling, too, about Kodiak College’s ethos, which influenced Schreiter’s application.

3rd: Claire Chandler, Alaska Journal of Commerce, “Unwavering vision leads to survival and success”

Comments: Ms. Chandler could have gone mawkish in the profile of a cancer survivor and entrepreneur. But her treatment is cool yet empathetic, bringing specific detail about Terzah Tippin Poe’s trauma and promise to breathing life. This is smart as a story, also, for its business context, which is tied so much to Tippin Poe’s identity.

BEST ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

Judge (large and small): Douglas Fischer, Oakland Tribune environmental reporter

Large

1st: Lisa W. Drew, Science\Business, “Dr. Yes or No”

Comments: Through a lively, well-crafted profile of a scientist trying to determine when tundra is frozen enough, Ms. Drew manages to wrap up the complicated debate over “the machinery of natural-resource management,” as she so nicely puts it. A story on this topic snagged first place last year, but try as I might I can’t find fault with Ms. Drew’s finely nuanced piece. Well done.

2nd: Elizabeth Bluemink, Juneau Empire, “Hard rock, hard choices”

Comments: Crisp writing and balanced reporting bring a crucial issue for Juneau to the Empire’s readers. Ms. Bluemink’s exploration of the various options being considered for the Kensington Mine offers perhaps the most readable dissection of an EIR I’ve ever seen in print. My only complaint: she buried the lede. When Ed Fogel, the state’s project manager, was quoted in the 12th paragraph saying, “This is a big issue of what Juneau wants Berners Bay to be,” I realized that’s the discussion I wanted to hear.

3rd: Amanda Coyne, Anchorage Press, “Hunting the hunters”

Comments: There’s no question Alaska’s controversial predator control program has received its share of ink. But Ms. Coyne brings fresh perspective by taking to the skies with an environmentalist looking to photograph hunters. The environmentalist may have returned empty-handed. Ms. Coyne bagged a great story.

Small

1st: Kelly Jean Lincoln, The Delta Discovery, “How beach grass took root in Bethel”

Comments: So often, when looking at invasive plants and “non-native” species, one wonders how they got there. For beach rye grass, Ms. Lincoln answers that riddle with a fascinating documentation of its introduction in Bethel. One quibble: she never examined any potential downsides of the coastal grass’ spread.

2nd: Paul Basile, The Delta Discovery, “Kapuukaraat, the delicious taste of spring”

Comments: A fine, tight little feature on the tradition and harvest of Kapuukaraat, a semi-aquatic plant. My only complaint is that Mr. Basile never probes why a lake with an abundance of greens one year may have none the next. Given that everyone “flocks like a bunch of geese” to rich finds, could overpicking have an impact?

3rd: Michael Armstrong, Homer News, “15 years after the spill”

Comments: A great piece of history that does a sound job documenting Homer’s response to the greatest oil spill in North America. Mr. Armstrong could have strengthened it considerably — and done a great service to the News’ readers — had he hung more of the story around a disturbing point he doesn’t make until the 68th paragraph: “No place in the Western world has so little oil spill protection as in Cook Inlet.”

CRIME & COURTS

Large

Judge: Hurst Laviana, crime reporter
Wichita Eagle

1st: Kyle Hopkins, Anchorage Press, “This evil world. Cynthia Lord told police that to save her sons, she had to kill them”

Comments: The story is packed with details about a mentally ill mother who shot and killed her three teenage sons. The neighbors’ descriptions of the woman’s bizarre behavior provide a vivid account of why the woman acted the way she did. A nice touch is provided by the circular way the story starts with the woman dialing 911 and ends with the woman shooting the children.

2nd: Ta Brant, Anchorage Daily News, “Tape shows man’s fatal struggle with Chilkoot’s security.”

Comments: A very detailed account of how a man died at the hands of a group of bouncers. Obtaining the videotape from the event through an open records request provided a strong foundation for the story.

3rd: Scott Christiansen, Anchorage Press

“A parade of troubles: Night court presents a window into life on the edge.”

Comments: A solid slice-of-life story about a quirky part of the criminal justice system. It would have been nice to have pictures, but I’m assuming that cameras were not allowed in the courtroom.

Small

Judge: Dave Krajicek former crime reporter for the Omaha World-Herald; crime bureau chief for New York Daily News.

1st: Heather A. Resz, Anchorage Chronicle

“Bullying, violence linked”

Comments: This is a first-rate piece of small-paper journalism on an important subject. Resz revisits a 1997 Alaska school shooting through interviews with the killer, then adds texture and context by telling readers, through sourcing, why we should care. The story makes a compelling case that bullying was at the root of the school shooting. Like good public-service journalism, it adds links and contacts for those seeking additional information on the subject. For its depth, enterprise and sourcing, the piece stands out among the entries in this category.

2nd: Naomi Klouda, The Tundra Times, “Trooper’s victim wins \$1.8 million”

Comments: This story is a thorough look at troubling allegations of brutality against an Alaska state trooper. The piece centered on the results of a civil trial award, but Klouda made it more than a courtroom story through interviews with the victim, law enforcement authorities and attorneys. It stood out in its length, detail and depth among other entries in this category. Depth is something that often goes wanting due to the production pressure under which small-paper reporters operate. (We note that Klouda had three front-page bylines in the edition we judged.)

3rd: Jedediah R. Smith, Bristol Bay Times

“Nose for Booze”

Comments: A nice little only-in-Alaska piece about an alcohol-sniffing dog in a dry village, with good detail on the price of the dog and the cost of bootleg hooch in Togiak. A couple of things might have made the story even stronger: (1) comparison of the cost of the dog to the village’s total law enforcement budget, for context, and (2) context on the trend toward outlawing alcohol in native areas and resulting statistical

drops in sex assaults, suicides, etc. However, we note that Smith is a busy reporter, like most working for small-town papers. He had every front-page byline in the edition we judged, as well as two photo credits.

HEALTH OR SCIENCE

Judge (large and small): James Dawson, Senior news editor Physics Today

Large

1st: Doug O’Harra, Anchorage Daily News, “UAF team listens to the earth rumbling”

Comments: This story is unusual, well reported and well written. Mr. O’Harra has done a first-rate job of science reporting. That he saw a story in the “infrasound renaissance made possible by modern computing power and an international effort to intercept the faint rumble of illegal nuclear blasts” was impressive, especially if he found it in the summary book from the AGU meeting. He pulled together the science, used quotes to move the story along, and used just the right amount of imagery. Nice job. Send him to the AGU meeting in the fall.

2nd: Amanda Coyne, Anchorage Press, “Keeping Faith”

Comments: A very good story, painful to read, yet fascinating. It is a long piece, yet Ms. Coyne’s in-depth reporting and handling of a very difficult topic pulled me all the way through. I would have like to have seen more on the physiology of the brain and the latest research into this perplexing illness. Some context would have also been helpful – is this struggle going on in other states? Finally, the piece would have been even more powerful with tighter, cleaner writing’s. Coyne’s reporting and overall effort on this piece is impressive.

3rd: Chris Talbott, “Born to burn”

Comments: An interesting, timely story, well researched and written, particularly in the use of quotes. Mr. Talbott keeps the writing at a high level all the way through and blends the science in very well. I’m not sure one should mix Stephen King and Salvador Dali in the same piece. Nice work.

Small

1st: Drew Herman, Kodiak Daily Mirror, “Next phase begins for whale project”

Comments: A nicely written science piece in which Mr. Herman tells an interesting story, makes good use of quotes, and works in a great deal of science. Good reporting as well. The reader learns a lot.

2nd: Carey James, Homer News, “SPH obstetrics mixes midwives and medicine”

Comments: This story has been done before, but Ms. James does a good job of pulling the reader in and moving through the story. The Cesarean makes the story more interesting because midwife pieces often don’t put enough emphasis on the “things can go wrong,” aspect of childbirth. Having been present for the births of three of my children, plus a couple more as a journalist, I found the quotes from Silianoff about the real physical pain involved refreshing. A nice job.

3rd: Anne Millbrooke, Nome Nugget, “Follow the compass”

Comments: A fascinating piece that is unexpected. The image of scientists tracking the daily movement of the north magnetic pole is a nice one, and the history Ms. Millbrooke included made the story even better. I would have enjoyed a longer piece with more from the scientists themselves. The writing was clear and straightforward.

BEST EDITORIAL WRITING

Judge (large and small): Eleanor Clift, Newsweek, Washington, D.C.

Large

1st: It’s a tie!

Terry Miller, Ketchikan Daily News, “Pick on the Other Guy,” “Let’s Back off,” “Click!”

Comments: Thoughtful editorials that provide perspective and provoke thought for readers on either side of these issues.

Mathew Zencey, Anchorage Daily News, “Save the Nike Site,” “Bad deal,” “Adolescents”

Comments: Takes clear stands with a logical framework that compels the reader to pay attention.

2nd: Scott L. Woodham, Anchorage Press

The Flashlight Letters

Comments: Innovative approach to jazz up editorial writing and make it more user friendly for younger readers.

3rd: Lori Evans, Peninsula Clarion, “When did it become...; Plan for giant final dividend...; Wolf should attend”

Comments: Good job holding local legislators accountable and naming names. These are textbook examples of what editorials should do.

Small

1st: John Roscoe, Catholic Anchor, “Refresher on ends and means in Iraq; Oil consumption is a moral issue; Profits and prisons shouldn’t be mixed”

Comments: Broadens the discussion about moral values to issues not always framed in moral terms.

2nd: Carla Helfferich, The Ester Republic, “Duty” and “Cheering up the Left”

Comments: These essay-like editorials grab the reader with their intimacy and clear-eyed candor over war and politics.

BEST COLUMNIST

Judge (large and small): Seattle Times columnist Nicole Brodeur

Large

1st: Rebecca Braun, Juneau Empire

Comments: Braun, as a guest columnist, doesn’t face the same grind as regular staff columnists. Still, her copy stood out for its clean, lean prose, her quick, smart arguments. More regular writers can learn from her.

2nd: Heather Lende, Anchorage Daily News

Comments: Lovely, human column. Very vulnerable and funny and honest. Nice details; scenes, really, that put the reader there. Normal places we all know but still beautifully captured.

3rd: Geo Beach, Anchorage Daily News

Comments: Refreshing, thoughtful, offbeat columns that pull many elements together. This is a tough-talker with a huge heart who takes readers on a wild ride of thought and then sets them right back at home.

Small

1st: James Mason, Arctic Sounder/ANI

Comments: A mix of observational, opinion and just plain attitude presented in a conversational yet informed way. Really interesting.

2nd: Tony Bickert, Alaska Star

Comments: Nice ideas framed in a self-deprecating, humorous, honest style. Very in touch with readers.

3rd: No winner

BEST SPORTS COLUMNIST

Judge: Los Angeles sports columnist Bill Plaschke

Small and large papers compete together

1st: Jeremiah Bartz, The Frontiersman

Comments: Welcome to J's World, where baseball players are judged on the number of pre-game child dogs they consume, Terrell Owens is Eyore, and sportswriters improved their typing speed with steroids. Bartz does a wonderful job of making the reader laugh, and think, and feel. For a columnist, that is truly a job well done.

2nd: Craig Medred, Anchorage Daily News Comments: Writing outdoors in Alaska must be like writing football in Nebraska; it's probably very difficult to come up with something new. But Medred reaches all the remote corners, with all the right touches, railing against senseless deaths while embracing the wilderness life.

3rd: Casey Ressler, The Frontiersman

Comments: From stories of high school recess to rec softball, Ressler reminds us that, at its core, a sports column is like a visit from a neighbor, written as one would talk over the back fence, filled with information that may not shake the world, but it is interesting for the neighborhood.

SPORTS NEWS REPORTING

Large

Judge: Glen Crevier, Assistant Managing Editor/Sports, The Star Tribune Minneapolis

1st: Eric Smith, Anchorage Daily News, "Lean is not mean: With many athletes flying South, Service athletics is cut to the bone"

Comments: Excellent story reporting the demise of a once-powerful athletic program because of the school district's new zoning boundaries. The writing was engaging and the story was full of interesting facts that vividly told the story how Service High School was coping with fewer athletes and lower expectations.

2nd: Eric Smith, Anchorage Daily News, "Encore act: Fifth-year athletes in center of debate over high school eligibility"

Comments: A fair, balanced look at the controversial issue of high school athletes using a fifth year of athletic eligibility. The writer did a good job of explaining why the rule was implemented and of finding both key sources who represented both sides of the issue.

3rd: Charles Bingham, Juneau Empire, "The Little League game that wasn't"

Comments: Well-told, easy-to-read story about a Little League All-Star game that ended in a double-forfeit. Nice writing that did not get in the way of the facts. The writer got to the point quickly and provided a clear explanation of the rule causing the odd finish.

Small

Judge: Lew Freedman, Chicago Tribune

1st: Jacob Brooks, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "Undefeated Bears Take Alaska Title."

Comments: Comprehensively covered for the local audience.

2nd: Jeff Benzak, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "KHS Pool Goes Bust."

Comments: Some vivid description of things going wrong.

3rd: Brian Lepley, Alaska Post, "Us Team Takes Gold with Draper."

SPORTS GAME/EVENT STORY

Large

Judge: Los Angeles sports columnist Bill Plaschke

1st: Matt Nevala, Anchorage Daily News, “Oh Yeah, How Sweep It Is.”

Comments: The object of any game story is to take the reader to the best seats in the house, and Nevala does this with his stirring account of the Alaska Aces’ first playoff series victory in six years. This game story had the three P’s required of all good game stories; passion, perspective and punch.

2nd: Charles Bingham, Juneau Empire, “Hollywood Ending”

Comments: This was a Hollywood-type gamer, complete with flashback and dramatic narrative and happy ending.

3rd: Andrew Krueger, Juneau Empire, “Long Run In The Sun.”

Comments: The story of how Joe Viechnicki won the Frank Maier Marathon was nothing compared to the story of how he arrived at the marathon on time, and Krueger does a great job of telling both.

Small

Judge: Glen Crevier, Assistant Managing Editor/Sports, The Star Tribune Minneapolis

1st: Tommy Wells, The Delta Discovery, “Iten ends King’s three-year reign”

Comments: Tightly focused story on the Kuskokwim 300 Sled Dog Race. The writer did a nice job of explaining the significance of the victory, made good use of quotes, and did a thorough job of explaining why Jeff King’s three-year win streak ended: because one of his dogs got loose during a break. That was a great anecdote for readers.

2nd: Jacob Brooks, Kodiak daily Mirror, “Meeting the challenge”

Comments: Good descriptive writing telling readers the difficulties competitors faced in the Kodiak Emerald Island Eco-Challenge. The writer made use of multiple sources to tell the story of the travails of the day and the course.

3rd: Nate Raymond, Homer Tribune, “Dirt racetrack a relief for local motocross bikers”

Comments: Thorough reporting from an issue that had high local interest: the opening for a dirt racetrack. The story included a mixture of live news and added context by explaining the origin of the movement to build the track.

BEST SPORTS FEATURE

Large

Judge: Los Angeles sports columnist Bill Plaschke

1st: Craig Medred, Anchorage Daily News, “Wolf Pack or No Wolf Pack, Musher Has A Tale To Tell”

Comments: An irresistible piece of writing, a credible bit of reporting, this story of a musher who claimed he was attacked by wolves and knocked out for six hours and survived to tell about it. Great job in telling his side of the story, then bringing it experts to refute. A real-life tall tale at its best.

2nd: Doyle Woody, Anchorage Daily News, “Wet and Wacko”

Comments: Tremendous description of a tremendously weird goalie, written in the fast pace of a hockey game with all the interesting twists and turns.

3rd: Doug O’Harra, Anchorage Daily News, “Family Afloat”

Comments: How can anyone resist a feature story in which the first six paragraphs are about the author worrying about his family going to the bathroom in a kayak? A great family story about the things in life that are really important.

Small

Judge: Glen Crevier, Assistant Managing Editor/Sports, The Star Tribune Minneapolis

1st: Ben Stuart, Homer News, "Shortcut from Seward: Trio crossed Harding icefield"

Comments: This was an interesting tale of a non-traditional competitive event and the difficulties involved in accomplishing a goal. The writer did a nice job of taking the readers into the wild with a descriptive style and good use of quotes. You could feel the anxious moments the competitors felt as they tried to traverse a "raging whitewater river through a deep canyon."

2nd: Jeff Benzak, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "Night golfing"

Comments: Good job of telling readers about the oddness of this event and the rules. The writer effectively interspersed humor throughout the story to keep readers engage. It was a fun event and a fun way to tell the story.

3rd: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, "Alenna Nilsen: Vikings guide of wrestling lore"

Comments: In-depth profile about the determination and work ethic of a female athlete in a boys' sport, and the admiration she receives from her coaches and peers.

BEST ARTS COVERAGE

Judge: Doug McLennan, Editor, ArtsJournal.com

Small and large papers compete together

1st: Amanda Coyne, Anchorage Press, "Sound of Silence"

Comments: This was an ambitious attempt to explain the motivations and provide context for a story that could easily have been portrayed as a black-and-white polarizing he said/she said. A deft mix of reporting and analysis that contributed greatly to understanding this story.

2nd: Kyle Hopkins, Anchorage Press, "Designing the Undead"

Comments: Lots of great vivid detail that conveys the color and imagination of these special effects artists.

3rd: Alex DeMarban, ANI, First Alaskans Magazine, "Sounds of Old"

Comments: A compelling story about conveying history from audio artifacts and rebuilding a sense of the past.

SUSTAINED COVERAGE OR SERIES

Judge (large and small): Julie Sullivan-Springhetti, The Oregonian

1st: Diana Campbell, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, "In Cancer's Grip"

Comments: Personal, startling and thorough coverage of a very local story. Campbell's report brings historic, state and national perspective to the numbers. She resists sentimentality. And yet, you can feel a boy's pain and a mother's fear. This is an important series for Native people nationwide, a critical one for Alaskans.

2nd: Paula Dobbyn, Anchorage Daily News, "Golden Glitter"

Comments: Newspapers are rarely ahead of the news, but Dobbyn jumps out here with a sharply reported, well-written series. The potential impact of the Pebble Mine emerges along with a picture of a people and a place totally unprepared.

3rd: Tim Inklebarger, Juneau Empire, "Bracing for the Move."

Comments: Inklebarger's series brings decision-makers and the people affected by those decisions face-to-face. Like a cinematographer, he moves around a seemingly mundane subject of relocating a government

agency, giving readers entry points that create a far better understanding of their government and neighbors.

Small

1st: Laurel Bill, Anchorage Chronicle, "Condo Catastrophe."

Comments: Great narrative writing throughout a nearly perfect consumer outrage story. Well-sourced, vivid and complete. Bill serves readers well.

2nd: Homer News Staff, "Quaint Little Drinking Village"

Comments: The newsroom creates a thorough, coherent look at this pervasive social problem, but retains the tone that - like the alcoholics featured - all this can change.

3rd: Amy Armstrong, The Alaska Star, "School Budget Woes."

Comments: Armstrong's stories shine when she shows the people behind the budget numbers. Clear and revealing beat coverage.

BEST HEADLINE WRITING

Judge: Bob Drews, retired Business copy chief, San Jose Mercury News, San Jose, California

Small and large compete together

1st: Jenny Neyman, Peninsula Clarion

"Graduating Senior: Woman finishes art degree 59 years after her first class," "Enduring Summer: Family, friends matter most to man who's twice battled cancer," "Stickler for Details: Carver hunts diamond willow in the rough," "Road Scholars: Rural students leave village life in high school in search of greater opportunities," "Making waves: KWJG-FM strives for local flair."

Comments: Fine art headlines that went well with the photographs and were complemented professionally by the decks. I thought Stickler for details was the single best headline of all those submitted for this contest.

2nd: Andrew Krueger, Juneau Empire

"One-Disputed: Shadow lingers over tonight's Sugar Bowl," "Weather or Not: Some thrive, others wilt in nature's wrath," "Center of Balance: Juneau's Tasha McKoy is a strong post by necessity, a team leader by example," "Coup D'Etroit: Pistons rout Lakers to win NBA title/Billups wins MVP; L.A. dynasty may crumble," "The little team that could/Juneau boys win state team title; "Bear girls finish second/Crimson Bear boys win state crown with just six swimmers" "Winless streaks for Juneau, Southeast come to an end during state girls meet"

Comments: All five headlines were strong, compelling, told the story and never once resorted to cliché or reaching for an obscure angle. Andrew doesn't fall into the trap of mistaking cute for creative or obtuse for original.

3rd: Tyler Rhodes, Alaska Journal of Commerce

"Film businesses forced to refocus," "Ferry could float two communities," "Seward Ship's Drydock is happily swamped," "Sitka hospital nursed back to financial health," "Energy supplies may be in hot water" Comments: This business newspaper's conservative layout and appearance obviously doesn't stand in the way of creative headlines in tight counts. A long time ago, an editor told me to make a headline "sell the story." Tyler pays heed to that advice by using a sense of flair to "sell" these specialized reports.

BEST EDITORIAL CARTOON

Judge: David Fitzsimmons, Editorial Cartoonist, The Arizona Daily Star

Small and large compete together

General comments: It was a pleasure and a challenge judging the fine entries that were submitted. Alaska is a lively haven for thriving cartoonists. From the high-level quality of the subject matter I can only guess that Alaska's satirists enjoy a glut of riches much as we do here in Arizona.

1st: Tony “Toe” Newman

Comments: Tony’s cartoons deal with serious and meaningful subjects in a very funny and clear fashion. This inklinger slays the dragons with a deft touch.

2nd: Dan Darrow, The Ester Republic

Comments: The linework, composition and use of visual parody makes for compelling and memorable cartoons. A skilled draftsman, Dan inks commentary that is entertaining, concise and relevant to readers.

3rd: Chuck Legge, The Frontiersman

Comments: Chuck’s cartoons are simple, direct and deadly. The No Child Left behind shoe shop analogy is a very nice and funny fit that is imaginative and clever.

BEST SECTION

Lost in the mail. Refunds available for entrants.

BEST WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

Not available as of press time.

BEST ILLUSTRATION

Judge: Steve Dorsey, Design and Graphics Director, Detroit Free Press; Also editor of SND’s Design Journal

Small and large compete together

1st: Aaron Jansen, Anchorage Press, “The Great Taxi Adventure.”

Comments: Clever incorporation of popular imagery from Grand Theft Auto packaging, plus inclusion of little local touches throughout. Very fun and engaging. But don’t stop there, incorporate the idea into the logo and reefer, let the entire cover be the box for the “game.”

2nd: Stephanie Johnson, Alaska Star, “2004 Iditarod.”

Comments: Artful and refreshing, a welcome departure for newspaper illustration, this is something I would want to hang onto beyond the cycle of the paper. Great use of color and texture. Well done.

3rd: Randy Wood, Anchorage Press, “Crude awakening.”

Comments: This is a clever idea that quickly communicates visually the concept of the article. The type treatment may be a touch too much, but I enjoyed the free-hand quality of the illustration.

BEST PAGE LAYOUT & DESIGN

Large

Judge: Steve Dorsey, Design and Graphics Director, Detroit Free Press; Also editor of SND’s Design Journal

1st: Aaron Jansen, Anchorage Press, “Metrosexual Doll”

Comments: A very clever treatment that captures the attitude of the article and engages the reader by telling the story visually. It may not be everyone’s cup of tea, but it will certainly compel you to read more about why this local personality subjected himself to this makeover process. It’s fun and grabs attention. Credit given for carrying the treatment inside the cover too. One nitpick: The nameplate is almost entirely illegible: squeezed, too tightly letterspaced and poorly reversed ‘Anchorage,’ all scream for relief – and distract from the page itself.

2nd: Gianna Ridgeway, Anchorage Daily News, “Village digs in against a fiery foe.”

Comments: Great use of a sensational, newsy photo. Good restraint in not crowding too many other stories onto the page and instead letting readers spend time with the scorching photos from within the fire fighters' world. Well done.

3rd: Michael Piatt, Juneau Empire, "Blaze guts Subway building."

Comments: Strong, committed use of big breaking local news. Congrats on making room for the news of the day and not trying to force too many story starts onto the front. Nitpicks: I wish the lead headline were slightly larger – the dimensions of the page would have withstood it and then the headline would have been in proportion to the lead photo. Also, I wish there was a little more of a breakdown of details for readers – help me grasp the impact of the story in the display type more.

HM: Aaron Jansen, Anchorage Press,

"WANTED"

Comments: Another clever idea, well executed – but not carried far enough. Why not turn the ENTIRE tab cover into a wanted poster – logo and teasers included... now THAT would have been fun.

Small

Judge: Gary E. Maitland, Managing Editor
Herald-Zeitung (Texas)

1st: Stephanie Johnson, Alaska Star, "Schools Out for Summer"

Comments: Creative touch on a familiar theme the end of the school year. Headline font captured the zainness of the youthful subjects. Nice touch to use drawings from students. Stroke of genius to use the swirls of scribbling so commonly found in drawings of youth this age as a background design element. Very nicely done.

2nd: Brian Lepley, Alaska Post, "Winter Wildlife in Denali National Park"

Comments: Large photo of snowcapped mountain is a real attention getter. Colors of backdrop and wildlife photos are complimentary. Copy a bit hard to read against backdrop, and perhaps there is too much of it. Photos of animals are a bit too dark. Using a second photo of mountain probably not necessary. Overall, pages have a nice, appealing look.

3rd: Betsy Lund, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "2004: A Year in Photos"

Comments: Solid effort on a Year in Review package. The second page of the double truck has more visual impact because of the photos, although I would have liked to have seen more varied sizing of the pictures. The mini-page layouts made for a bland first page and their small size made them unreadable. Perhaps they could have been enlarged with the emphasis focused just on the stories featured.

BEST GRAPHIC

Judges: Director of Graphics Steve McKinstry and Senior Editor/Visuals Randy Cox, The Oregonian

Small and large compete together

1st: Ron Engstrom, Anchorage Daily News

"Bering Sea Jellyfish"

Comments: Well-organized and executed for the reader with very clever use of subheads to gain a quick understanding of the news focus intended. Good use of black and limited color choices helps to avoid unnecessary confusion in a graphic so filled with information. This graphic was a quick read and I learned something I didn't already know without having to plow through too much drawing distraction.

2nd: Charles Atkins, Anchorage Daily News, "Moose Car Collisions"

Comments: An impressive assemblage of information along with detailed research provides an insightful look at this problem. Of all three top graphics, this one displayed the best use of detailed research. Unfortunately, this graphic suffers from too many colors with no links to the information displayed. That, combined with redundant use of images (the moose repeated at least three times) hurt this graphic's overall appeal.

3rd: Ron Engstrom, Anchorage Daily News, "E Street Shuffle"

Comments: Nicely organized to give the reader a vision of the downtown changes coming. Unfortunately, despite the appeal, the artist's renderings are played too small (and too fuzzy) to be of real use in envisioning future development. And, the background map color would have been much more legibly used if it had been carried throughout the graphic. As is, legibility of the text is compromised in some confusion between colors map details.

BEST SPOT NEWS PHOTO

Large

Judges: The Los Angeles Times: deputy director of photography Calvin Hom; senior photo editor Alan Hagman; feature photo editor Hal Wells; assignment editor Robert St. John

1st: Robert Hallinen, Anchorage Daily News, "Oil Spill"

Comments: A quiet image that looks like a painting, though would have liked to see the print, some of the color was lost in reproduction. Image shows the enormity of the damage with strong composition.

2nd: Sam Harrell, Fairbanks Daily News-miner, "On Thin Ice"

3rd: Al Grillo, Associated Press, "Steep Plunge"

Small

Judge: Tony Overman, The Olympian, NPPA

1st: Randi Somers, Homer Tribune, "Firefighter Extrication"

Comments: Photographer was in close on the action as the firefighter works to free a man from a car wreck. This is the definition of spot news: reacting on adrenaline and making good photos.

2nd: Wes Hanna, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "Reality Sets In"

Comments: Photo of couple hugging during their home fire has strong emotion, drawing the viewer into the real cost of losing everything. And sometimes the story isn't about the flames, but about the family, friends and neighbors offering support and strength.

3rd: Michael Armstrong, Homer News, "Free Bird"

Comments: Key moment in the capture of an eagle that had got stuck on a power pole. Blue sky makes a clean background for the eagle in the net to "pop."

BEST PICTURE STORY

Large

Judges: The Los Angeles Times: deputy director of photography Calvin Hom; senior photo editor Alan Hagman; feature photo editor Hal Wells; assignment editor Robert St. John

1st: Eric F. Engman, Fairbanks Daily News Miner, "In Cancer's Grip"

Comments: Clearly the winner by far out of all the entries. It was obvious in the images that the photographer took control of the story and spent a tremendous amount of time on it. The best part of the series were the images of the Prince family. It was evident that the photographer spent time with the family, got to know them, gained their trust. He did not rely on portraits but made sure he photographed "real people doing real things." Strong documentary work.

2nd: Robert Hallinen, Anchorage Daily News, "The Secrets of Puffins"

3rd: Robert Hallinen, Anchorage Daily News, "Recycle"

Small

Judges: Director of Photography Patty Reksten; Features picture editor Mike Davis; Senior Editor/Visuals Randy Cox, The Oregonian

1st: Klas Stolpe, St. Petersburg Pilot, "Play Ball"

Comments: Although the reproduction and display on this picture story leaves lots to be desired, that doesn't diminish the strength of these pictures as contributing to the story line. Each photograph is a small moment that all blend together to provide the reader with a larger look at the tee-ball game that afternoon. From close-ups to wider-view action, this photographer has done a fine job of telling a story in multiple pictures.

2nd: Brian Lepley, Alaska Post, "Winter Wildlife in Denali National Park"

Comments: Although it's not really a story, but an appealing collection of wildlife photos, this photographer has done an excellent job of capturing these creatures in their native environment. Each provides us with a sense of place and, by combining the wildlife with the tight mountain peaks too, we get a better idea of where this place is. Unfortunately, the redundancy and conflicting usage of the large

3rd: Klas Stolpe, St. Petersburg Pilot, "Little Norway Festival 2004"

Comments: Very well displayed, this collection of photos shows us some of the variety of cute activities that take place during this annual festival. Several strong portraits by this photographer place this entry in the winner's circle, but the inclusion of a couple of weak photos not only hurts the story line but also dilutes the effectiveness of the other photos to tell the story.

BEST SPORTS PHOTO

Large

Judges: The Los Angeles Times: deputy director of photography Calvin Hom; senior photo editor Alan Hagman; feature photo editor Hal Wells; assignment editor Robert St. John

1st: Brian Wallace, the Juneau Empire, "The Heat is On"

Comments: Peak moment, strong framing of the two players. Photo could have been cropped tighter from the bottom for more impact.

2nd: Michael Penn, Juneau Empire, "Down, Not Out"

3rd: Al Grillo, Associated Press, "Long Ride Home"

Small

Judge: Rob Romig, director of graphics, The Register-Guard

1st: Ben Stuart, Homer News, "Goal"

Comments: Good emotion and composition from a sport that's tough to shoot.

2nd: Bob Martinson, Northern Light, "Game-winning goal"

Comments: Captures the key moment in a hockey game, with a look of anticipation on the players' faces.

3rd: Robert DeBerry, Anchorage Chronicle, "Superman"

Comments: Nice juxtaposition of the motorcycle and the mountain. Could have benefited from a tighter crop.

BEST SCENIC PHOTO

Large

Judges: The Los Angeles Times: deputy director of photography Calvin Hom; senior photo editor Alan Hagman; feature photo editor Hal Wells; assignment editor Robert St. John

1st: Michael Penn, Juneau Empire, "Winter Dawn"

Comments: Combines natural elements well, strong composition and light, the placement of the gull in the right third of the image makes the photo.

2nd: Robert Hallinen, Anchorage Daily News, "Surfer Boys"

3rd: Evan R. Steinhauer, Anchorage Daily News, "Spencer Ice"

Small

Judges: The Oregonian: Director of Photography Patty Reksten; Features picture editor Mike Davis; Senior Editor/Visuals Randy Cox

1st: Jeff Richardson, ANI/The Dutch Harbor Fisherman, "Picture Perfect Perch"

Comments: Appealing composition and deft use of graphics lend an air of regal loneliness to this portrait of an eagle. The very effective contrast between the man-made foreground and the organic background pushed this scenic into first place.

2nd: Jed Smith, ANI/Bristol Bay Times, "Chasing Daylight"

Comments: Silhouettes can be deadly dull, cheap techniques to introduce graphic contrast into photography. This example effectively avoids that trap through strong use of color, appropriate use of open space and a sense of timing to capture man and beast on the mountain. That, coupled with the tension afforded by avoiding symmetry, produced a very close second place.

3rd: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, "One Pizza Pie"

Comments: How to resist the jagged mountainous contrast with the silky-white orb of the moon? Straightforward, appropriate use of late afternoon light and the beauty of nature and the planets. Well-done!

BEST PORTRAIT

Large

Judge: Tony Overman, The Olympian, NPPA

1st: Eric F. Engman, Fairbanks Daily News Miner, "Raising Grandchildren"

Comments: Beautiful, natural moment of a grandmother with the three grandchildren she is raising. Window light gives an angelic feeling and combines with the obvious love between the family to make us care about these people.

2nd: Jim Lavrakas, Anchorage Daily News, "Face Mask"

Comments: The most clever portrait that we've seen in a long, long time. The mask maker's mask of himself, masking his real face, but held by his real hands is so surreal that you keep staring right back. Great clean background, too.

3rd: Jim Lavrakas, Anchorage Daily News, "Windshield Man"

Comments: A straightforward portrait executed to perfection. Off-camera strobe separates the man from the shattered windshield he is holding. Lighting also helps cracks stand out against the dark background.

Small

Judge: Rob Romig, director of graphics
The Register-Guard

1st: Betsy Lund, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "We will miss you"

Comments: Subtle yet emotional moment, composed well.

2nd: Amy M. Armstrong, The Alaska Star, “Shannon Brunke”

Comments: Gives the sense this woman loves her job.

3rd: Bob Martinson, Northern Light, “Mariano Gonzalez”

Comments: Nicely composed, but might have been better if the subject had held the mask in front of his face.

33 BEST FEATURE PHOTO

Large

Judges: The Los Angeles Times: deputy director of photography Calvin Hom; senior photo editor Alan Hagman; feature photo editor Hal Wells; assignment editor Robert St. John

1st: Erik Hill, Anchorage Daily News, “Job Site Abstraction”

Comments: Wonderful composition and moment, strong repetition of images and color, good job of seeing by the photographer, waited for the perfect juxtaposition of subject.

2nd: Marc Lester, Anchorage Daily News, “A Visit From Spiderman”

3rd: Jim Lavrakas, Anchorage Daily News, “Calf Kissed”

Small

Judge: Tony Overman, The Olympian, NPPA

1st: Jeff Benzak, Kodiak Daily Mirror, “Curse Reversed”

Comments: This joy-filled photo brings to life the relief and exultation that Red Sox fans across the nation were feeling. Great expression and the TV screen “clinches the championship” for this photo.

2nd: James Mason, Alaska Newspaper Inc., “Hauling a Hawser”

Comments: We have no idea what a “Hawser” is, but we love this photo from the everyday life of barge workers. The oversized ropes and post make the men seem small. Their body language is great and the soft light from above makes them look like a statue.

3rd: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, “Takeoff”

Comments: There were a lot of eagle photos in this category, but none as perfect at this one. Perfect body language, perfect light, perfect background. It looks like a painting.

RADIO

BREAKING NEWS

Judge: Corey Flintoff, NPR

1st: Lori Townsend, Annie Feldt, Michelle Wozniak, Alaska Public Radio Network

“Selendang Ayu Disaster”

Comments: This very thorough report conveyed the precarious situation of the ship, as well as the danger to all the people involved in the rescue and to the environment.

2nd: Dan Bross, KUAC-FM, “Newscast: Fire”

Comments: This coverage tackled the breaking news story from several angles, including the progress of the fire, the people forced from their homes, and the health danger from smoke and pollution.

3rd: Johanna Eurich, KDLG, "Drowning"

Comments: This clear, concise narrative proves that it's not necessary to have sound bites to cover a breaking news event. The story is well and starkly told. I have some concerns that witness accounts should have been attributed, since this story involves both family tragedy and legal liability.

BEST SINGLE STORY

Judge: Susanna Capelouto, Georgia Public Broadcasting

1st: Libby Casey, KUAC, "Troop Deployment"

Comments: This story was touching and was presented well. It had high technical standards.

2nd: Matt Lichtenstein, KFSK, "Greenpeace Protest"

Comments: This story was very balanced, which can be hard with environmental pieces.

3rd: Dixie Hutchinson, KNBA, "Alaska Native Oratory Society"

BEST COMPREHENSIVE REPORTING

Judge: Catrin Einhorn, Chicago Public Radio

1st: Ed Schoenfeld, Anne Sutton, Matt Lichtenstein, Coast Alaska, KFSK, "Tourism Changes Series"

No 2nd or 3rd place winners.

BEST ONGOING PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM

Judge: Elizabeth Arnold, NPR

1st: "AK," APRN, Ashley Gross, Gabriel Spitzer, Ellen Lockyer, Duncan Moon, Michelle Wozniak

Comments: Comprehensive but localized coverage of complex issues. Solid, informative but lively writing and consistently creative use of sound.

2nd: Alaska Teen Media Institute "In Other News"

Comments: New perspective on important issues told in an approachable, humorous but informative way. Great use of sound, good production skills, well researched. These kids have a future in radio! Made me NOT want to get pierced OR tattooed!! Good on site interviews.

3rd: Jeff Brown, KTOO, The American State Songbook

Comments: ORIGINAL!! Who said public affairs shows had to be long and serious? These little vignettes, like Garrison Keillor's writer's almanac, are written and produced in such a way as to make you stop what you're doing for a few minutes and think about something else, something kind of nice... now THAT'S a public service!

ONE TIME PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIAL

Judge: Paul Glickman

1st: Matt Lichtenstein, KFSK, "Veterans Day Special"

2nd and 3rd: No winners.

COMMENTARY, EDITORIAL OR REVIEW

Judge: Bill Drummond,, Berkeley School of Journalism

1st: Amanda Krysinski, Alaska Teen Media Institute, "Heavy Metal Commentary"

Comments: Vitality in her delivery. Creative use of sound effects and music. Clear writing. An original idea.

2nd: Gabriel Spitzer, Alaska Public Radio Network, "Why I smoke"

Comments: An intelligent treatment of a controversial and un-PCsubject. First-rate delivery and writing.

3rd: Johanna Eurich, KDLG, "Spring"

Comments: Good imagery and sense of scene. Effective delivery and clean writing.

BEST DOCUMENTARY

Judge: Julie Shapiro, Third Coast International Audio Festival

1st: Gabriel Spitzer, Living on Earth, "Moving the Village"

Comments: excellent sense of place is established through the use of sound and very strong writing. Uniqueness of region in story shines through the structure of the piece, and the pace at which the story is told. Technically, this piece is tight, mixed well, emotional and informative. Choice of characters and scenes is very effective. Overall - the piece gives a scientific topic that we've all heard many, many reports on a more human, tangible essence.

2nd: Sarah Neal, KUAC, "Dry Country"

Comments: There isn't much opportunity to use sound as illustration here, but the producer wrote strongly, and cleverly, and really worked with her options. She also effectively demonstrated certain challenges encountered while reporting, which gives the listener an extra glimpse inside both the process she was reporting on, and the process of telling the story. Her tone is professional, though also with an element of curiosity and energy that sounds very honest, while completely trustworthy.

3rd: Alaska Teen Media Institute, Alaska Teen Media Institute, "ulture Shock"

Comments: The pace of this doc is perfect, considering the subject matter! The youth producers who made the piece express an appropriate amount of energy and level of engagement in relation to their stories, and the particular music used throughout reinforces their perspectives easily. The interviews are a little bit sloppy but this is forgivable, and does not prevent the doc from accomplishing what it's setting out to do - give listeners a sense of what it might be like for both rural and urban Alaskan youth to engage with their surroundings and each other. It's very promising and exciting to hear the voice of Alaskan youth!!!

GOVERNMENT OR POLITICALS

Judge: Laura McCallum, Capitol Bureau Chief, Minnesota Public Radio

1st: Amanda Stossel, KTNA, "A Place Called Y"

Comments: Unique story that draws listener in; well written and delivered; good tape.

2nd: Dixie Hutchinson, KNBA, "ATG Discharged"

Comments: Compelling story about an interesting slice of history; colorful character brings story to life.

3rd: Amanda Krysinski, Alaska Teen Media Institute, "Political Humor"

Comments: Creative take on the 2004 campaign; well written.

BEST BUSINESS REPORTING

Judge: Kai Ryssdal

1st: Anne Sutton, KTOO, "Pt. Sophia"

Comments: Great use of sound, both axx and ambi. Excellent production values. Nice story arc, cohesive narrative and good analysis.

2nd: Jody Seitz, KDLG, "Wild Alaska Seafoods"

Comments: Good sound, good writing. Interesting subject, nice setup of local business and what it means for area.

3rd: Sarah Neal, KUAC, "TIF"

Comments: Good explainer on dense topic. Clear writing, nice discussion of future implications, good expansion of what TIFs mean beyond local impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

Judge: Patricia Murphy, Host/ Reporter "All Things Considered", KUOW 94.9 Public Radio Seattle

1st: Gabriel Spitzer, Alaska Public Radio Network, "Shishmaref Confronts Climate Change"

Comments WOW! Amazing tape. Was it luck or planning that put you there to capture that sound? Excellent mixing, loved the tape to tape to tape. A very important story.

2nd: Ashley Gross, Alaska Public Radio Network, "The Mine in Our Backyard"

Comments: Good used of sound. A well prepared balanced report. Strong exploration of the issue.

3rd: Len Anderson, Alaska Public Radio Network, "Cats Only on St Paul"

Comments: Very funny. Nice writing, great tape.

CRIME & COURTS

Judge: Richard Baker, News Director, K-State Radio Network, Associate Professor, Dept. of Communications, Kansas State University

1st: Len Anderson, KSKA, "Bethany's Body Positively Identified"

Comments: The report was well written and delivered. It was able to evoke an element of pathos and understanding without being maudlin. The sound bites were well chosen and placed.

2nd: Matt Miller, KTOO, "Courtwatch: Presumptive Sentencing"

Comments: Miller asked the right questions to explain a complicated subject. He seemed to know his subject well, but kept the focus on the guest.

3rd: Sarah Neal, KUAC, "Council Member Steps Down To Fight Crime"

Comments: This is an interesting story with excellent delivery. Neal packed a lot of information into a short piece.

BEST EDUCATION REPORTING

Judge: Rachel Ambrose, AP

1st: Ashley Gross, APRN, "Caught Between Tradition and Modernity: Russian Old Believer Schools"

Comments: The account quickly gets you into the story of how Russian Old Believers adjust to modernity on the Kenai Peninsula. In this case, their schools. The schools are able to adjust to teaching Russian and observing many religious holidays by starting classes earlier in early August and meeting on some

Saturdays. ‘We bend over backwards to help them graduate,’ says one teacher. But some parents think there’s not enough learning of the old ways. An excellent example, with good sound and voices heard, of how this school strives for good balance.

2nd: Mike Murray, “Salvadorans”

Comments: Another fine example of education meeting the cultural clash. Good writing and plays on words such as how these Salvadoran students attend this Catholic-run school “religiously.” We hear from both the teachers and the student fishermen who must learn English to get jobs.

3rd: Melissa Wentzel, “Life at Mount Edgecumbe High School”

Comments: This is a “voices” winner as we hear from eight boarding school students who give us a glimpse into what it’s like to be young, Native Alaskan and very far away from home.

HEALTH OR SCIENCE

Judge: Elizabeth Arnold, NPR

1st: Rosemary Alexander, KTOO, “The Forgetting”

Comments: Unexpected take on what could have been a straightforward review. Powerful personal report on a difficult emotional issue. Subtle use of sound. Courageous!

2nd: Dixie Hutchinson, KNBA, “World Aids Day”

Comments: Well researched reporting on a difficult subject. Comprehensive story of a national issue at the local level. Good voices.

3rd: Matt Lichtenstein, KFSK, “Catscan”

Comments: Great use of sound and self. Creative lively approach to a simple mundane event. Good writing, pace and delivery.

BEST RADIO FEATURE

Judge: Rachel Ambrose, AP

1st: Johanna Eurich, “Migrants”

Comments: A comprehensive look at Dillingham and its brief migrant invasion for salmon and halibut fishing each year. Answers questions about life for migrants who come in from as far away as Pennsylvania. Excellent writing, storytelling and use of sound.

2nd: Len Anderson, KSKA, “Big Mitch and the Singing Students”

Comments: We find out how true it is that everyone has a song. We hear from the teacher with the smoky voice to his students of all ages. The individual stories of why people take singing lessons make for a rich entry.

3rd: Jessica Cochran, APRN, “Fish Skin Workshop”

Comments: Excellent use of sound in this feature about the scraping and sewing of fish skins to make temporary artworks.

BEST PROFILE

Judge: Katherine Concannon, NPR Seattle

1st: Gabriel Spitzer, Alaska Public Radio Network, “Porky and the Volcano”

Comments: A long piece but the reporter managed to keep the listeners attention through compelling tape and a writing style and delivery that effectively matched the humorous tone of the story. The intro did a good job of drawing the listener into the piece at the beginning. And the use of a voice-over to read "porky's" own words was well done and added to the overall success of the story.

2nd: Lori Townsend, Alaska Public Radio Network, "M. Ashley Dickerson - Legal Pioneer"

Comments: Nicely written and the wonderful tape from Ms. Dickerson was used effectively.

3rd: Dan Bross, KUAC-FM, "Dennis Gaboury Profile"

Comments: A difficult story to listen to, but well-written and absorbing.

BEST SPORTS REPORTING

Judge: Bill Drummond, Berkeley School of Journalism

1st: Libby Casey, KUAC, Yukon Quest

Comments: Excellent actualities. An original story concept, ie.. concentration on quitters rather than the winner. Woven together in a dramatic way.

2nd: Shana Sheehy, APRN, "Running the Klondike"

Comments: Innovative use of sound, ambience and first-person storytelling. Good delivery and writing.

3rd: Rosemarie Alexander, KTOO, "Tough Bears"

Comments: Creative way of telling a story that was way larger than just the final score. Good use of ambience. Good writing and delivery.

BEST COVERAGE OF A LIVE EVENT

Judge: Mardy Derby, CBC

1st: Matt Lichtenstein, KFST, "Greenpeace"

No second or third.

BEST ARTS COVERAGE

Judge: Euan Kerr, Minnesota Public Radio

1st: Anne Sutton, KTOO, "Transformations"

Comments: The use of sound in this piece really takes a listener on stage in modern staging of an ancient Greek play, where drama meets synchronized swimming. The reporter gives us the history of the play, and outlines the challenges of building and performing in a huge tank of water.

2nd: Ashley Gross, APRN, "Christian Native Dance"

Comments: A visit to a remote island community provides an insight into the strength of tradition, the mobility of culture, and the human capacity for adaptation. By examining the individual spiritual and sometimes physical journeys of individuals the reporter helps listeners understand the formative pressures on a spiritual practice. The piece has some wonderful tape of the villagers describing their spiritual experiences.

3rd: Libby Casey, KUAC, "Gun Art Show"

Comments: While acknowledging the tense debate over the place of guns in modern society the reporter takes listeners to a show which uses art to look deeper into the culture surrounding these iconic objects.

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BEST DAILY NEWS PROGRAM

Judge: Mardy Derby, CBC

1st: Alaska News Nightly, Duncan Moon & Lori Townsend, APRN

2nd: Independent Native News, Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock, INN-KUAC

No second or third.

TELEVISION

BEST BREAKING NEWS STORY

Judge: Kimberly Reeves, Dallas

1st: Ben Deci, KTVA, "Plane Crash"

2nd: Dan Fiorucci, KTUU, "Private Plane Crash"

3rd: Meghan Stapleton, KTUU, "Bethany Found"

BEST SINGLE STORY REPORTING

Judge: Kimberly Reeves, Dallas

1st: Lynn Melling, KTUU, "Cabin Burns"

2nd: Meghan Stapleton, KTUU, "Short of the Runway"

3rd: Meghan Stapleton, KTUU, "Starved Dogs"

HM: Ty Kellner, KTVF, "Pogo Mine"

BEST SERIES REPORTING

Andrea McCarren, WJLA-TV, Washington, D.C.

1st: Rhonda McBride and Phil Walczak, KTUU, "Courting the Rural Vote"

Comments: This series represents everything that is right about television news. Thoughtful, insightful and beautifully written. Exquisite photography. My favorite pieces of all the entries judged! [Editors' note: this judge judged several categories].

2nd: Megan Baldino and Dave Steward, KTUU, "Crossing the Line of Duty"

Comments: Fascinating investigation. Well told. Excellent photography and editing.

3rd: Meghan Stapleton, Jason Moore and Eric Sowl, KTUU, "The Late Addition"

Fun idea. Well executed. Beautifully shot and edited.

BEST LIVE SHOT

1st: Meghan Stapleton, Justin Freeman, KTUU, “Short of the Runway”

Comments: Solid live shot; good camera work; wish Meghan had not used the word “miraculous” four times.

2nd: Megan Baldino and Dave Steward, KTUU, “Live on Kahiltna Glacier”

Comments: This was a technical feat, but that was only mentioned as an afterthought in the live shot. And Megan (overly) enthusiastically thanked all the sponsors by saying “(blank) rocks!!”

3rd: No winner.

BEST DOCUMENTARY

Judge: Tim Ryan, Assistant News Director
9News/KUSA-TV, Denver, CO

1st: Jeanie Greene, Jeanie Greene Productions/Heartbeat Alaska, “Diomed: People of the Sea”

Comments: Beautiful combination of video and music. Wonderful aerials of island towns, fascinating glimpse of a remote place.

2nd: Michael Rogers, Jaime Schwartzwald, KXD News 13, “A Salute to Champions” Comments: Well put together, good use of older tape of players. Nice, inspirational story.

3rd: Steve MacDonald, Rich Jordan, KTUU-TV, “Aftershocks: Anatomy of Alaska’s Earthquakes”

Comments: Interesting topic, nice open, well-presented and good personalization.

HEALTH OR SCIENCE

Judge: Stephanie Clements, 9NEWS KUSA-TV, Denver

General comments: Thanks so much for entrusting me with these entries... lots of terrific work to judge. And wow, what gorgeous scenery!

1st: Robert Hannon, KVAC Alaska One, “Vital Signs: Occupational Health”

2nd: Meghan Stapleton, Mike Nederbrock, KTUU, Channel 2 News, “The Cost of Tobacco”

3rd: Jeanie Greene Productions, Heartbeat Alaska, “Tobacco Cessation”

BEST EDUCATION REPORTING

Judge: Karen Larsen, KJRH (NBC)

General comments: I truly enjoyed judging this year’s entries. It’s obvious that Alaska has a dedicated and talented group of reporters.

1st place: Photographer Chris Werner and reporter Jason Moore, KTUU, “Exit Exam Private School”

Comments: The competition was very fierce in this category. However, Werner and Moore edged out the other entrants. “Exit Exam” is a very well written report which provides viewers with a balanced perspective and insight into a compelling topic. The photographer provided excellent video and natural sound along with solid editing to help bring the story to life.

2nd place: Angela Unruh and Rich Jordan, KTUU, “Russian Mission Subsistence Education”

Comments: Nicely written with good sound bite selection to support the reporter’s track. Using kids along with adults and educators to provide their perspectives unveiled a fascinating story. Good photography and editing with nice use of natural sound.

3rd place: Reporter Yvonne Ramsay and photographer Eric Jowl, KTUU, “No Child Left Behind in Rural Alaska”

Comments: “Very good story-telling. Reporter did an excellent job of bringing home a national issue. (Suggestion: needed more natural sound throughout and sound bites from children.)

HM: Jeanie Green and Dave Manning, Heartbeat Alaska, “Akhiok Culture in Schools Week”

Comments: Stellar photography, natural sound and editing. This is a top-notch photographer at work.

HM: Rebecca Palsha, KIMO ABC Alaska’s Superstation, “Joining NASA”

Comments: It’s obvious that this reporter has a knack for helping students feel comfortable enough to use their own words. Nice job of interviewing kids in a hands-on setting rather than a formal, sit-down interview.

BEST ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

Judge: Andrea McCarren, WJLA, Washington, D.C.

1st: Rhonda McBride and Dave Steward, KTUU, “St. Paul Island’s Rite of Spring: Clean Beaches”

Comments: Outstanding photography and use of natural sound. Nice writing. A wonderful piece.

2nd: Jeanie Greene and Dave Manning, Heartbeat Alaska, “The Dipnet Dilemma”

Comments: Great photography and interesting material (though it was a bit over-produced. I’d like it better without so much music and so many effects).

3rd: Dan Fiorucci and Brad Hillwig, KTUU, “Selendang Ayu”

Comments: Fell flat compared to others. Really one primary interview, although material was interesting.

BEST CRIME OR COURTS REPORTING

Judge: Kimberly Reeves, Dallas

1st: Ben Deci, KTVA, “Padgett Trial”

2nd: Maria Downey, KTUU, “Olson’s Arraignment”

3rd: Megan Baldino, KTUU, “Crossing the Line”

BEST POLITICAL REPORTING

Judge: Adam Schrager, 9News Reporter, KUSA-TV Denver, CO

1st: Anne Sutton, KTOO, “Alaska Week: The Boxer”

2nd: Rhonda McBride-Reporter, Phil Walczak, KTUU, “Big Race on the Kenai”

3rd: Megan Baldino, Tom Anderson, KTUU, “The Stripping Bill”

BEST BUSINESS REPORTING

Judge: Tim Ryan, Assistant News Director
9News/KUSA-TV, Denver, CO

1st: Reporter Maria Downey; Photographer Barry Johnson, KTUU, "Alaska Dream Kitchens:A Consumer Nightmare"
Comments: Well done, interesting.

No second or third.

BEST TELEVISION FEATURE

Judge: Deborah Horne, Emmy-award winning reporter, KIRO 7 News Seattle

1st:**Ben Deci, Ron Solstad, KTVA**, "Globe of Death"
Comments: Wonderfully done. Very clever. Very Entertaining.

2nd:**Jeffrey Hope, Justin Freeman, KTUU**, "Spear Fishing"
Comments: Nicely done. Solved the problem of needing to show us the fishing itself without giving away the entire story.

3rd: **Jeffrey Hope, Rich Jordan, KTUU**, "Animal Carousel"
Comments: Made what could have been a so-so story, very interesting. Nice use of limited video.

BEST ARTS COVERAGE

Judge: Deborah Horne, Emmy-award winning reporter, KIRO 7 News Seattle

1st:**Jeffrey Hope, Eric Sowl, KTUU**, "Jeweler"
Comments: Well done profile of this jeweler. Nicely shot.

2nd: **Sharice Walker**, "Watercolor Society"
Comments: Nice visuals. Interesting story.

3rd: No Winner

ONGOING PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM

Judge: Dick Kay, Emmy-award winning reporter; George Foster Peabody medallion, NBC 5 Chicago

1st: **Jeanie Greene, Heartbeat Alaska**
"Heartbeat Alaska"

Comments: I debated no award since there was only one entry, but (decided) that should not disqualify the show from awards judging. I understand how shows like this are produced and since one piece, the "Nome Child Advocacy Center" seemed to be a professional production I excluded it from my decision. The other pieces in the composite however were beautifully photographed and I am surprised photographers were not included in this entry. Maybe they were included in another category. I found the piece on the Doctor and Tobacco a bit unconnected but the third production on drug abuse in a small village flowed a bit better. Even if this is a syndicated show (or maybe I'm wrong) I thought it took a lot of effort and a lot of time to cover all the bases in the last two pieces so I did make it my choice for First Place.

ONE TIME PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM

Judge: Dick Kay, Emmy-award winning reporter; George Foster Peabody medallion, NBC 5 Chicago

1st: **Katie Bausler, Skip Gray, and Terry Tavel, KTOO-TV/Alaska One**, "Who's in? Who's out?"

Comments: This was an effective use of vignettes to illustrate the topic of discussion. Those small stories made the subject at hand clear and understandable even to the uninformed. The program was seamless and the host never strayed off topic. Nice production. Well shot by the photographers and well produced.

2nd and 3rd: No winners.

Comments: I have had a long debate with myself as to a 2nd or 3rd place. I believe the Permanent Solution show is the kind of program television should attempt but I could never fully grasp the topic. The hosts could have given a short introduction of the reason for the Conference of Alaskans, the four questions put to them, and the final resolution. That would have put the discussion in some perspective. In the end ... I had decided to give it 2nd place but changed my mind and decided not to award a 2nd or 3rd place. I thought the Nome Child Advocacy entry was a bit disingenuous because it was included in another entry in another category. It was very informative but it also made use of actors and I am not sure that fits a special public service program when you consider how well the KTOO-TV entry was done with local newsmen and individuals. So....no 2nd or 3rd.

BEST SPORTS STORY

Results not available as of press time.

BEST PROFILE

Judge: Gary Horcher, award-winning investigative reporter, KIRO 7 News Seattle

1st: "Debbie Lestenkoff, woman who walks in two worlds"

Comments: An artfully shot, beautifully composed profile, this piece conveyed a strong sense of history, and a compelling concern for environment. We liked how it came full circle to explain the tattoo, and the cause the woman felt compelled to serve. The story reminded me a little bit of the great movie "Whale rider". The writing on this piece obviously took time, and whatever it took, the result was well worth it.

2nd: Megan Baldino, reporter, Justin Freeman, photographer, KTUU, "Lost & Found"

Comments: An incredibly emotional piece, with a fantastic "reveal", surprising the viewer with the returned dogtag. Well shot, very well written, and inspiring. This man is one of the quiet American Heroes, and you gave him a voice I will not forget.

3rd: Jim Scheve and Justin Freeman, KTUU, "From their perspective"

Comments: An absolutely perfect mini-documentary, with effective use of emotional interviews, and film. These veterans provided a very compelling sense of history, with a really effective statement about today's challenges. We were very moved by the war stories, but we were even more deeply touched by the credit the living soldiers gave to the ones who never made it home. THIS PIECE SHOULD BE SHOWN EVERY MEMORIAL DAY.

BEST LIVE SPECIAL

Judge: Tim Ryan, Assistant News Director
9News/KUSA-TV, Denver, CO

No winners

BEST EDITING

Judge: Eric Kehe, 9News Director of Photography

1st: Bradley Hillwig, KTUU, "Without A Trace"

Comments: Good nats, creative radio nats woven in, scene was set well, appropriate f/x enhanced story, edits on scanner beats very effective, good transitions and pace.

2nd: Eric Sowl, KTUU, "MDA Live Ride"

Comments: Good nats, sometimes nats a little overpowering, good edits on action, good pace, excellent superimposition f/x during ride.

3rd: Jaime Schwartzwald, KXD News 13, "Delta Mud Drags"

Comments: Liked the story. Good cuts on action but not much sequencing, good pace, good nats breaks to help pace.

BEST FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Judge: Eric Kehe, 9News Director of Photography

1st: Justin Freeman, Jeffrey Hope, KTUU

"Alaska Spear Fishing"

Comments: Nice underwater photography, great effort, good build-up and pay-off, some blue video on boat, good fishing moments, way to stay with action. Tough shoot under difficult conditions. Deserves the award.

2nd: Shawn Wilson, KTUU, "The Summer Mountain"

Comments: Followed action well, good nats, good pace, great spill at end.

3rd: Skip Gray, Terry Tavel, Katie Bausler, KTOO, "Glacier Bay"

Comments: Beautiful scenics shot from boat, story lost focus, okay nats.

BEST SPOT NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY

Judge: Eric Kehe, 9News Director of Photography

1st: Eric Sowl, KTUU, "Dog Rescue"

Comments: Good story, great nats and interactive video took me there, made me care, followed action well, nice story construction and followed story through to completion.

2nd: Bradley Hillwig, KTUU, "The River's Edge"

Comments: This story did not pick up or have a sense of urgency till the very end when the family arrived, nicely shot, good composition.

3rd: N/A, only two entries

75 BEST SPORT PHOTOGRAPHY

Judge: Eric Kehe, 9News Director of Photography

1st: Eric Sowl, KTUU, "Dodgeball"

Comments: Good creative standup, followed action well, good sequencing, good moments, some interactive camerawork. Just a solid piece.

2nd: Bradley Hillwig, KTUU, Snow Cross

Comments: Good stadium transition, good action but no crowd reaction, not very interactive, followed action well, great moment at the very end that needed to move up.

3rd: Justin Freeman, Lars Peterson, KTUU, "Iditarod"

Comments: This story felt like it started and ended at the finish line, not much effort, nice shots, background noise overpowered clean nats, decent sequencing, some good shot variety.

BEST DAILY NEWSCAST

Judge: Tim Ryan, Assistant News Director
9News/KUSA-TV, Denver, CO

1st: KTUU CH2 “Newshour” (10-12-04)

Comments: Nice variation of stories, lots of live presence, solid A & B blocks.

2nd: KTUU CH2 Late Edition

Comments: Nice team coverage and depth of coverage on remains found.

3rd: KTUU CH2 Newshour (2-27-04)

Comments: Nice pacing, good content

OPEN TO ALL MEDIA

HUMOR

Judge: Chicago Sun-Times columnist Mark Brown

1st: Mike Dunham, Anchorage Daily News

“Operetta Sees Red; Violetta is Blue”

Comments: “There are strange things done in the midnight sun

By the men who moil for gold;”

Not to mention by the ones who write for newspapers. Strange but imaginative idea: translating an opera in the style of a Robert Service poem. Creatively written. Uniquely Alaska.

2nd: Marion Owen, Associated Press, “Dock Dog”

Comments: Pretty funny photo, in a cruel sort of way. The dog didn’t appear to see the humor. I’ll bet the verdict from dog lovers was split.

3rd: Amanda Krysinski, Alaska Teen Media Institute, “Teen Trivia”

Comments: Funny concept: asking adults to translate teen lingo. Just needed a little better execution.

BEST INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

Judge: Bob Drogen, National security correspondent, Los Angeles Times Washington, D.C. Bureau

1st: Paula Dobbyn, Anchorage Daily News

2nd: Maria V. Downey and Eric Sowl, KTUU

3rd: Jody Seitz and Johanna Eurich, KDLG

Comments: News organizations perform many roles in our democracy. We bring you world events, from the tsunami to Iraq. And we bring you local news, from schools to crime. But perhaps our most important role is as a watchdog, especially by keeping a close eye on government and business. The three winners of the Alaska Press Club investigative reporting awards are in that proud tradition. Each of these stories exposed misdeeds and served to protect taxpayers and consumers.

Third prize for investigative reporting goes to **Jody Seitz and Johanna Eurich** at KDLG radio in Dillingham. Their work last year, called "Failed Canneries," is proof that small communities can produce some of the best journalism. In dozens of stories, KDLG tracked and exposed myriad financial and other problems at Woodbine Alaska Fish Company in Egegik and at Wild Alaska Seafood Company in Ekok, two crucial processors for the local economy in Bristol Bay. The reporters not only talked to workers, inspectors and company officials. They examined documents from banks, creditors and courts. Their extensive reporting revealed rotting fish in cannery tanks and freezers. They documented inadequate working conditions and workers essentially unable to leave. In the end, their investigative reporting led to a state investigation - and to efforts to revamp state laws and regulations.

The second prize for investigative reporting goes to **reporter Maria V. Downey and photographer Eric Sowl** at KTUU-TV in Anchorage for their two years of dogged reporting on a crooked contractor named J.R. Olson. At first the story might not appear that crucial. Jerry Olson is accused of fleecing local homeowners by installing bogus septic systems. But Channel Two discovered more than 20 such cases across the state. They had to investigate each one because no one in state government or law enforcement realized the cases were connected. Consumers had complained to a variety of agencies, from environmental affairs to the attorney general. But no one had seen the pattern - until Channel Two showed them. The first round of stories led to a state investigation and civil and criminal charges last summer against Mr. Olson for fraud and environmental violations - including polluting drinking water and a lake. But that wasn't the end. Channel Two discovered Mr. Olson had moved north and his work had led to numerous new complaints. Once again, customers complained on camera about outrageous practices - including a house built 90 degrees off kilter. State authorities are now investigating those charges as well. Maria's stories show investigative reporting with real punch. Her reporting not only exposed a shoddy businessman and protected consumers. It forced government agencies to do the job they had utterly failed to do.

The first prize for investigative reporting goes to an extraordinary series of stories that exposed classic wrongdoing - ethical problems in one of the state's highest offices. The governor's secretary, Becky Hultberg, said it best: "It caught us cold." That was probably everyone's reaction to the Anchorage Daily News front-page story on Oct. 1 headlined "State Official Could Profit in Trade Deal." **Reported and written by Paula Dobbyn**, the story outlined how Alaska's attorney general, Greg Renkes, had a personal financial stake in a state trade agreement to sell coal to Taiwan from the Beluga fields on the western shores of Cook Inlet. The paper reported that Renkes had \$100,000 in stock and had been a paid technical advisor and public affairs consultant to a Denver company called KFx, which was supposed to dry the coal. Gov. Murkowski quickly appointed former U.S. attorney Robert Bundy as an independent counsel to investigate the case. But Dobbyn was way ahead. She reported that the KFx technology had never been commercialized and the company had serious financial problems. Plus the leaseholders on the coalfields were neither consulted nor informed before the trade deal was signed. They learned about it on the governor's website. More importantly, she showed that Renkes had been less than candid when he had repeatedly denied promoting KFx, or helping to arrange the deal with Taiwan, or could profit from it. The attorney general had introduced KFx to state trade officials, she found. He had bought and sold the stock repeatedly while they were negotiating the deal. He had promoted it at least twice at public events. Using a public records request, the Daily News obtained hundreds of e-mails, letters, memos and other documents. They showed that Renkes also had flown to Taiwan to push the project and had pitched KFx to Taiwanese officials visiting Alaska. He had personal business ties to KFx executives, and he had rewritten the trade agreement in a way to significantly benefit KFx. The upshot, as we know, is special counsel Bundy concluded that Renkes violated Alaska ethics law. And in February, Renkes resigned, citing what he called the "vicious politics of personal destruction." Others would call it a textbook case of investigative reporting that found and exposed a clear conflict of interest by one of the governor's closest advisors.

BEST MEDIA WEBSITE

Judge: Adam Howell, award-winning website designer, Winston-Salem Journal

1st: KTOO: Gavel to Gavel Alaska (KTOOFM&TV)

Comments: Very usable, amazingly up-to-date site (audio and video was up for the hour before I visited — and there were already 10 or so updates from earlier in the day). The clean design encouraged browsing and I'm sure for many Alaskans, return visiting.

2nd: KTUF (KTUF, www.webcenter11.com)

Comments: A little cluttered but very informative. Provides up-to-date local content but there's so much to look at that some might be a little overwhelmed.

3rd: Marion Owen

(www.upbeetcommunications.com)

Comments: The audio is very interesting and the site is certainly welcoming to new users. Contains a very personal touch and a lot of great information.

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Judge: Pulitzer-prize winning investigative reporter Gary Cohn, Los Angeles Times; also former UAAAtwood Chair.

Winner: Diana Campbell and Eric Engman, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner

This year's Public Service Award goes to the staff of the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, notably reporter Diana Campbell and photographer Eric Engman, for a series of stories about the growing cancer rate among Alaska natives. The stories and photographs focused much-needed attention on the impact and growth of cancer among the native population and the many difficulties — including geographical distance, limitations of the rural health-care system, and a variety of cultural and lifestyle factors — faced by the native population in combating cancer. The stories were told by Diana Campbell in a clear way, focusing on people that made the reader care deeply about this growing problem. Eric Engman's photographs documented the people and problems visually and complemented Campbell's compelling writing. The entire series provided Alaskans with important information that can be used to help fight the growing cancer problem.

This was an extraordinary team effort. The Alicia Patterson Foundation gave Diana Campbell a fellowship to focus on the rising cancer rate among Alaska natives. The News-Miner and managing editor Kelly Bostian supported Campbell during her fellowship and then gave her the time and teamed her with Engman to expand her reporting into a compelling five-part series. This project, which epitomizes the notion of public service, shows what relatively small newspapers can do when they have the will and creativity to serve their readers.

This was truly an extraordinary year for Public Service by Alaska's news organizations. I would also like to commend the Anchorage Daily News and Paula Dobbyn's groundbreaking investigation into conflicts of interest by Alaska's Attorney General. Her stories documented a serious ethical problem and brought about results. I strongly recommended that Dobbyn's stories be named the winner of another keynote category, investigative reporting.