

## **Alaska Press Club Awards 2007**

### **PRINT**

#### **CATEGORY 1: BREAKING NEWS**

Large newspapers and publications

First place: James Halpin and Lisa Demer, Anchorage Daily News, “Police Halt One-man Rampage”

Comments: This is a fine example of clear, concise writing on deadline. The article, complete with graphics and photos, is an excellent, straight-forward, readable account that ties together numerous events in a cohesive manner—very well done.

Second place: Lisa Demer, Anchorage Daily News, “Longtime city tennis star commits suicide”

Comments: This is a very good deadline account of the end of a life of a troubled woman, told through court documents, police and her parents.

Third place: Sitka Sentinel Staff, Daily Sitka Sentinel, “Plane Crash.”

Comments: This is a fine bit of reporting and writing on the cusp of deadline.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Rob Stapleton, Alaska Journal of Commerce, “Mail Hub Move Proposal by USPS Being Examined.”

Comments: A good story that surely provoked much discussion.

Second place: Michael Armstrong, McKibben Jackinsky, Homer News, “Fire Destroys Home.”

Comments: This is good work by on a late-breaking story that was spotted by an alert reporter who followed her instincts.

Third place: Layton Ehmke, Homer Tribune, “Adventure over bluff draws double rescue.”

Comments: This is an example of good enterprise reporting.

Judge: Maurice Possley, a three-time Pulitzer finalist, reports on criminal justice issues for the Chicago Tribune. Possley’s coverage of deaths linked to a leading brand of cribs prompted regulators to issue a national recall. He’s the author of a guide to court reporting for criminal justice journalists, and a pair of true crime thrillers: “Everybody Pays” and “The Brown’s Chicken Massacre.”

#### **CATEGORY 2: BEST GENERAL NEWS STORY**

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Mary Pemberton, Associated Press, “Alaskan Village on Alert for More Wolves”

Comments: Since it was done by telephone she did a splendid job capturing what must have been a really scary time in the Bush.

Second place: Wesley Loy, Anchorage Daily News, "Deadly fishery getting safer"

Comments: As one of the interviewees said, this is a cool story.

Third place: James Halpin, Anchorage Daily News, "On raptor's arrival, critics question its existence:

Comments: Unexpected story and right on the money.

Judge: Joel Shurkin, a noted science writer, former war correspondent and wire-service bureau chief, shared the Pulitzer Prize for the Philadelphia Inquirer's coverage of the Three Mile Island Disaster. His latest book, "Broken Genius: The Rise and Fall of William Shockley, creator of the Electronic Age," was published in 2007. He is currently serving a one-year appointment as UAF's Snedden Chair.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Tamar Ben-Yosef, The Arctic Sounder, "Mystery deepens as belugas surface"

Second place: McKibben Jackinsky, Homer News, "Homer mom, daughter stop bear mauling"

Second place: Third place: Layton Ehmke, Homer Tribune, "Sinking anglers saved"

Judge: Ralph Thomas covers politics for the Seattle Times' Olympia bureau. He is a former Juneau reporter for the Anchorage Daily News and past managing editor at the Peninsula Clarion.

### CATEGORY 3: BEST USE OF STORY AND PHOTOS BY A JOURNALIST

Large newspapers and publications

First place: First Place: Kelly Bostian, Fairbanks Daily-News, Flights of Fancy

Comments: This cohesive package is clearly a first place. A well reported article with depth. A great lead photo. Nice lighting on the last photo- the falcon in flight. The Hawk Talk nugget box adds nicely to the overall professionalism of the package.

Second Place: Mark Farmer, Revealing the Raptor

Comments: An insider sharing his access and knowledge with the reader.

Third Place: none awarded

Judges: Dan Schlatter, staff photographer; Laura Stumbaugh, production coordinator; Lore Shattuck, page designer, Puget Sound Business Journal in Seattle.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Monica Southworth, The Dutch Harbor Fisherman/Alaska

Newspapers, “Camp Quangayaax passes the Aleut flame.”

Comments: Nice variety of well-displayed images helps form a complete package. A few redundant images, but overall, clearly the leader of the pack and a unanimous vote by the judges.

Second place: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, “Icicle Runs Smooth Operation”

Comments: A single photo that captures the essence of the event. You get a true sense of being there and a peek at what pilots see on the water — an intimate photo that’s done well.

Third place: Rob Stapleton, Alaska Journal of Commerce, “Barrow Forum Eyes Arctic Development”

Comments: A good variety of photos — gives you a sense of being at the event. Photos are displayed well.

Judges: Doug Parker, photo editor, and the photo staff at the New Orleans Times Picayne.

#### CATEGORY 4: BEST SHORT FEATURE

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Debra McKinney, Anchorage Daily News, “Homer’s Salty Dawg Saloon Turns 50”

Comments: Lively writing with plenty of voice. This story stood out for its vivid sense of place and use of telling detail.

Second place: Rachel D’Oro, Associated Press, “Wet Towns Draw Heavy Drinkers From Countryside”

Third place: No award given.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Melissa Campbell, Alaska Journal of Commerce, “Anchorage sees invasion of cranes”

Comments: A fine example of looking behind the obvious, this story took us into the crane’s cramped cab and then 165 feet into the air. The writer captured the crick in the crane operator’s neck and the pressure in his bladder, because she asked the right questions. The writing is simple and effective and avoids clichés.

Second place: Darrell L. Breese, Alaska Star, “Locals break into extreme filming”

Third place: Darrell L. Breese, Alaska Start, “Local doctor flying high with Iditarod air force”

Judge: Kelley Benham is deputy Floridian editor at the St. Petersburg Times. She joined the Times five years ago after a short career as a high school journalism teacher. She has won the Ernie Pyle award, a National Headliner award, first place AASFE awards for short feature and general feature, and the Green Eyeshade Award.

## CATEGORY 5: BEST LONG FEATURE

First place: Julia O'Malley, Anchorage Daily News, "A Long Way to go - Fort Richardson widow begins unwanted journey"

Comments: Wow. Whenever you tear up halfway through a story, you know you have a winner, and that's what happened for me here. The taut prose, superb organization and many telling moments in this article made it the kind of read you absolutely cannot put down before you've finished the final word. Phrases such as "She turned the knob and let the future in," and "The coffin, draped in a flag, floated slowly down a conveyor belt," displayed the hand of a master. Bravo.

Second place: George Bryson, Anchorage Daily News, "Fighting Again (Government Cuts Alaska Soldier's Aid)."

Comments: A deftly crafted tale of true tragedy, this story doesn't pull unnecessarily on our heart strings, but it pulls no punches, either. A great mix. The opening, in which the disabled Tyler Hall pulls up his cuff to reveal his artificial leg, is well-chosen and gripping, and the narrative unfolds in seamless building-block fashion, leading us from one compelling element to the next with no let-down. A great, fresh look on a time-worn element of war.

Third place: Matthew Carroll, Peninsula Clarion, "All In - Poker popularity lends a hand to those betting on a good time."

Comments: Well-told yarn of something we all know a little about, but few know all. This writer shows his voluminous homework here, turning out an authoritative account of a sport I normally would not care so much about — but he made me care. Summing up the 2,598,960 possible hands in a card deck, starting and ending with the account of Allen Auxier landing a royal flush, telling us that an astounding 80 million Americans play poker — these, and many other touches in this story, made it a fine draw.

Judge: Kevin Fagan is a San Francisco Chronicle reporter whose San Francisco-based coverage of homelessness from 2003 to 2006 helped shape local and national policy. He has won more than 65 national and regional prizes, including the national Excellence in Urban Journalism Award. In 2006 he shared the national James Aronson Social Justice Journalism Award with his photography partner on the homelessness beat, Brant Ward. Fagan was a Knight Fellow in 2007.

## CATEGORY 6: BUSINESS REPORTING

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Pat Forgey, Juneau Empire, "Oil costs dwarfed by profits."

Comments: This solid piece of business-enterprise reporting sheds light on a crucial industry by analyzing oil company financial documents to give a more

precise picture of Alaska profits and costs. Among the story's admirable features is its willingness to describe the limitations of the data, yet the story clearly explores policy implications of what is revealed.

Second place: Wesley Loy, Anchorage Daily News. "Shell's rocky return."

Comments: It's the writing that elevates this story on the advent of independent drillers. Beginning with the lede's "poking holes in the ice-clogged Arctic Ocean," the story uses active verbs and sharp quotes to bring home to readers the reality that — no matter how complicated — business is essentially just people making deals and taking risks.

Third place: Rachel D'Oro, Associated Press, "Alaska's shimmering auroras captivate Japanese tourists."

Comments: This could have been a phoned-in, fill-in-the-blanks tourism trend story. Instead, the writer took us readers to a cold mountainside to experience "shimmering curtains of green and plum." Nicely done.

Judge: Steven Goldsmith is associate editor of the Puget Sound Business Journal, handling both general business news and special sections. Previously, he was a reporter and editor at the Seattle Post-Intelligencer for 15 years.

Small newspapers and publications

First Place: Layton Ehmke, Homer Tribune, "Economic study shows arts impact."

Comments: Good lead that immediately grabs the reader's attention since it refers to window stickers that many people have seen. The writer makes good use of multiple sources. It's a cohesive story on an important topic.

Second Place: Kaitlin Johnson, The Northern Light, "Financial experts say charge less, save more."

Comments: Good lead, using a story that will catch the attention of many students. This story is well written; the sentences are clear and simple. It's a thorough discussion of issues that are crucial to readers.

Third Place: Tim Bradner, Alaska Journal of Commerce, "Problems at Chugach spark utility overhaul."

Comments: Story is well organized and uses extensive background information to place the problem in perspective.

Honorable Mention: Rob Stapleton, Alaska Journal of Commerce, "Postal rate increase to be felt at the checkout line in Bush Alaska."

Comments: Good summary of key issue for the Bush.

Judge: Erin Van Bronkhorst is a copy editor for the Puget Sound Business Journal in Seattle. Erin worked for 12 years for The Associated Press in Seattle, and has also done reporting and editing for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and Tacoma (Washington) News Tribune, among others. She covered news and politics for the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner in the mid-1970s.

## CATEGORY 7: BEST GOVERNMENT OR POLITICAL REPORTING

### Large newspapers and publications

First place: Pat Forgey, Juneau Empire, “Connections and Conflicts: A way of life in the Alaska Legislature.”

Comments: Outrageous conflict of interest, completely exposed by Pat Fogey’s fine work. What will become of this expose’? We’re waiting for follow-ups. And changes in the legislative culture.

Second place: Lisa Demer, Anchorage Daily News, “Little Mommy: Siblings torn apart struggle to understand adult decisions.”

Comments: This brings out the humanity of the foster care system and shows its deficiencies, how a bureaucracy can be blind to the most obvious truth, such as the fact that family members need to stay together. It points to a way to improve this: legislation.

Third place: Yereth Rosen, The Christian Science Monitor, “Tales of oil industry’s influence in Alaska.”

Comments: A fine account of amazing corruption. All it lacks is a deeper look from fresh sources with new information not already revealed elsewhere.

### Small newspapers and publications

First place: Layton Ehmke, Homer Tribune, “Alleged Pebble fraud charges lace fishery hearings”

Comments: Shining a light into the darkness, this piece would make it difficult for government and business to maneuver in any inappropriate way. The right questions have been asked, and aired out for the public to determine whether they’ve been adequately answered. Write a follow-up.

Second place: Craig Giammona and Shannon Haugland, Daily Sitka Sentinel, “Assembly Quorum Asked Stein To Quit”

Comments: In the best tradition of journalism, Giammona and Haugland doggedly pursued this story to the obvious truth that the gentleman was fired, even though no one would say so clearly. It’s first-rate work. The writing might have been more clear. But the information is there, and that is the core of good government reporting.

Third place: Rob Stapleton, Alaska Journal of Commerce, “Rural Alaska Census Data May Be Skewed”

Comments: Directly to the point, this is piece is valuable for what it tells governments about crucial data they need to function properly. It offers the implication of a solution: a new way of gathering data is needed in a unique state.

Judge: An award-winning reporter, photographer, editor, columnist, journalism educator and novelist, Dean Baker has covered local, state and federal government issues in Montana, California, Germany, Oregon and Washington

for the Eugene Register-Guard, The Oregonian, Salem Times, Vancouver Columbian, and other newspapers and magazines.

#### CATEGORY 8: BEST EDUCATION STORY

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Robinson Duffy, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, "An Apple a Day"

Comments: Duffy effectively weaves real people—junior high and high schoolstudents, in this case—into a detailed, comprehensive look at effortsto get young people to eat better. He points out how the banning of vending machines in schools has failed to stop kids from eating junkfood: They just bring their own from home or buy it at a localconvenience store. But Duffy does not dismiss the wellness efforts. He represents the challenges clearly but without judgment. And he explainsthe goals clearly, leaving the reader with the sense that this effort,while difficult, could pay dividends in the long run. The quotes fromstudents are generally smart and real, and they help advance the storyrather than just lend credibility.

Second place: John R. Moss, Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman, "Lunch Boycott" Will Morrow, Peninsula Clarion, "Learning to Make Do"

Small newspapers and publications

First place: McKibben Jackinsky, Homer News, "In Nature's Classroom"

Comments: Jackinsky brings alive Al Poindexter, who teaches about naturalresources at Homer High School. The story mixes scenes from theclass-- young people learning how to canoe--with the broader picture ofwhy such a class is important in Alaska: The state depends on itsnatural resources for its economic prosperity. Jackinsky also shows thereader how the students bond among themselves during the trip, and howPoindexter's team-building exercises foster that.

Second place: Joel Davidson, Catholic Anchor, "Alaskans Engage Islam"

Third place: Mary M. Rall, Alaska Star, "Teacher Explores Serum Run trail"

Judge: Colin McMahon is the Perspectives Editor at the Chicago Tribune.

#### CATEGORY 9: BEST PROFILE

Large newspapers and publications

First Place: James Halpin, Anchorage Daily News, "Feather Duster"

Comments: Vivid, crisply written portrait of the armed guardian who keeps the Anchorage landfill safe from seagulls.

Second Place: Jeannette J. Lee, Associated Press, "Alaska's First Dude"

Comments: Thoroughly reported, lively look at the governor's snow-mobiling, salmon fishing, child-rearing spouse.

Third Place: Chris Eshleman, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, "Curling Plays major role in Cox's Life"

Comments: Affectionate, well-reported picture of the elder of local curling.  
Judge: Paula Span, a former Washington Post staff writer, is a contributing writer for the Washington Post Magazine and a contributing columnist for the New York Times. She teaches at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Nate Raymond, The Sun Star, "Fighting for Equality"

Comments: Fine narrative with a lot of information about the subject smoothly woven in with the facts about why she's a newsmaker. An excellent recounting of a piece of history. Story never bogs down.

Second place: Darrell L. Breese, Alaska Star, "Principal Okeson combines laughter, learning at elementary school to make education fun"

Comments: Fun, lively writing with a lot of good sources. The readers gets a real sense of the person in a short time. Obviously, good interviewing behind the story.

Third place: Drew Herman, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "Aleutian Beat"

Comments: Great opening and good insight into an unusual subject. Smooth writing; good anecdotes

Judge: Tom Koetting is the deputy managing editor for local news at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

## CATEGORY 10: BEST ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

Large newspapers and publications

First place, Rosemary Shinohara, Anchorage Daily News. "Midtown - can we fix it?"

Comments: fine piece examining that most rarely explored topic: Our urban environment. When you have video store workers driving their cars across the street to get lunch because their terrified of crossing the intersection on foot, something is amiss. Ms. Shinohara offers a glimpse of the challenges and potential of transforming a neighborhood that has bloomed with no attention to urban planning - "a land," as she succinctly notes, "ruled by cars and trucks." I wish more reporters would follow Ms. Shinohara's footsteps into our urban landscape.

Second place: Jeannette J. Lee, Associated Press. "1B cleanup of deserted military sites near Alaska villages meets funding drops, mixed results."

Comments: Two of journalism's most important responsibilities are to speak up for those with no voice and to hold our government accountable. Ms. Lee does both with her piece exploring the floundering effort to clean former military sites throughout the Bush.

Third place, Russell Stigall, Mat-Su Frontiersman. "Order: 2 plants, hold the fry"

Mr. Stigall finds a great story when he looks at what might happen when a winter's worth of a power plant's acidic emissions flush into local waterways during the spring melt. The electric company promises to comply with all regulatory standards; scientists warn the regulations don't adequately address the issue. Given the stakes – a potential collapse of important links in the food chain – Mr. Stigall's clearly written account is most important.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Michael Armstrong, Homer News. "Bagging marine debris"

Comments: Mr. Armstrong spent 10 days picking up trash on the remote Gore Point and came home with a most distressing story about our consumptive ways. This really is journalism at its best: Fun to report, fascinating to read, jaw-dropping in its findings. Great work.

Second place: Tim Bradner, Alaska Journal of Commerce. "High energy prices pull renewable projects from the fringe"

Comments: In a year where every newsroom seemed to be hunkered down and facing cutbacks, it's refreshing to see the Journal of Commerce sending a reporter to Fairbanks to cover an energy conference. The investment paid off. Mr. Bradner's colorful report seamlessly weaved big-picture forces shaping world energy markets with small-town concerns facing rural utility managers. By continuously translating global forces into local terms – instead of \$100 oil, Mr. Bradner reports of \$5 diesel – the story provides an excellent example of how to make a big, hard-to-report issue relevant to hometown readers.

Third place: Dustin Solberg, The Bristol Bay Times, "Drawing a line in the sea"

Comments: The lede set the tone: A mysterious line of massive trawlers, far on the horizon, doing god-knows-what damage to the marine environment. What followed was a gripping account of frustrated Bering coast residents confronting an international fishing fleet. Mr. Solberg should be congratulated for showing how an international conflict plays out on the local stage.

Overall comments: Alaska's small papers again deserve kudos – for the third year in a row – for aggressive and compelling coverage of the environment.

The Alaska Journal of Commerce in particular should be commended for a fine effort in '07: Four of the top six articles in the category came from that paper.

Judge: Douglas Fischer found time to judge despite moving to Boulder, Colo., from Oakland, Calif., where he was an environmental reporter. He is the recipient of the national Grantham Prize for Excellence in Reporting on the Environment.

## CATEGORY 11: BEST REPORTING ON CRIME OR THE COURTS

Large newspapers and publications

First Place: Casey Grove, Anchorage Press, "Little City Blues."

Comments: Casey Grove's rich portrait is as much a vivid profile of Whittier as it is a crime story. In one paragraph after another, Grove layers in the sort of context and history that are all-too-often left out as journalists rush from one breaking news event to the next. The story is rife with lively quotes—"This is a town that drinks"--and well-used descriptions and similes that give it a literary quality. Of course, weeklies have the luxury of time in telling stories. Grove used that time well.

Second Place: Lisa Demer, Anchorage Daily News, "Shot by a stranger."

Comments: Lisa Demer's clear-eyed account of how two victims crossed paths with a psychotic killer could serve as a primer on how to tell a frightening story simply and without overstatement. The terror at the root of the piece is portrayed not with overwrought prose but with the sheer randomness of the crimes and the detailed accounts of the ordinary things the victims were doing at the time. Demer's piece benefits from her obvious knack for getting sources to open up to her. I was struck by Rumsey's tombstone comment: "Ah, this is how the story ends...I've done a lot of cool things." And Deak's point that his assailant truly meant to kill him was punctuated with a fine exclamation point: "Which is a very strange feeling."

Third Place, Kyle Hopkins, Anchorage Daily News, "Overtime for police up sharply."

Comments: This is a nice example of enterprise with an edge — the sort of uncomfortable story that police would rather not see in the paper (especially those listed in the overtime top 10). The writing and structure were sound, and the graphics contributed to a solid news package. Two suggestions: The arcane rules of a police labor contract designed to take care of those closest to retirement might have been explored more fully, and a comparison with the police overtime experiences of similar cities (or at least some context from an expert in the field) would have been illuminating for readers.

Judge: David J. Krajicek is a special correspondent for the New York Daily News and a featured contributor to Court TV's Crime Library. He is the author of "Scoop!" (Columbia University Press), a look at coverage of crime and crime policy. He was as an assistant professor at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism before returning to writing full time. He is co-founder of Criminal Justice Journalists, a national association of crime reporters, and co-author of Covering Crime and Justice, a CJJ Web publication.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Naomi Hagelund, UAF Sun Star, "While they were sleeping."

Comments: A nicely woven tale of how a series of thefts changed the lives of those living in a university apartment complex.

Second place: Joel Davidson, Catholic Anchor, "Inmates denied Mass in Sutton correctional facility."

Comments: An interesting and quirky story about a priest's failed attempt to use wine to celebrate Mass in prison. The reporter asked the right questions (Were the misinformed corrections officers disciplined?) even if corrections officials refused to answer them.

Third place: Nate Raymond, UAF Sun Star, "UAF seeks lessons from Virginia Tech."

Comments: A blunt look at what one university is doing to beef up campus security in the wake of the Virginia Tech shootings.

Judge: Hurst Laviana is a longtime crime and courts reporter at the Wichita Eagle. His reporting on the notorious BTK killer won national attention, as did a series on parolees who killed more than two-dozen Kansans after their release.

#### CATEGORY 12: BEST REPORTING ON HEALTH OR SCIENCE

First place: Megan Holland, Anchorage Daily News, "The Adult Face of FAS"

Second place: Dustin Solberg, The Bristol Bay Times, "Toxins in Our World"

Third place: Casey Grove, Anchorage Press, "The high road: Alaska researchers map marijuana to its source"

Judge: Tom Paulson is a science and medical writer for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. He visited Africa for a month on a Knight Science Journalism fellowship to report on the impact of Bill Gates' philanthropic efforts to improve health care in the Third World.

#### CATEGORY 13: EDITORIAL WRITING

First place: Matthew Zencey, Anchorage Daily News

All three editorial were consistently good — well reasoned, right tone for the material, well written. Comments: Some feet need to be held to the fire, and Zencey is on the case.

Second place: Rob Boyce, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.

Comments: Takes on complex subjects and explains them well. Allows for nuance, still reaches a conclusion.

Third place: Mark Kelsey, Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman

Comments: Straightforward, cleanly written editorials display a good depth of local and regional knowledge.

Judge: Tom Condon is a columnist, editorial writer and editor of Place, a Sunday Commentary section of The Hartford Courant. He is also a Vietnam veteran, having served with U.S. Army Intelligence in the Mekong Delta in 1969-70. Condon has won more than 30 journalism and community awards, including the New England Society of Newspaper Editors Master Reporter Award.

## CATEGORY 14: BEST COLUMNIST

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Beth Bragg, Anchorage Daily News

Comments: I read these columns and marveled at the strength of Beth's voice, her toughness and tenderness and her point of view on some difficult subjects. I really felt for her in places, thinking that her email was probably worth paying someone else to go through. And that's good; that's the job. In that sense, Beth is what a columnist should be.

Second place: Heather Lende, Anchorage Daily News

Comments: Lovely, charming columns that show a real sense of place and community, and a sense of one's place in the world, and in life. A nice respite for readers.

Third place: Gregg Erickson, Anchorage Daily News

Comments: Strong columns that point out problems and offer solutions with boldness and a clear knowledge of what goes on at the state level. Also VERY readable, which is tough when it comes to writing about government.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Rosemary Fitzpatrick, Homer News

Comments: I am in love with these columns. Instantly engaging, warm, human, and yet completely useful in terms of How to Garden. I loved them, love the voice, love the approach. Love the writing. Truly great stuff. What a gift to readers, even those who would no sooner kick the dirt than dig in it.

Second place: Michael Armstrong, Homer News

Comments: Interesting columns with an eye to place and a big message for readers. They are a little slow to start, and the point needs to be sat with a little longer, to stand out a little more. But there is experience and knowledge there, along with a gift with words. Nice.

Third place: Ben Stuart, Homer News

Comments: Very funny, sweet columns from a new father. It may be hard, but it would be smart for the writer to take his voice to other areas, be they government or other, tougher issues. But who can argue with a new boy and the joy of parenting? The columns were self-deprecating and fun. They helped me remember the early days.

Judge: Nicole Brodeur has been the Metro columnist at The Seattle Times since 1999.

## CATEGORY 15: BEST SPORTS COLUMNIST

First place: Andrew Cremata, Skagway News

Comments: I just think he is terrific and I don't care about fishing.

Second place: Beth Bragg, Anchorage Daily News

Comments: A really good writer.

Third place, Tim Nichols, Juneau Empire

Comments: Thought he did a nice job.

Judge: Jim Moore is a Seattle Post-Intelligencer sports columnist.

#### CATEGORY 16: BEST SPORTS NEWS REPORTING

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Mary Pemberton, Associated Press, "Iditarod board suspends musher for dog abuse"

Second place: Mary Pemberton, Associated Press, "Mackey wins 1,100-mile Iditarod"

Third place: Jeremiah Bartz, the Frontiersman, "A great loss"

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Craig Giammona, Daily Sitka Sentinel, for "Wolves move to 3A"

Second place: Suzanna Caldwell, The Northern Light, for "New brand to bring Seawolf mascot to life"

Third place: None given.

Judge: John Canzano is a radio host as well as a sports columnist at The Oregonian. In 2007, the Associated Press named him the nation's No. 2 sports columnist.

#### CATEGORY 17: BEST SPORTS GAME/EVENT STORY

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Matthew Carroll, Peninsula Clarion "Dinner of Champions"

Comments: Mr. Carroll took a regular event that could have been pedestrian and mundane and fashioned a clean, interesting story that was well reported. He got great quotes, did some good post-event reporting, and even those who were present at the event learned something they didn't know.

Second place: Ben Stuart, Homer News "Local completes solo Iditarod ski trail"

Comments: Mr. Stuart's account of the solo passing of the trail was interesting, relevant and went beyond the obvious.

Third place: Jeremiah Bartz, Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman "Another way to skate"

Comments: Mr. Bartz's story on a hockey scrimmage proved to be far more than meets the eye. This is an example of good execution of an abstract, non-traditional sports story.

Judge: John Canzano is a radio host as well as a sports columnist at The Oregonian. In 2007, the Associated Press named him the nation's No. 2 sports columnist.

## CATEGORY 18: BEST SPORTS FEATURE

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Matthew Carroll, Peninsula Clarion, “Not bad, for a girl or a guy”

Second place: Mary Pemberton, Associated Press, “Susan Butcher’s ashes spread on Iditarod Trail”

Third place: Casey Grove, Anchorage Press, “Excuse me while I kiss the sky”

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Darrell Breese, Alaska Star, for “Athlete attempts to end his bad luck”

Second place: Rebecca George, The Sun Star, for “How the Chinooks came to deal with Title IX”

Third place: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, for “Agner sets POW course record, qualifies for Boston Marathon”

Judge: John Canzano is a radio host as well as a sports columnist at The Oregonian. In 2007, the Associated Press named him the nation’s No. 2 sports columnist.

## CATEGORY 19: BEST ARTS COVERAGE

First place: Sarah Henning, Anchorage Daily News, “King of Cool” and “Airport’s Lethal Light” Comments: Kenny G is so “out” that you don’t even really see him written about much anymore. Yet he clearly has a huge fan base. I liked the directness of dealing with the unhipness of a guy who just does what he does. But this story went beyond that, giving insights into how G makes his music, and a nice sense of who he is. What could have been a one-dimensional slam or puff piece was instead a nicely turned portrait. The airport piece likewise could have been a straight-ahead report on damaged art. But it went beyond that, explaining why it was important culturally and what needed to be done.

Lynne Snifka, Anchorage Press, “Into the Wild Ride”

Comments: A very fun piece of writing. This has everything – a great sense of curiosity about what this movie would be, the anticipation and fears about how Hollywood would treat the story, the context of the book and movie, great quotes from those in a position to judge it. And it’s all laced with interesting personal perspective on the subject. A virtuoso performance of a review.

Steve Quinn, Associated Press, “Alaskan Theatre does ‘Macbeth’ in Tlingit.”

Comments: So the story about translating and performing Shakespeare in another language is nothing new. But the writer not only gave a sense of the technical difficulty of doing such a thing and conveying the unusualness of performing in a language very few speak, but he also let us know why it was important to do and how the Shakespeare related to the language and

community in which it was being done.

Judge: Douglas McLennan is a Seattle-based arts reporter and editor.

## CATEGORY 20: BEST SUSTAINED COVERAGE

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Darrell L. Breese, Alaska Star, “Former lawmaker bribery scandal”

Comments: All of Mr. Breese’s entries were well written and reported, and stood out from the other entries. In this series, he diligently followed the events in the case, writing community-relevant stories that were complete and easy to follow. Follow up stories, such as a look at privately-funded polling, filled out the package. Well done.

Second place: Diana Haecker, The Nome Nugget, Iditarod Coverage

Comments: Haecker’s coverage of the Iditarod provided a nice, insider view of the

race for locals. It was thorough and provided an inside glimpse of the characters in the race, particularly the colorful champion.

Third place: Michael Armstrong, Ben Stuart, McKibben Jackinsky, Homer News, One-fish halibut limit

The reporters did a good job following the news in a controversial and complex issue that clearly is very important to their readers.

Judge: Amanda J. Crawford covers state government and politics for The Arizona Republic. Prior to joining the Republic in 2003, Crawford worked at the Baltimore Sun and in the Washington, DC, bureau of People Magazine.

Crawford was a finalist for the Livingston Award in 2007 and has won more than a dozen awards in state reporting contests. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Best of the West Journalism

Contest.

Large newspapers and publications

First place: George Bryson, Anchorage Daily News, Wounded Warriors

Comments: This series stood out for the initiative and enterprise shown by Bryson. While the topic of the war wounded is not a new one, this series serves to remind us why the Iraq War may be remembered more for its injured than its dead. By focusing on individual stories, such as that of Tyler Hall, an amputee, or Dustin Heger, who wears his wounds internally in the form of post-traumatic stress disorder, Bryson gives us a compelling look at the issues that individuals, families and society in general is going to have to deal with as the war continues and its soldiers return home. This was the only entry of the category that was based entirely on enterprise reporting, rather than an unfolding event at the courthouse or local government. For that, Bryson’s work also stands out.

Second place: Dan Joling, Associated Press, Global Warming

Comments: This sobering series could be subtitled “It’s melting!” In a series of

stories, Jolins shows the effects of global warming as measured by increased deaths among polar-animal populations and the loss of sea ice. The author weaves together actions taken by conservation groups with reports and research to show what scientists presume is the impact of global warming on Alaska's lands and seas. The stories give a context to the then-simmering issue of whether to list polar bears as an endangered species. And it does so in a clearly written, compelling series of stories.

Third place: Lisa Demer, Richard Mauer, Kyle Hopkins, Sean Cockerham, Sabra Ayres, Wesley Loy, T.C. Mitchell, Anchorage Daily News, Corruption charges and trials

Comments: This package of stories does a thorough job of chronicling a series of corruption scandals affecting several Alaska politicians. In addition to following the unfolding events, the series gives readers a wider look at the situation. The pieces on the financial status of the oil-field services company at the heart of the scandals, and the reaction of the company's customer to the charges, provide helpful context to this wide-ranging story. Break-out stories, such as the one on a colorful attorney defending one of the lawmakers, bring another angle to this unfolding political saga.

Judge: Mary Jo Pitzl is a legislative reporter for The Arizona Republic. She's been a staff writer for more than 20 years, covering a variety of news beats, from politics to the environment, transportation to schools. She is a recipient of the Society of Professional Journalists' national Sunshine Award, for her work pushing for and using public records.

## CATEGORY 21: BEST SERIES

### Small Newspapers and Publications

First place: Sean Pearson and Layton Ehmke, Homer Tribune, "Probing Pebble" Comments: This three-part series on a company's controversial search for gold, copper and molybdenum under the tundra gives us a look at what's happening and more importantly, why it is happening. The result is that readers get to see real people on both sides of the issue, get a terrific sense of place and find lots of information about what it will take to accomplish, mean for ordinary Alaskans and cost taxpayers. This is fine explanatory reporting, neither inflammatory nor boosterish.

Second place: "Being Young" by Diana Haecker, the Nome Nugget

Comments: Three cheers for Diana who takes a new look at an old problem – kids in a small town with nothing to do – and makes it fresh by moving around her community to report on services, what kids in even smaller communities outside Nome want and how adults have responded. I admire her ability to take news in plain sight with such enthusiasm. But her bravest move was to hand kids the pen and say, "tell us what you think."

Third place: “Heritage of Courage,” by Mary Lochner, The Northern Light.  
Comments: Lochner takes a terrific idea and painstakingly traces the history of civil rights for Alaska Natives. This series public service that does much to surprise and reveal including finding people like Helen McNeil. This series is a great resource for teachers.

#### Large Newspapers and Publications

First place: Wesley Loy, Anchorage Daily News, “A Fateful Step”

Comments: The gripping narrative of a North Slope roustabout stepping into an oil-rig auger would make a powerful narrative in any category. Dramatic and sparsely told, it leads readers through a horrifying account of what you think will be man’s last few minutes on earth. What elevates the series came next: the unvarnished Part IV. Loy artfully reveals a fairly unsympathetic subject whose youth, lack of education and immersion in a consumer culture clearly show he is ill-prepared to live one more month, much less a lifetime, of disability. Loy refuses to dude the guy up. And he follows with a strong sidebar on the human costs of oil exploration. Nicely done.

Second place: “The School District’s Wellness Policy,” by Robinson Duffy, Fairbanks Daily News Miner — Duffy takes a routine area of beat coverage - the school lunch menu – and delivers a timely series that is full of news, accountability and most importantly, some insight into the sugar-addled brains of teenagers. He talks to kids and adults, writes in a clear, compelling style delivers some news “hiding in plain sight” that parents and educators can truly learn from.

Third place: Julia O’Mally, Anchorage Daily News, “The Way Home”

Comments: O’Malley’s fine and empathetic touch opens the doors on four families separated by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. A significant report from the quiet front.

Judge: As a member of the Oregonian’s Investigations team, Julie Sullivan shared reporting duties on “Liberty’s Heavy Hand,” an expose of abuses at the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service that earned the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service.

#### CATEGORY 22: BEST HEADLINE WRITING

First place: Tony Hall, Anchorage Daily News, “Fairbanks alcohol dries up, bar one”

Second place: Greg Johnson, Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman, “Shortfall sours Mat Maid optimism”

Third place: Cheryl Chapman, Anchorage Daily News, “Urban scrawl / Volunteer graffiti-buster paints out Anchorage’s visual trash”

Judge: Seth Markow has been a copy editor/proofreader for 18 years and with the Honolulu Star-Bulletin for 11, the past eight as slot man.

#### CATEGORY 23: EDITORIAL CARTOON

First place: Mike O'Meara, Homer News, "Special Caucus Room"

Comments: A strong and pointed message, simply but effectively laid out and clearly rendered.

Second place: Jamie Smith, The Ester Republic, "Surge"

Comments: A clever and thoughtful idea, buttressed with strong graphics.

Third place: Tony Newman, Juneau Empire, "Quarter Designs"

Comments: Humorous but pointed. Lots of lettering, but avoids looking cluttered. Thanks for including contextual notes with entry.

Judge: John Trever has been an editorial cartoonist at the Albuquerque Journal since 1976. His cartoons appear in more than 350 daily newspapers. Among his awards are honors by the Society of Professional Journalists, the Free Press Association and the Overseas Press Club.

#### CATEGORY 24: BEST SECTION

Large newspapers and publications

First place: PLAY, Anchorage Daily News

Comments: Marvelous! It's the complete package, carried off with grace and panache. Story topics, writing, headlines, photography, and illustrations hit all the right notes. The design craftsmanship is inspired and technically superb.

Second place: LIFE & ARTS, Anchorage Daily News

Comments: Beautiful, fascinating centerpieces with insight

Third place: LATITUDE, Fairbanks News Miner

Comments: Dramatic use of cover art, strong local content

Small newspapers and publications

First place: MOTION, The Northern Light

Comments: Consistently high-quality, orderly design that keeps the spotlight on well-written stories and engaging photography and artwork.

Second place: SPORTS, Alaska Star

Comments: Strong photography brings this section to life.

Third place: MILITARY, Alaska Star

Judge: Jim Springhetti is a member of The Oregonian presentation staff.

#### CATEGORY 25: BEST WEEKLY

First place: The Homer Tribune

Comments: The Trib offers readers a blend of punchy writing, informed skepticism and a real engagement with its community. The paper's four-part series on the proposed Pebble Mine was an ambitious examination of a complicated proposition, and exactly the kind of public interest reporting that

papers of all sizes should strive to execute.

Second place: The University of Alaska Fairbanks Sun Star

Comments: The Sun Star asks tough questions about gender, university pay and administrative pork. Although the paper also includes a well-chosen variety of topics, its focus on accountability provides students and the broader community around the university a valuable service.

Third place: The Anchorage Press

Comments: The Press is a writer's paper with a strong point of view and sharp edge. The combination of emphasis on connecting to issues and places outside Anchorage makes the Press a great read.

Judge: Nigel Jaquiss is a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter for Willamette Week in Portland, Ore.

## CATEGORY 26: BEST ILLUSTRATION

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Lucas Ketner, Anchorage Press, "Tales from the Trash"

Comments: Lucas' style lends itself well to this homage to those classic EC comics of the '50s. Nicely capturing that feel, incorporating the mast and headline for a completely integrated presentation. The concept grabs the eye while communicating an emotional truth to the story itself. It's a perfect blend of story and illustration.

No second- or third-place award given.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Stephanie D. Johnson, Alaska Star, "Tasty Tradition"

Comments: Stephanie tackled what often comes from an illustrator's way. One where the story is less than exciting where the artist must still strike a visual balance between the tone of the story and a compelling illustration that will drive readers into the content. Here, she does a fine job doing that with a great scratchboard illustration that sets just the right tone.

Judge: Rick Nease is the nationally recognized art director at the Detroit Free Press.

## Category 27: BEST PAGE LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Greg Johnson, Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman, "Page 1"

Comments: Nice top-down design. Interesting reefers and solid use of a grid structure. Use of information boxes are helpful.

Second place: Tim Nichols, Juneau Empire, "Alive and kicking"

Comments: The cutout helps to energize the page. Structure is easy to follow, from the secondary story on the left to bottom articles. nice use of photography to move reader through page.

Third place: Kim Andree, Juneau Empire, "Fall Harvest Table"

Comments: Nice use of color art in presentation. The downpage feature is interesting, though I would be interested in seeing some of the student's art on the page too.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Aaron Burkhart, The Northern Light, "Deciphering High-Def"

Comments: The page begins with a nice typographic treatment to help the reader generally understand the possible confusing nature of the technology. There is also nice use of the grid for copy and comparison of the two format choices.

Second place: Aaron Burkhart, The Northern Light, "Summer Meltdown III"

Comments: This is a nice listing page. Silhouetted figures create a energetic mood from the start. The use of small images to highlight some of the bands is also a nice touch.

Third place. No award given.

Judge: Adrian Johnson designs the Arts and Life section at the Cleveland Plain Dealer for seven years, where he designs the Arts and Life section. He has also designed the Sunday Arts section, the Friday entertainment magazine and front pages.

#### CATEGORY 28: BEST GRAPHIC

First place: Tim Nichols and Michael Plett, The Juneau Empire, "Crimson Bears on Offense, Defense"

Comments: We've all seen play diagrams. Usually bad ones with circles and arrows going every which way and are useful for one play only. This graphic avoids that pitfall. The presentation is very clean and sets up what we should expect to see game day. Clip and saves are always a good thing.

Second place: Aaron Burkhart, Suzanna Caldwell and Ashley Smith, The Northern Light, "Basketball Powerhouses Venture North for Annual Tournament"

The expanded bracket gave good information of the teams' makeup and went further to include an excellent brief chronology of each teams' season to date. The only suggestion I would offer is that the all-team player and season stats have the same neutral screen tint, say 8% gray. There is a little too much rainbow effect going on.

Judge: Randy Cox, visuals and production editor, is helping lead the integration of the paper's visual journalism efforts into the Internet while supervising his newspaper's photo and graphics departments.

#### CATEGORY 29: BEST SPOT PHOTO

Large newspapers and publications

First place: John Wagner, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, "Rollover"

Comments: This was one of the best photos we saw in any category; a well-executed news photo.

No awards given for second and third place.

Judges: Staff photographer Lara Solt; photo editor Brad Loper and deputy director of photography Chris Wilkins at the Dallas Morning News.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Thad Poulson, Daily Sitka Sentinel, "Plane Crash"

Comments: Great job at getting to the scene quickly and making a dramatic photograph

Second place: Layton Ehmke, Homer Tribune, "Caribou Hills Fire"

Comments: Great moment and beautiful composition.

Third place: Sean Pearson, Homer Tribune, "Plane Crash Victim"

Comments: Great job at getting an emotional moment.

Judges: Judy DeHass, staff photographer; Janet Reeves, director of photography; and Dean Krakel, assistant director of photography of The Rocky Mountain News.

#### CATEGORY 30: BEST GENERAL NEWS PHOTO

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Al Grillo, Associated Press, "Guilty"

Comments: Strong moment as the verdict was announced, photographer did well with what he had.

Second place: Al Grillo, Associated Press, "Healer"

Comments: Good caption information elevated this image to second place and gave this photo news value.

Third place: David Sheakley, Juneau Empire, "Bubblenet"

Comments: Interesting situation shot well by photographer, little bit of an off fit in the news category.

Judges: Staff photographer Lara Solt; photo editor Brad Loper and deputy director of photography Chris Wilkins at the Dallas Morning News.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Darrell L. Breese, Alaska Star, "Case Closed"

Comments: Great moment inside the courtroom.

Second place: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, "Herring Catch"

Comments: Beautifully composed image with vibrant color.

Third place: Rob Stapleton, Alaska Journal of Commerce, "Picketline"

Comments: Well-composed image and an interesting photo of a boring subject

Judges: Judy DeHass, staff photographer; Janet Reeves, director of photography; and Dean Krakel, assistant director of photography of The Rocky Mountain News.

### CATEGORY 31: BEST ARTS PHOTO

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Brian Wallace, Juneau Empire, "Annaleisa Place"

Comments: Clear winner, well composed and nice moment. Her intensity and expression make the photo.

Second place: Michael Penn, Juneau Empire, "Lifted embrace"

Comments: Very interesting photo, was hurt by dull lighting though.

Third place: Joshua Borough, Anchorage Daily News, "Dancing"

Comments: Interesting flash use elevated to the photo into top three.

Judges: Staff photographer Lara Solt; photo editor Brad Loper and deputy director of photography Chris Wilkins at the Dallas Morning News.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, "Oregon Ballet Nutcracker"

Comments: Great angle, beautifully composed.

Second place: Greg Lincoln, The Delta Discovery, "Hooper Bay Traditional Dancers"

Comments: Great moment, excellent expression on subject's face.

Third place: Monique Musick, The Ester Republic, "Junior Joey"

Comments: Good angle and choice of lenses.

Judges: Judy DeHass, staff photographer; Janet Reeves, director of photography; and Dean Krakel, assistant director of photography of The Rocky Mountain News.

### CATEGORY 32: BEST PICTURE STORY

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Al Grillo, Associated Press, "Nome Drinking"

Second place: David J. Sheakley, Juneau Empire, "Celebrating excellence"

Third place: David J. Sheakely, Juneau Empire, "Hunting how to"

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Greg Lincoln, The Delta Discovery, "Camai Dance Festival"

Second place: Nicolette Sauro, The Sun Star, "Spring Fest"

Third place: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, "Prom"

Judges: Roberto E. Rosales and the photography staff at the Albuquerque Journal.

### CATEGORY 33: BEST SPORTS PHOTO

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Al Grillo. Associated Press, "Shooting the hoop"

Second place: Robert DeBerry, Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman, "Sweet Catch"

Third place: Evan R. Steinhauser, Anchorage Daily News, "XC Skiers"

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Greg Lincoln, The Delta Discovery, "Collin"

Second place: Sean Pearson, Homer Tribune, "Bull flip"

Third place: Ben Stuart, Homer News, "It's a stretch"

Judges: Roberto E. Rosales and the photography staff at the Albuquerque Journal.

#### CATEGORY 34: BEST SCENIC PHOTO

Large newspapers and publications

First Place: Bob Martinson, Aurora

Comments: This photograph has a great awe-factor. It's a beautiful scenic showing off one of Alaska's most famous wonders.

Second Place: Klas Stolpe, Big Blue

Comments: Majestic. Amazing colors and nice composition. An extremely in depth caption.

Third Place: Bob Martinson, Sow and Cubs

Comments: This photograph has a nice supporting background and composition. Both foreground and background scream ALASKA.

Overall comments: All the photographs entered were amazing. It was very difficult to narrow them down to three winners. A pleasure and challenge to judge!

Judges: Dan Schlatter, staff photographer; Laura Stumbaugh, production coordinator, Puget Sound Business Journal, Seattle

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Bob Martinson, The Cordova Times, "Rainbow Boat"

Comments: A classic rainbow image cast in a still-life scene of serenity along the waterfront. Then, throw into that mix the wonderful mirror-like reflection and the almost perfect circle of refraction. The result is stunning and clearly first-place. I'd like to keep it on my desktop it's so much fun to look at over and over again.

Second place: Besty Lund, Kodiak Daily Mirror, "Tree"

Comments: Striking contrasts and exposure criticality make up this almost-symmetrical black-and-white pastoral scene of winter. Not often do I think a photo shot directly into the burst of a bright sun make much of a photo, but in this case the photographer used what appears to be either end of day or late in the day angle of sun cast to provide the shadowing of that dainty little tree with skill and appeal.

Third place: Sean Pearson, Homer Tribune, "Eagle has landed"

Comments: Yeah, it's an awfully corny title, but a lovely photo nonetheless. Silhouettes and sunsets are often the ticket to competent

vacation photography, but in this case the two combine to provide us a look of the wild, of creatures we can only dream of emulating. What a vast, open space Alaska is and to see that eagle landing so gracefully, so powerfully is a great pleasure to visually share in.

#### CATEGORY 35: BEST PORTRAIT PHOTO

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Evan Steinhauser, Anchorage Daily News, "Katie Campbell"

Comments: We got the most feeling from this photo, well executed portrait utilizes

nice light & a powerful moment.

Second place: Brian Wallace, Juneau Empire, "Bishop Nikolai"

Comments: Symmetrical, colorful and well-framed portrait. Interesting to look at.

Third place: Al Grillo, Associated Press, "Thanks"

Comments: This was a little bit of an odd fit for portrait but a great moment elevated it into the winning ranks.

Judges: Staff photographer Lara Solt; photo editor Brad Loper and deputy director of photography Chris Wilkins at the Dallas Morning News.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Gretchen Weiss, The Northern Light, "Urban Artist"

Comments: Great placement of the subject and excellent use of surroundings.

Second place: Greg Lincoln, The Delta Discovery, "Bearskin Boat Maker"

Comments: A beautiful subject and nice moment.

Third place: Rob Stapleton, Alaska Journal of Commerce, "Demographer"

Comments: Unique idea for a portrait, well done.

Judges: Judy DeHass, staff photographer; Janet Reeves, director of photography; and Dean Krakel, assistant director of photography of The Rocky Mountain News.

#### CATEGORY 36: BEST FEATURE PHOTO

Large newspapers and publications

First place: Hall Anderson, Ketchikan Daily News, "Just do it"

Comments: Just great seeing by the photographer, an unusual moment shot well.

2nd place: Robert DeBerry, Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman, "Comforting"

Comments: Close finish for first place, tight & clean moment sums up an emotional event.

Third place: Robert DeBerry, Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman, "Backflip"

Comments: Body language of the cyclist combined with clean composition make this photo really work as a feature.

Judges: Staff photographer Lara Solt; photo editor Brad Loper and deputy director of photography Chris Wilkins at the Dallas Morning News.

Small newspapers and publications

First place: Klas Stolpe, Petersburg Pilot, "Puckered Ornament"

Comments: Great moment and excellent color.

Second place: Tyler Rhodes, Nome Nugget, "Taking the Plunge"

Comments: Wonderful expressions on the people's faces.

Third place: Sean Pearson, Homer Tribune, "Popeye Wrestlers"

Comments: What a hilarious moment!

Judges: Judy DeHass, staff photographer; Janet Reeves, director of photography; and Dean Krakel, assistant director of photography of The Rocky Mountain News.