



Lee Enterprises Honors Excellence in News, Innovation and Spirit

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DAVENPORT, Iowa--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Applauding outstanding achievement in news coverage, innovative advertising programs and employee spirit, Mary Junck, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Lee Enterprises (NYSE: LEE), has announced the winners of the 2008 Lee President's Awards.

"We honor these standout people and organizations for making meaningful differences for our readers, online users, advertisers and communities," she said. "Their accomplishments set a high standard that no competitor can match."

She added: "In all of our 53 markets, large and small, the vital work we do every day further strengthens our position as the first and best print and online provider of local news, information and advertising. In addition to honoring the winners of these awards, we salute stellar work by thousands of other employees across our company."

EXCELLENCE IN NEWS

The news award recognizes outstanding achievement in any aspect of print and online journalism, from reporting and writing to photography, video, graphics and presentation.

The judges selected five sets of winners:

- Arizona Daily Star, Tucson, Ariz. - For an investigative series on social promotion in schools. The Daily Star spent 10 months obtaining and analyzing millions of student grades to quantify how often middle and high school students are moved from one grade level to the next, even though their scores in key subjects don't merit their promotion. The investigation found that nearly a third of the students in eight of Tucson's largest school districts had failed one or more core classes, yet nearly 90 percent were promoted to the next grade level. The award is shared by Jack Gillum, Sarah Mauet, L. Anne Newell, Andrea Rivera, Kori Rumore, George Sanchez, Jill Torrance, Rob Wisner and Jamar Younger. This is the Daily Star's fourth Lee President's Award for News in four years. Online: azstarnet.com/socialpromotion

- North County Times, Oceanside/Escondido, Calif. - To the entire staff, for delivering wide, deep, creative and continuous coverage when devastating wildfires forced the evacuation of 500,000 residents, burned 575 square miles, destroyed 1,400 homes and killed 10 people. Among comments from the judges: "This is an example of great public service during a community disaster... Extremely effective for keeping the community informed... Included stunning visuals and interviews that caught emotion of fire destroying homes... Comprehensive online coverage..." Online: nctimes.com/fire2007

- St. Louis Post-Dispatch, St. Louis, Mo. - For an investigative report, "Free to Flee." The Post-Dispatch found that hundreds of thousands of warrants on felony charges were not being entered into national databases used by law enforcement to check out the people they stop. The missing warrants included murder, rape and kidnapping. Even when warrants are in the national database, fugitives are often released because the jurisdiction that issued the warrant will not travel out of state to retrieve them. Online coverage included an interactive map featuring 30 cases in which fugitives were able to commit new crimes as a result. The award is shared by Robert Cohen, Cara DeMichele and Joe Mahr. This is the second time in three years that Joe Mahr has shared a Lee President's

Award. Online: stltoday.com/fugitives

- Suburban Journals of Greater St. Louis: To reporter Steve Pokin, for uncovering a MySpace hoax by neighbors that led to the suicide of a 12-year-old girl. His relentless coverage brought about a firestorm of national attention, a federal indictment and new cyberbullying laws in at least seven states. Online: lee.net/awards/sj
- The Daily Herald, Provo, Utah - For "Brady, the Greatest Gift." The story of Brady Thompson is one of remarkable courage, hope, friendship, faith and character. Brady suffers from an unknown condition that causes hundreds, sometimes thousands, of seizures a day. Although he was expected to die many times, Brady has become an example of a full life to an entire community. The Daily Herald's tender and powerful story was published in a 40-page special section on Christmas Day with a deep interactive presentation online. The award is shared by Elyssa Andrus, Craig Dilger, Jessica Eyre, Doug Fox, Ashley Franscell, Jason Larson, Logan Molyneux and Randy Wright. Online: heraldextra.com/brady

The judges gave honorable mentions to The Times-News in Twin Falls, Idaho, and the Wisconsin State Journal in Madison, Wis. In Twin Falls, Jared Hopkins and Josh Palmer exposed a complicated scheme in which politically connected developers were being paid to advise city officials on how the city would invest public funds in their own for-profit project. Online: lee.net/awards/twinfalls. In Madison, Mark Pitsch and Deborah Ziff uncovered lax safety inspections of amusement rides after the death of a 16-year-old girl. Their reporting led to tightened inspection standards. Online: lee.net/awards/madison

Judges for the Excellence in News category were Richard Cole, dean emeritus of the school of journalism and mass communications at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Sherry Chisenhall, editor and vice president for news at The Wichita Eagle; and Charlotte Hall, senior vice president and editor of the Orlando Sentinel.

Among their comments on the entries: "The overall quality was amazing.... Things happened because of what those newspapers did - across the board from the smallest to the largest.... They're nothing short of excellent, all of them.... They constitute a truly important service to readers."

INNOVATION

The innovation award recognizes an individual or team for creating or significantly advancing a print or online idea that drives revenue, builds audiences or serves customers better.

Judges for the innovation category were Barbara Cohen, president and founder of Kannon Consulting; Herbert W. Moloney III, president and chief operating officer of Western Colorprint, Inc.; and Jim Currow, executive vice president for newspapers at Morris Publishing LLC.

They selected six sets of winners:

- Billings Gazette Communications, Billings, Mont. - For leading the development of a statewide online classified website, sellitmt.com, in collaboration with other Lee Enterprises daily and weekly publications in Montana. The site includes advertising from the Billings Gazette and Thrifty Nickel in Billings, the Independent Record and The Adit in Helena, the Missoulian and Grizzly Nickel in Missoula, The Montana Standard in Butte, the Mini Nickel in Bozeman and The Prairie Star in Great Falls. The award is shared by Ryan Brosseau and Dave Worstell.
- Five enterprises for "Innovation in Execution" in leading a highly successful companywide initiative to gain market share by providing superior advertising reach, creativity and results. In one year across Lee, the program is credited with attracting more than 9,000 new advertisers. Sharing the award are The Southern Illinoisan in Carbondale; The Sentinel in Carlisle, Pa.; the Casper Star-Tribune in Wyoming; The Post-Star in Glens Falls, N.Y.; and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch - For creating Work2Goal, an online tool that enables sales representatives and managers to track

real-time revenue and goal achievement. The tool is credited with helping the Post-Dispatch take more than 510 advertising accounts from competitors in the last year. The award is shared by Charles Arms and John Hurst.

- Suburban Journals of Greater St. Louis - For leadership in developing the company's first module of Marketplace, a robust online directory combining search and social networking with deep, compelling content. With this new platform at stlouisbestbridal.com, St. Louis Best Bridal expects its online revenue to rise more than 700 percent from 2007 to 2009. As a result of the successes in St. Louis, several other Lee markets have begun rolling out this module, and modules on other topics are being planned.
- Lincoln Journal Star, Lincoln, Neb. - For Ultimate Home Delivery, a high-profile, six-month promotion that culminated in giving away a \$300,000 home to a subscriber. The program included significant advertising agreements with builders and related businesses. The award is shared by Terry Christensen, Staci Lunders, John Mabry, Ava Thomas, Mary Weixelman and Tara Wilkinson.
- Quad-City Times, Davenport, Iowa - For developing Q-C House Hunt to drive online traffic and generate leads for real estate agents. The program has been shared across Lee.

The judges gave honorable mentions to The Times-News in Twin Falls, Idaho, and The Times of Northwest Indiana, based in Munster. The staff in Twin Falls developed helpful Reader Guide pages to introduce new editions brought about by the consolidation of daily and weekly publications. In Northwest Indiana, the staff developed a popular reader contest called Bingo Mania.

LEE SPIRIT

The Lee Spirit Award recognizes outstanding personal commitment to our company and the people we serve.

This year's winner is the entire staff of Courier Communications in Waterloo/Cedar Falls, Iowa, for extraordinary spirit and performance during "40 days and 40 nights of coverage in print and online of three of the largest news stories the community has ever seen."

Extensive coverage by The Courier and wfcourier.com followed the largest single-day immigration raid in U.S. history, an EF-5 tornado that killed eight people and cut a swath of destruction across the region, and a record flood that forced thousands to flee and devastated hundreds of homes. Two members of The Courier family lost their homes to the tornado, and the grandmother of another was killed. Six staff members were victims of flooding.

Even though The Courier's building itself had to be evacuated, along with all of downtown Waterloo during the flooding, intensive coverage and timely delivery continued without interruption. The news, production, circulation, advertising and business staffs quickly set up shop on a local college campus and elsewhere, and printing was moved to another city for 10 days.

Readers, online users, advertisers and community leaders heaped praise on The Courier. Typical of the comments: "I just want to say 'thank you' for all of the great information you provide. I used to think the news from a newspaper was updated once a day. I found out differently during the tornadoes a couple of weeks ago. Now with the flooding, I always go to YOUR website for the latest breaking information."

Online: lee.net/awards/waterloo

Lee Enterprises is a premier publisher of local news, information and advertising in primarily midsize markets, with 49 daily newspapers and a joint interest in four others, rapidly growing online sites and more than 300 weekly newspapers and specialty publications in 23 states. Lee's newspapers have circulation of 1.6 million daily and 1.9 million Sunday, reaching more than four million readers daily. Lee's online sites attract 12 million unique visitors monthly, and Lee's weekly publications have distribution of more than 4.5 million households. Lee's newspaper markets include St. Louis, Mo.; Lincoln, Neb.; Madison, Wis.; Davenport, Iowa; Billings, Mont.; Bloomington, Ill.; and Tucson, Ariz. Lee stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol LEE.

Source: Lee Enterprises