http://www.KSCBNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=2801

Daily Leader Takes Home Sweepstakes

The High Plains Daily Leader newspaper of Liberal won the state's highest award in the division one category on Saturday in Topeka at the Kansas Press Association Awards of Excellence. That award being the 2010 Sweepstakes.

Each year a Sweepstakes winner is named in each of the four circulation divisions. The winners are determined based upon the number of points received for first, second and third place awards received in each of the advertising and editorial contest categories. This year the two were combined for the first time. The Daily Leader is in the division one category which includes newspapers with a circulation of 4,800 and under.

President and Publisher of The Leader, Earl Watt, who has now been apart of five Sweepstakes as a Publisher (four with the Southwest Daily Times) said this one means the most without question.

"Obviously, it's a thrill. Especially considering this has been our first full year of being able to compete since we are only in our second year of existence," Watt said.

The Leader won the most first place awards with sixteen. Two of the sixteen awards were best front page, and best sports page. Nine were Editorial and seven were advertising. They won 32 overall awards which includes first, second, and third.

There were just under 100 total newspapers competing with the toughest competition according to Watt being Ottawa and Junction City who have both won the Sweepstakes before.

Once The Leader was announced the winner Watt said it was really special to have the Publisher of the Wichita Eagle coming over to offer his congratulations. Also a former head of the William Allen White School of Journalism at the University of Kansas who is now retired came over to congratulate The Leader as well.

Watt stressed his gratitude toward his staff and said they are great to work with.

"Our goal is to work and to be the best. This was a complete team effort all the way from the writers, to the press crew, the advertising department, the composition department, even all the way to the secretaries and paper carriers."

Watt said this isn't just a special award for his staff and him, but also for the city of Liberal.

"It's a special night for Liberal, because this is their award. We get to tell their story."

Copyright KSCB News