



Lee Enterprises Honors 2015 President's Awards Winners

November 12, 2015

DAVENPORT, Iowa--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Nov. 12, 2015-- Mary Junck, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Lee Enterprises, Incorporated (NYSE: LEE), announced today the winners of 2015 Lee President's Awards for outstanding journalism, innovation and spirit.

"The winners of these awards represent only a sample of the outstanding work every day across Lee," she said. "In recognizing the distinguished efforts of these winners, we also recognize all of the exceptional work done throughout the year for the readers, advertisers and communities we serve."

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.

Receiving awards:

- **Arizona Daily Star** in Tucson for examining the future of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. As the Air Force pushed Congress to endorse a process that would lead to base realignments and closures, it also announced plans to retire the Davis-Monthan's primary flying mission, the A-10. Reporters Sarah Garrecht Gassen and David Wichner examined the future of the base and documented how other communities support and protect the bases essential to their local economies. Two editorials laid out the Star's prescription for change: a prescription that took hold and is coming to fruition. [Details.](#)
- **Billings Gazette** in Billings, Montana. Reporter Zach Benoit and photographer Hannah Potes covered the life of Alejandro Gonzalez for the 96 minutes he lived, chronicling one family's determination to go through with having a child with a fatal medical condition. The Gazette staff was allowed intimate access in order to document the agony of an infant death — and the strength of a family. [Details.](#)
- **Quad City Times** in Davenport, Iowa, for "The Rise and Fall of Valley Bank," a seven-part investigative series by reporter Alma Gaul, which chronicled the issues that led to state banking regulators closing down the bank in 2014, with a loss of more than \$59 million to the FDIC fund. Through deep reporting on federal documents and numerous interviews with banking officials and shareholders, Gaul's series uncovered allegations of mismanagement, fraudulent loan practices and a secretive culture that was centered on one man, the bank's CEO. [Details.](#)
- **Rapid City Journal** in South Dakota for embarking on a project to spark a public discussion on the future of medical marijuana regulation. The three-day package, supported by outstanding photojournalism, offers a very personal look into legal risks of those who use the drug and informative reporting intended to help frame a more intelligent debate on medical marijuana. [Details.](#)
- **St. Louis Post-Dispatch** for doggedly fighting for public records to expose abuses in the St. Louis County court system. The abuses gravely impact the lives of predominantly low-income citizens and helped fuel some of the distrust that exploded after the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. The discoveries include ticketing schemes to fund municipalities and barriers in a justice system that side with secrecy and favor the well-connected. The revelations in the extensive coverage have helped drive legislation to begin putting significant reforms into place. [Details.](#)
- **Wisconsin State Journal** in Madison for its investigation of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. The work of reporters Matthew DeFour and Dee J. Hall with state editor Mark Pitsch revealed that the governor's signature economic development agency gave top campaign donors unsecured deals that jeopardized its job creation mission and the public trust. The investigation produced results two days before it was published. Knowing of the State Journal's investigation, the governor called for the end of the WEDC loan program. [Details.](#)

Judges for Excellence in News were Richard Cole, dean emeritus of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Roy Peter Clark, author and Poynter Institute instructor; Suki Dardarian, senior managing editor and Vice President at the Minneapolis *StarTribune*; Richard A. Green, president and publisher of Enquirer Media and a regional group president for the Gannett Co.; and Mark Katches, editor of *The Oregonian*.

INNOVATION

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

Receiving awards:

- The **St. Louis Post-Dispatch** and the **Lincoln Journal Star**, in Lincoln, Nebraska, for greatly expanding high-profile

events through a vast suite of print and digital marketing tools. Focusing on innovative events of high community interest such as food and entertainment, business-to-business and philanthropy, both enterprises connected with larger audiences and more advertisers in new ways, creating new revenue streams.

- The **Lincoln Journal Star**, in Lincoln, Nebraska, and **Journal Gazette & Times-Courier** in Mattoon and Charleston, Illinois, for developing model initiatives to reach more advertising customers. In Lincoln, a Retail Revitalization task force led to a re-aligned sales team armed with big ideas and solutions to help businesses reach more of the *Journal Star's* large audiences. In Mattoon and Charleston, a high-profile shop-local campaign included a 32-page special section. It resonated with readers and advertisers, as well as generated significant incremental revenue for the *Journal Gazette & Times-Courier*.
- The **Wisconsin State Journal** in Madison, Wisconsin, for remarkable revenue growth in the industry-challenged category of automotive advertising. Beginning with an "automotive summit" with automotive dealership general managers to educate and set expectations, the team at the WSJ undertook a significant overhaul of the classified product bundles and extensively redesigned the section itself to improve color and section front availability. Using this momentum, they targeted inactive dealerships and looked to grow existing partnerships through creative marketing ideas and expanded digital advertising using Amplified Digital. All resulted in double-digit growth in Madison.

Honorable mention was awarded to TownNews.com for successfully launching IQ a data management program that will greatly enhance programmatic advertising revenue while improving audience engagement. Also receiving honorable mention is the *Casper Star-Tribune* for "They Served with Honor: Vietnam," a project recognizing Wyoming's 16,000 Vietnam veterans.

The judges also chose two additional winners specifically recognizing innovation for growth of audience.

Receiving awards:

- **The Pantagraph** in Bloomington, Illinois, for the launch of a pilot website in collaboration with Newspapers.com, a division of Ancestry. *The Pantagraph* was the first newspaper in the nation to enter into such a partnership, providing users with an easily searchable database of historic newspaper content and preserving it for future generations.
- **The Post-Star** in Glens Falls, New York, for its initiative to shoot photos and publish galleries for each of the high school proms in the region. During a two-month period, the newspaper crew attended proms at 21 local high schools. The galleries, which were heavily promoted through social media, created a high volume of page views with many coming from people younger than eighteen.

Honorable mention for growth of audience was given to the *Wisconsin State Journal* for two special projects, "12 Gifts to Our Readers" and "7 Days of Summer." The *Billings Gazette* in Montana received honorable mention for the appointment of a newsroom digital producer exclusively focused on developing, repackaging and launching content to grow targeted digital audiences.

Judges for the innovation category were Brad Harmon, vice president of publishing at GateHouse Media, Inc.; Barbara Cohen, president and founder of Kannon Consulting; and Herbert W. Moloney III, an independent director of Lee and longtime advertising and publishing executive.

LEE SPIRIT

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

Being honored is:

- **Greg Brownell**, sports editor for the *Post-Star* in Glens Falls, New York. In his 33-year career with the *Post-Star*, Brownell has proven himself an exceptional leader both inside and outside the newsroom. As an editor, he has led the Glens Falls sports section to national recognition while helping develop the careers of many young journalists. His commitment to the *Post-Star* and its readers has included covering late-night breaking news, taking countless calls from customers and delivering a missed newspaper if needed. In the community, Brownell annually hosts a penalty shot challenge as part of the "Power of Pink" soccer game. Proceeds from his challenge are donated to breast cancer research.

ABOUT LEE

Lee Enterprises is a leading provider of local news and information, and a major platform for advertising, in its markets, with 46 daily newspapers and a joint interest in four others, rapidly growing digital products and nearly 300 specialty publications in 22 states. Lee's newspapers have circulation of 1.0 million daily and 1.4 million Sunday, reaching more than three million readers in print alone. Lee's markets include St. Louis, MO; Lincoln, NE; Madison, WI; Davenport, IA; Billings, MT; Bloomington, IL; and Tucson, AZ. Lee Common Stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol LEE. For more information about Lee, please visit www.lee.net.

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Lee Enterprises, Incorporated
Charles Arms, 563-383-2100
Director of Communications

IR@lee.net