

By Russ Pankonin

The Imperial Republican

The Imperial Republican brought home six awards in this year's Nebraska Press Association's (NPA) Better Newspaper Contest.

The contest results were announced Saturday during NPA's annual convention held in Lincoln last weekend.

Judges from the Michigan Press Association awarded the Republican one first place award, two second place awards and three third place awards. The Republican competes with other Nebraska newspapers whose circulation falls between 1,501 and 2,499.

The first place award came on a sports photo by Russ Pankonin taken of Michael May pushing away a football defender.

Pankonin and News Editor Jan Schultz took second place for the paper in the best editorial competition.

Pankonin wrote a pair on hospital issues while Schultz's topic addressed the health care fiasco.

Jana Pribbeno, Chris Fidler and Karen Hayes took second for the best ag advertisement featuring Adams Bank & Trust.

Fidler also placed third with a computer graphic on weather temperatures.

Pribbeno and Dana Sorensen took third for best reader interaction with a youth reporter contest. The paper also received third place for best editorial page.

Wauneta, Grant win awards

Two other Johnson Publications, Inc. papers brought home awards, as well.

The Wauneta Breeze won a total of 18 awards, finishing second overall in Class A newspapers with circulation up to 1,000.

First place awards came for best reader interaction, classified page, classified ad, sports column, specialty pages, feature series, in-depth writing and editorial.

Second place awards came for best photo page, feature photography, news photography, youth coverage and web site.

Third place awards included best single ad, sports action photo, sports feature photo, breaking news story and in-depth writing.

The Breeze was also second place among papers with circulation of 859 or less.

The Grant Tribune-Sentinel won first place for best front page, second in headline writing and third for breaking news story. They compete against other papers with circulation of 860-1499.

Loral Johnson award stays in family for second year

The Loral Johnson Community Newspaper Sweepstakes Award stayed in the family for a second consecutive year.

Kurt and Paula Johnson, co-publishers of the Aurora News-Register, won recognition as the top weekly newspaper in the Better Newspaper Contest for the second year in a row. Johnson is the son of Elna and the late Loral Johnson of Imperial.

The News-Register competes against papers with circulation of 2,500 or more.

The award was established in 2004 in honor of the memory of publisher Loral Johnson of Imperial. The award recognizes the top weekly newspaper in the Better Newspaper Contest.