



Heart of America Awards

2009

Print, above 50,000 daily

Deadline Reporting

Gold: Diane Carroll, Laura Bauer, Joe Lambe, The Kansas City Star, "Justice: Hall guilty in Kelsey Smith killing." *A thoughtful, careful reconstruction of a terrible crime, told without resorting to melodrama.*

Silver: Barbara Hollingsworth, Steve Fry, Jan Biles, Topeka Capital-Journal, "Two Storms, Two Days." *Very nice job covering a multi-part story in a comprehensive, colorful way.*

General Reporting

Gold: James Carlson, The Topeka Capital-Journal, "Coal Plant Series." *Nice job tracking the behind-the-scenes politicking that guided policy decision-making on a power plant.*

Silver: Suzanna Stagemeyer, Kansas City Business Journal, "Economy trips early warning signals." *A remarkably prescient look at the crumbling U.S. economy, viewed through the lens of local industries.*

Bronze: Judy L. Thomas, The Kansas City Star, "Use of Porter Funds in Question." *Judge's comments: Great job breaking news about mishandled funds.*

HM: Christine Vendel, Malcolm Garcia, Lee Hill Kavanaugh, The Kansas City Star, "Murder's Big Month."

HM: Peter Rugg, The Pitch, "Children Left Behind."

Business Reporting

Gold: Steve Everly, The Kansas City Star, "Splash Blending." *Focusing on a corner of the energy-cost crisis, the reporter uncovers an unusual problem – and tells his story in a straightforward way. Nice example of making business news relevant to the average reader.*

Silver: Carolyn Szczepanski, The Pitch, "Your Tax Dollars Not at Work." *A careful dissection of a public-works project gone wrong.*

Bronze: Bill Wilson, The Wichita Eagle, "Water Walk questions." *A thorough look at the history of a businessman's checkered past.*

Investigative Reporting

Gold: Judy L. Thomas, The Kansas City Star, "Apple for the teacher, but luxury for execs." *Superb job uncovering wasteful spending by a public agency and its cozy relationships with investment managers. Terrific work that led the state to amend its processes.*

Silver: Tim Carpenter, The Topeka Capital-Journal, "Board of Healing Arts." *A thorough, thoughtful look at a health watchdog's shortcomings.*

Bronze: Dion Lefler and Tim Potter, The Wichita Eagle, "35 suits in developer's past." *Solid job digging into the past of a developer responsible for a high-profile city project.*

Feature

Gold: Roy Wenzl, The Wichita Eagle, "For Alex." *An exhaustively researched set of facts reconstructed into a gripping tale. Each character is carefully drawn. The presentation is exemplary. An effective, touching walk-off to the series in the final segment.*

Silver: James Carlson, The Topeka Capital-Journal, "The Bob Owen Story." *The reporter realized the potential of the story idea through deep research and fine writing. Some of the phrasing is so elegant that it demands to be reread and savored.*

Bronze: Carolyn Szczepanski, The Pitch, "Old Street, New Dance." *The writer weaves present and past into a piece that captures both people and place. A lot to give readers in a single, satisfying story.*

Profile

Gold: Stacy Downs, The Kansas City Star, "Defenders see sass; detractors say crass." *A gem of a news profile. A well-rounded piece of reporting that captures why people could have such divergent views of a controversial public figure.*

Silver: Barbara Hollingsworth, The Topeka Capital-Journal, "A Postmortem Essay." *A salute to the care with which this piece was crafted, and to the honest account of David Wake's flaws and attributes.*

Bronze: Carolyn Szczepanski, The Pitch, "The Teacher." *Every minute the writer spent with the subject shows in telling details and well-chosen quotes. An interesting profile of an interesting person.*

Sports Writing

Gold: Kent Babb, The Kansas City Star, "Broken Promise." *Superb writing, compelling reading, even -- especially -- if you already know the ending.*

Silver: Carolyn Szczepanski, The Pitch, "Up Show-me Creek." *Takes man readers to a treacherous place they've never been and broadens the realm of "sports."*

Bronze: Rick Plumlee, The Wichita Eagle, "Raised on Running." *Excellent approach to defining what helps drive a high-level athlete.*

HM: Jason Whitlock, The Kansas City Star, "Upshaw's Style Fit the NFL."

Photojournalism Breaking News

Gold: Chris Oberholtz, The Kansas City Star, "Tornadoes' Record Surge Taking a Destructive Toll." *Overall scene shows the devastation well. People add to the impact of the photo.*

Silver: Jack "Miles" Ventimiglia, Daily Star-Journal, "Getting Help." *Photographer's efforts for good access at right moment paid off.*

Photojournalism Feature

Gold: Jack "Miles" Ventimiglia, Daily Star-Journal, "Ridin' Waves

at the Rodeo.” *A light, playful moment with the added interest of the weather element.*

Silver: Jack “Miles” Ventimiglia, Daily Star-Journal, “On a Chilly Christmas Eve.” *A scene that readers can enjoy.*

Editorial

Gold: Barbara Shelly, The Kansas City Star, “In a Funk About KC Mayor’s Priorities.” *Excellent writing on a gutsy piece of journalism. Bold, informative and takes a strong stand. I admire the detail and the reporting and the willingness of the editorial board to even admit it made a mistake in judgment about the mayor. Very strong piece.*

Silver: Jack “Miles” Ventimiglia, The Daily Star-Journal, “Jury Service.” *Editorials starts out strong and makes a forceful point all the way through. The editorial does not just lament a situation it offers solutions to a problem many states and localities are facing. Punchy writing and strong opinion.*

Bronze: Jack “Miles” Ventimiglia, The Daily Star-Journal, “Death for Child Rape.” *Good clean writing and sharp opinion throughout forces the reader to examine his or her own beliefs on a difficult subject. I like the questioning of where society should draw the line throughout the piece. Nice job.*

HM: Brian Kaberline, Kansas City Business Journal, “Dressing Down City.”

News Column

Gold: Mark McCormick, The Wichita Eagle, “One nation, indivisible: What will it take?” “Quest for publicity is getting desperate,” “Mom’s low self-esteem is putting kids in danger.” *Timely, topical and very well written.*

Silver: David Martin, The Pitch, “Deutsche Bags,” “White Sale,” “Suitezilla.” *Well-worded indictments of problems that are particularly topical now.*

Bronze: Barbara Shelly, The Kansas City Star, “KC police credibility at stake in Salva case,” “Where will the buck stop on elder abuse?” “Please drop everything else as you read this.” *Eminently serious content viewed with clear-eyed compassion.*

Non-news Column

Gold: Tony Rizzo, The Kansas City Star, “Farewell, childhood innocence,” “My year of shameful parenting,” “Rotten in Denmark? Not quite.” *He’s very capable of writing serious and whimsical content, which is what every general columnist should do.*

Silver: Cindy Hoedel, The Kansas City Star, “Cindy’s House.” *Topical ideas certain to interest and maybe amuse various readers.*

Bronze: Debra Skodack, The Kansas City Star, “Good Connections.” *Straight-forward and informative content to which many readers can relate.*

Entertainment

Gold: Alan Scherstuhl, The Pitch, “The Best Story of the Year.” *The writer does a deft job of capturing the person at the center of controversy. His own expertise informs but does not overpower the story.*

Silver: Alan Scherstuhl, The Pitch, “What’s at Stake,” “Water Logged,” “Desert Storm.” *Reviews worth reading whether you’d plan to see the show or not. They describe not only the art but also its links to time and place, in language that is chosen with care.*

Bronze: Jason Harper, The Pitch, “A Picture of Hope.” *Great use of quotes to add detail to the writer’s own well-crafted picture of one person who represents a larger community issue.*

Beat Reporting

Gold: Christine Vendel, The Kansas City Star, Police. *Vendel was able to draw back and do big picture stories while juggling the respon-*

sibilities of a heavy daily beat. She also did the extra reporting that turned a breaking news story into a compelling narrative.

Silver: Suzanna Stagemeyer, Kansas City Business Journal, Tech and Telecom. *Stagemeyer had a nice mix of profile and analysis on a complicated beat. Her stories were sophisticated without wandering into jargon or arcane technology.*

Bronze: Stacy Downs, The Kansas City Star, Home Reporter.

Public Service Project

Gold: Edward M. Eveld, Lisa Guterrez, Marti Ross, The Kansas City Star, “Greener Living.” *Reporters approached this from multiple angles and engaged readers in the story while educating the public about how to reduce waste and energy use.*

Print, below 50,000 daily

Deadline Reporting

Gold: Alex Parker, Lawrence Journal-World, “Recovery effort for canoeist continues.” *Compelling details and comprehensive reporting made this the best deadline story.*

Silver: Joyce L. Miller, Lake Sun, “One missing in helicopter crash.” *Reporter brought together lots of information on deadline.*

General Reporting

Gold: Joyce L. Miller, Charis Patires, Deanna Wheeler, Lake Sun, “Osage Beach Fire Protection District.” *Reporters should be commended for pushing past the official explanation and testing the explanations for the firing.*

Silver: Allison Elyse Gualtieri, The Sedalia Democrat, “Teen Pregnancy in Pettis County.” *Great combination of factual data on teen pregnancy with a humanized, personal face on the issue with individual stories.*

Bronze: Ryan McGeeney, University Daily Kansan, “City Ordinance Displaces Students.”

Investigative Reporting

Gold: Sarah Nail, Sedalia Democrat, “Citizens raise stink over trash bid.” *Reporter asked pointed questions of all elected officials and represented the public’s concerns over the city’s garbage collection contract.*

Feature

Gold: Alex Parker, Lawrence Journal-World, “The influence of tradition, modernity.” *The writer captured the tension between faith and the daily temptations of modern life. A well-organized story that took a smart moment to answer the reader’s question about how this group compares to the more familiar Amish.*

Silver: Sarah Nail, The Sedalia Democrat, “Katy Trail Series.” *Humor and an appreciative eye for detail combine to make these stories an entertaining start-to-finish tale. A well-presented package.*

Bronze: Allison Elyse Gualtieri, The Sedalia Democrat, “Text messaging keeps kids talking without talking.” *An excellent news feature localizing a national story. Sources’ quotes reflect what must have been good questions by the reporter and the quotes are woven skillfully into a complete, thorough story.*

Profile

Gold: Michelle Brooks, Jefferson City News Tribune, “Tenacious seeker of the truth.” *Who would have known duct tape was so interesting? The writer helped readers learn something in the process of meeting a lively, quietly important member of the community. Nicely chosen subject of a profile.*

Silver: Michelle Brooks, Jefferson City News Tribune, “Not one to

just fiddle around.” *A nicely woven mix of information about the craft and the person who is passionate about it. Quotes are used effectively.*

Bronze: Charis Patires, Lake Sun, “Osage Beach resident plans to swim 20 miles for Shriners.” *In a few quick strokes, the writer captures the motivation of the subject and event details. Very nice phrasing.*

Sports writing

Gold: Michelle Brooks, News-Tribune, “Hoops at the Blacktop.” *A well-done look at the thoughts of those one may come across on the blacktop on any given day.*

Silver: Zach Wardenburg, Lake Sun, “When the Splatter Matters.” *Good information presented while urging people to try their hands at this growing sport.*

Photojournalism breaking news

Gold: Charis Patires, Lake Sun, “Divers recover missing body.” *Good, clear photos on a breaking news event.*

Editorial

Gold: David Schiefelbein, Lake Sun, “Quarry fight is lake area’s.” *Effective in urging citizens to give their attention to a matter affecting them.*

News Column

Gold: David Schiefelbein, Lake Sun, “Falls farther behind,” “Civic lesson for a 4-year-old,” “Primary colors.” *Good reads on some interesting topics. Particularly liked the work on the “Fall Farther Behind” column.*

Non-News Column

Gold: David Schiefelbein, Lake Sun, “More than old truck,” “I have a dream for your money,” “08-08-08.”

Entertainment

Gold: Joyce L. Miller, Lake Sun, “Lake’s ‘party anthem’ boys will open Shootout entertainment Thursday.” *Good article on upcoming performance and ties song to local origins. Liked the posting of info from the band’s Web site.*

Beat Reporting

Gold: Allison Elyse Gualtiere, Sedalia Democrat, “Warsaw budget crisis.” *Good proof that a little investigative reporting can make a difference in an issue. Nice job of making sense of the series of events and what they mean.*

Silver: Sarah Nail, Sedalia Democrat, “Sedalia City Beat.” *I particularly liked the “Pensions have some struggling” story. Good job with lots of different people used as resources. “Statewide standard sought” was also a good one; “City sales tax” story wasn’t as newsy as the others so it didn’t come across as being as enlightening as the others – more due to the nature of the subject than to anything wrong with the reporting.*

Bronze: Ryan McGeeney, University Daily Kansan, “Mass transit in a small town.” *Well-done stories. I’m impressed that this is a university paper; it’s a heckuva lot better than my school paper was. Some good points brought out, that this seemingly mundane issue could have a big impact on students.*

HM: Brye Butler Steeves, TEN Magazine, “Feeding high prices;” “Shipping out;” “Rural snapshots.” *Great job on a comprehensive set of agricultural issues. The best part was the use of specific people, farm couples, families, etc., to show how these forces and issues directly affect people. Only drawback is that it’s almost too much for a daily reader to digest. A little overwhelming and long; I think it deserves its own category where this kind of thing wouldn’t be an issue. Otherwise, it’s some fine reporting (and I did a long, semi-analytical farming article for a magazine so I appreciate some of the challenges of this kind of work).*

Public Service

Gold: Ryan McGeeney, University Daily Kansan, “Ghost World.” *Well-written and very descriptive.*

Silver: Charis Patires, Lake Sun, “Helping Hands Shelter needs a Hand.” *Good article on woman’s initial misconceptions and her search for help.*

Print, non-daily

General Reporting

Gold: Beth Lipoff, Kansas City Jewish Chronicle, “Jobless and Jewish in KC.” *Good writing, good information and statistics that make universal issue a personal one.*

Investigative Reporting

Gold: Mary Rupert, Wyandotte West, “Sands Mounts Lobbying Effort to Win...” *Comprehensive coverage of a complex issue.*

Feature

Gold: Tom Parker, Washington County News, “The final journey of Robert Glenn Bennett.” *Heart-rending story that was hard to put down. It flowed, is visual and detailed.*

Silver: Beth Lipoff, Kansas City Jewish Chronicle, “Do you have an intermarriage issue?” *Interesting article about issues interfaith couples face. Enjoyed reading personal, social and religious angles to story and the inclusion of resources for readers.*

Sports writing

Gold: Andy Brown, Miami County Republic, “A Record Meant to be Broken.” *Great combination of action, emotion, background and great storytelling.*

Silver: Mark Dewar, Sun Publications, “Seeing is believing.” *Interesting story about an athlete’s visual challenges. Readable combination of personal and athletic detail.*

Bronze: Mark Dewar, Sun Publications, “Playing out of position.” *Interesting personal story that draws in the reader.*

Editorial

Gold: Bob Sigman, Sun Newspapers, “Unanimous Vote is not Fair.” *Clear and informative discussion of need for law change.*

News Column

Gold: Bob Sigman, Sun Newspapers, “Smoke Erodes Health.” *Convincing and illustrative discussion about smoking ban and public attitudes.*

Silver: Bob Sigman, Sun Newspapers, “Denied Equity Once Again.” *Dismay and outrage put forth in skilled argument.*

Bronze: Bob Sigman, Sun Newspapers, “Goodbye to Low Teacher Pay.” *Great combination of personal and statistical information.*

Print, class sizes combined

Magazine Story

Gold: Edward M. Eveld, The Kansas City Star, “Go Chickens, Go!” *A lovely look at the persistence of a humane farming advocate, and the farm he has created. Beautifully written.*

Silver: Peter Rugg, The Pitch, “Devil Inside.” *An interesting look at a religious practice – exorcism – that many readers might assume was not longer used. Great observation and detail.*

Trade and speciality publications

Business-to-business publication

Gold: Land Line Magazine. *Well-written stories, nice layouts and graphics.*

Silver: Kelly Scanlon, KC Small Business. *User-friendly layouts, interesting stories.*

General reporting

Gold: Debra DeCoster, Kansas City Hispanic News, "Kerry full of life and faith..." *A moving, well-written series of stories on a young girl's illness.*

Silver: Jami Jones, Land Line Magazine, "American Idle." *A comprehensive and helpful series on idle reduction.*

Bronze: Clarissa Kell-Holland, Land Line Magazine, "You would be naked and hungry." *Informative, well-written, nicely presented.*

HM: Debra DeCoster, Kansas City Hispanic News, "Morales brothers fighting for their country..."

HM: Reed Black, Land Line Magazine, "There's a wall in Washington..."

Business Reporting

Gold: Brye Butler Steeves, TEN Magazine, "Changing Structure of Rural Banking," etc. *Well-written series of stories on a complex issue.*

Silver: Kelly Scanlon, Kansas City Small Business Monthly, "We're Not Done Yet." *A comprehensive story and a pleasing writing style.*

Bronze: Brye Butler Steeves, TEN Magazine, "Economic Force."

HM: David Tanner, Land Line Magazine, "There are 50 ways to leave your toll road."

Investigative reporting

Gold: Charlie Morasch, Land Line Magazine, "Grand Theft Cargo."

Silver: Clarissa Kell-Holland, Land Line Magazine, "Long Live the Queen."

Feature

Gold: Brye Butler Steves, TEN Magazine, "Farm to Global Market." *Informative, interesting and perfectly organized.*

Silver: Charlie Morasch, Land Line Magazine, "When does the truck start driving you?" *Good, solid information overcomes structural problems. Heart of issue buried way too deep.*

Online

News Web Site

Gold: Jen Clark, Aaron Ansell, Jay Bachman and Dave Uhler, The Topeka Capital-Journal, CJOnline.com. *Top-notch local news site with a focus on interaction with the reader community.*

Multi-Media Package

Gold: Alex Parker, Lawrence Journal-World, "Readying for War." *Video is used to great effect, telling a story in a way that print alone could not do. A respectful and thorough study of an aspect of military training that tends to be overlooked.*

Silver: Todd Feeback, Mike McGraw, Dave Helling, Dave Eames, Bill Dalton, Monty Davis, Ian Jennings, The Kansas City Star, "1988 Firefighters Deaths." *This multimedia package caps a long and admirable investigation of a deadly fire and the possible miscarriage of justice in its wake. The video is beautifully composed and shot, and the story is complemented by some attractive graphics.*

Blog

Gold: Jason Harper, The Pitch, Wayward Blog. *A funny, profane chronicle of the local music scene with an engaged and opinionated audience.*

Silver: The Pitch, Fat City. *A moving-in-time portrait of a moveable feast, nicely balancing high and low tastes.*

Bronze: Mom2Mom Featured Bloggers, The Kansas City Star,

mom2momkc. *Savvy, engaging writers clearly strike a chord with their audience.*

HM: The Wichita Eagle, "Party Time." *Political reporting with a personal feel, illustrating what can be done in a new medium.*

Radio

News Program

Gold: Sylvia Maria Gross, KCUR, KC Currents 12/21/08.

Silver: Staff, Lane Line Now, Land Line Now.

Business Reporting

Gold: Maria Carter, KCUR, "From Wall Street to Main Street."

Silver: Frank Morris, KCUR, "Brazilian beef company takes over U.S. industry."

Bronze: Mark Reddig, Land Line Now, "Tomcats take a bite out of cargo theft."

Talk Radio

Gold: Steve Kraske, Stephen Steigman, Danette Alexander, Kara Caldwell, KCUR, "Up to Date."

Feature

Gold: Frank Morris, KCUR, "Greensburg Anniversary."

Silver: Sylvia Maria Gross, "Paying to burn the prairie."

Bronze: Bill Grady, KMBZ, "Homeless in the heartland."

HM: Steve Bell, KCUR, "The Matthew 25 Project."

Investigative Reporting

Gold: Dan Verbeck, KCUR, "Kansas City homicides: Beyond data."

Silver: Mark Reddig, Land Line Now, "Going green: A concern over regulation in California."

Bronze: Reed Black, Land Line Now, "Is ethanol the right choice?"

HM: Terry Scruton, Land Line Now, "Who sets the price?"

Television, above 100 market rank

Newcast

Gold: Julie Kellogg, KCTV, "KCTV 5 News at 10 p.m." *Emotional interviews with storm survivors. Great pictures. KCTV had crews all over the area.*

Silver: Dori Olmos, KSPR, "Spring Flash Floods." *Nice use of the available resources.*

Spot News

Gold: Daniel J. Hurt, KAKE, "Winfield Park Fire."

Silver: Natasha Trelfa, Nathan Christner, KAKE, "Chapman Cleanup."

General Reporting

Gold: Michelle Sherwood, Joel Girdner, KSPR, "No Such Thing as a Free Lunch."

Silver: Marie Saavedra, Doug Magditch, KYTV, "Kettle Corn Security."

Bronze: Jennifer Bocchieri, Nathan Christner, KAKE, "Willsun Mock."

Investigative Reporting

Gold: Ash-har Quraishi, Chris Koeberl, Ken Ullery, KCTV, "Air-line Insecurity." *Excellent reporting that prompted significant change. Well written.*

Silver: Ash-har Quraishi, Chris Koeberl, Ken Ullery, Rob Rhodes, Chris Henao, KCTV, "Towing Pains."

Bronze: Joanna Small, Joel Girdner, Dallas Houtz, KSPR, "Pseudo Homeowners."

Feature

Gold: Larry Hatteberg, KAKE, "Painting the Town." *An excellent job stringing together a great story that could have easily unraveled. A compelling, humorous tale with lovely pictures.*

Silver: Dana Wright, et al (see entry form), KCTV, "Precious Doe." *A powerful, emotional story. Well composed and edited. Nice job with a hard-to-get interview.*

Photojournalism

Gold: Philip W. Maslin, WDAF, "Labor of Love."

Silver: Larry Hatteberg, KAKE, "Two On the Town."

Sports

Gold: Mike Scott, KSPR, "MMA: Mariah Reed Debut."

Silver: Dave Dunn, Philip W. Maslin, Colton White, WDAF, "You Have to See to Believe?"

Public Service Program

Gold: Bob Hess, Jennie Rinas, Kathy Quinn, WDAF, "WDAF: 25 Years of Love." *Heartwarming and powerful. This program, celebrating 25 years, is a winner.*

Silver: Philip W. Maslin, WDAF, "Pellet Power." *Informative, but wanted more than just experts... wanted to feel more.*

Documentary Program

Gold: Erik Ashel, Metro Sports/Time Warner Cable, "Border War." *Great story telling, set up and photography.*

Silver: Stephen Spiegel, Metro Sports/Time Warner Cable, "City Bell." *Excellent photography.*

Regular Franchise Feature

Gold: Larry Hatteberg, KAKE, Hatteberg's People Television Series. *Wonderful stories with beautiful photography. Please keep doing these stories!*

Television, below 100 market rank

Newscast

Gold: Michael Rosenhouse, Holly Edgell, KOMU, "KOMU 8 News at 10." *Good cold open, nice graphic behind anchors, good visuals.*

Silver: News Team, WIBW, "13 News at 6 – October 7, 2008."

Bronze: News Team, WIBW, "13 News at 6 – December 18, 2008."

Breaking News

Gold: Sarah Hill, Scott Schaefer, Holly Edgell, Stacey Woelfel, KOMU, "The Flood of '08."

Spot News

Gold: Mike Brannen, KOMU, "St. Charles Levee Break."

Silver: Kyle Martin, KQTV, "Historic Building Burns."

Bronze: Ariane Aramburo, KQTV, "Downtown Eshelman Fire." HM: Kyle Martin, KQTV, "Child Falls from Window."

General Reporting

Gold: Lindsay Shively, Eric Ives, WIBW, "St. Ann's Fire." *Good emotion in interview – arson suspicion should have been top of story.*

Silver: Melissa Brunner, Doug Brown, WIBW, "A Hero Comes Home."

Investigative Reporting

Gold: Patty Santos, KQTV, "Jail Overcrowding."

Feature

Gold: Sarah Hill, Scott Schaefer, Scott Schmidt, KOMU, "Sarah's Stories: Show Me Honor." *Well-shot, well-told, emotionally compelling.*

Silver: Megan Murphy, Scott Schaefer, KOMU, "Corn Maze." *Good nat sound.*

Bronze: Jim Riek, Scott Schaefer, KOMU, "Unionville Crash."

HM: Ariane Aramburo, KQTV, "My Hometown of Alaska."

Photojournalism

Gold: Scott Schaefer, KOMU, "Honor Flight." *Scott is an amazing artist – the video made this emotional story come to life.*

Silver: Scott Schaefer, KOMU, "Magic Tree."

Bronze: Scott Schaefer, KOMU, "Bible Drill."

HM: Mike Brannen, KOMU, "Fast Food."

Sports

Gold: Eric Blumberg, KOMU, "No Hitter for Mom."

Silver: Mike Brannen, KOMU, "Chase Patton."

Public Service Project

Gold: Sarah Hill, Scott Schaefer, Scott Schmidt, Barb Brueggeman, Stacey Woelfel, Matt Garrett, Reed Erickson, Jim Reese, "Honor Flight: Show Me Honor." *Well-shot, well-produced, well-written – an outstanding, extraordinary effort.*

Silver: 13 News Team, WIBW, "Fostering Hope."

Documentary Program

Gold: WIBW News Team, WIBW, "Helping Hands."

Regular Franchise Feature

Gold: Sarah Hill, Scott Schaefer, KOMU, "Sarah's Stories." *Well-told stories, beautifully shot.*

Silver: Lindsay Shively, WIBW, "Art Talk."

Bronze: Megan Murphy, Scott Schaefer, KOMU, "Coverage from Callaway."

2009 Special Awards:

Journalist of the Year: Christine Vendel, The Kansas City Star.

Judge's comments from Dave Umhoefer, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: *Vendel's passion for giving voice to crime/accident victims and their families comes through loud and clear. Her enterprising news features, nicely crafted narrative tales and deadline work have an eye for telling detail that gives her work a fresh quality and keeps her characters in your head for days. Her story on prosecutors' reluctance to charge rape cases involving victims with criminal pasts gets at a little-covered issue in highly readable fashion. The story on rapist Gary Jackman provided an important public service. And her coverage of a murderous month in Kansas City got inside the police department's workings despite obvious obstacles. Impressive work.*

Joe McGuff Lifetime Achievement Award: Steve Rose

Newspaper of the Year: The Kansas City Star

Television Station of the Year: KOMU

Radio Station of the Year: KCUR