

The Bridge Website Wins First Place Award in its First Year Honors

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Godfrey, Ill. – Lewis and Clark Community College’s student newspaper The Bridge is the winner of eight student newspaper awards among peer publications this Spring semester, including first place in web page design for <http://thelcbridge.com/>.

The Bridge, a monthly student newspaper, competed against nine other Division II Illinois Community Colleges with enrollment of more than 5,000 students that publish a tri-weekly or monthly paper. Staff members of several Illinois newspapers and Eastern Illinois University’s Journalism Department judged the Illinois Community College Journalism Association (ICCJA) competition.

When Tray Wetherell took the editor-in-chief position at the paper in the fall of 2010, establishing a website was at the top of his goals list. With the help of webmaster Nick Howland, it soon became a reality. The site went live in December 2010 and has grown from five hits a day to more than 550.

“No reliable student newspaper doesn’t have a website. It’s the wave of the future for journalism,” Wetherell said. “The actual publication is more a monthly roundup, but the website has Internet exclusive content including blogs, music reviews and other media (auto reviews, a live cooking show, etc.). We’ve also been able to utilize the website for covering news and events that happen between publications.”

Howland also snagged first place in the computer graphics category for an inside spread in the January 2011 issue containing maps of the Middle East, second place for computer graphics on the 2009-2010 L&C Student art show, second place for layout design for an issue he designed last year and third place in ad design for a Pony Espresso advertisement.

“It’s been a lot of work, but it’s actually been a lot of fun,” Howland said. “(Receiving the awards) is humbling. It’s nice to know that all the hard work we put into The Bridge

this year has gotten us some attention. More so, it's nice to hear students and faculty members talk about it – we know that the people we're making the newspaper for are picking it up.”

Other awards for The Bridge included: second place for freehand cartoons (Erin Murphy for “Now how will I afford gas?” in the September 2010 issue); third place for sports feature (Craig Phelps for “Trailblazers take path less traveled” in December 2010) and third place for photo spread (Jesse Bonniwell for Winter 2011 photo spread on the January 2011 back page).

“Although Tray and Nick were instrumental in the new website and changes in the paper, all the students put a lot of work into The Bridge, often putting in more time than they get paid for,” said The Bridge advisor Danette Watt. “I am fortunate to have a very dedicated staff of editors, writers and photographers this year.”