

Berd Cage June 15, 2010

Sometimes you've got to brag

When I started working at The Mountaineer over 14 years ago, I knew absolutely nothing about the work it takes to produce a weekly newspaper. It was and continues to be a learning experience. With ever-changing technology, the newspaper industry has changed considerably since I started.

There are numerous contests the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association sponsors each year and if you read last week's Mountaineer, you saw how your local newspaper rated in the latest contest. I was disappointed that you had to read all the way to page D2 to read about the awards presented to The Mountaineer.

Your local newspaper, The Mountaineer, walked away with the most prestigious awards available. We cleaned house and where did we get placed - page D2? Gail and Glen, our esteemed bosses, seem to have an aversion to blowing their own horns.

When we switched to the new design, there were many-a Monday night that turned into all-nighters in order to have everything ready to go to press. Since our bosses worked those all-nighters along with Donna and Jean in our production department, they know first hand the long hours involved. So you'd think they would be screaming from the mountaintops how all the hard work and long hours paid off, but not our humble bunch. We wouldn't think of putting our accomplishments on the front page, no, not us. We'll be happy with page D2. And printing the award pictures in colour would also be boastful, so we'll be settling for black and white.

All of the positive feedback we received from you, our readers, when we changed our format and design, made us hopeful that we would at least be in the running for some prizes this year, but we were surprised and thrilled to receive four first-place awards.

If you didn't get all the way back to page D2 of last week's Mountaineer, then you should know that The Mountaineer won four first place awards. We won Best Editorial Page, Best Sport Pages, Best Front Page and Best All-around Newspaper out of 61 community newspapers in the competition. Each newspaper in the competition sent in newspapers from the same random weeks, so no one could pick and choose their best edition.

The Mountaineer averages around 20 employees and in my 14 years, I have seen a lot of employees come and go. The working family we have right now works very well together and these awards only reiterate that. I may tease Gail and Glen for not plastering our awards on the front page, but my coworkers and I all know that flamboyant pride just isn't their style, so we'll do the horn-blowing for them. At least my writing about our awards in this column is sure to get us into the A section of the paper. I love my job.

Bernadine Visotto is a writer who works for the best weekly newspaper in Alberta.