Editor Coffey leads Canton-Galva staff to regional honors

By LOIS DAVIDSON
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CANTON -- Ben Coffey said his teacher has taught him how to be a leader while learning life skills.

The editor-in-chief of the yearbook and newspaper at Canton-Galva High School has earned numerous journalism awards over the past three years. He credits his teacher, Jessica Bowman, for teaching him communication, leadership and organization skills.

“It’s not that I absolutely love journalism,” Coffey said. “It’s that I absolutely love Mrs. Bowman’s teaching style. She has taught me how to be a leader and that is something I will forever appreciate.”

Coffey placed first in advertising as the Canton-Galva journalism staff earned four first-place awards at the recent Kansas Scholastic Press Association’s Class 2-IA regional.

The students will compete at state May 5 at the University of Kansas.

Coffey spends five of his seven hours in Bowman’s classes and has dedicated much of his time and effort into the Canton-Galva journalism program. He will attend Wichita State University with plans to major in business administration and the science of nursing.

“My talents in journalism will probably help me in the business world,” Coffey said. “When I started on this staff, the editor was no more than a glorified proofreader, but I have, with Mrs. Bowman’s help, turned the role of an advisor into the role of a leader.”

“It hones our skills in special areas,” Coffey added. “Producing the newspaper is like homework in a regular class, and attending competition is like a regular class test.”

This competition allows students to submit color photographs, advertisements and create pages. The writing events are done the day of the event while the other categories are prepared in advance.

Bowman said the students use In Design programs to create entries on their computers.

During Coffey’s sophomore year, he earned first place in advertising at regionals and state. He earned state runner-up honors last year in advertising. He also placed runner-up in editorial writing at both the regional and state levels.

Coffey believes writing is the best form of communication and he said he will continue to perfect his writing skills at Wichita State.

“It gives a person the opportunity to fix mistakes and review for potential problems,” Coffey said. “Where in a regular conversation, you can’t.”

Being exceptionally proud of his staff, five of his eight staff members qualified for state.

“I feel privileged both to work with such a talented and goal-oriented staff as well as being able to work with the best journalism advisor in the state,” Coffey said.

Others placing from the Canton-Galva newspaper and yearbook staff were: Shannon Williams, newspaper assistant editor, first place, newspaper design; Cassandra Smith, newspaper staffer, first place, editing; honorable mention, infographic; Ashley Vogts, newspaper staffer, first place, sports photography; and Caitlin Nelson, photography editor, third place, newspaper sports writing; honorable mention, advertising, sports photography.

Bowman said the students performed well in events that required preparation as well as on-site events.

“Our places were pretty comparable to what we’ve done in the past, but we had more first places,” Bowman said.

She’s helped with Canton-Galva’s yearbook for the past five years and has helped the students start a student-run school newspaper this year.

“It’s very gratifying to see what the students have accomplished with the newspaper,” Bowman said. “They’ve learned a lot.”

See related photo, page 2.
Canton-Galva High School journalism and yearbook regional qualifiers are (front row) Shannon Williams, junior, newspaper; Caitlin Nelson, junior, yearbook and newspaper; Ashley Vogts, junior, newspaper; and (back row) Ben Coffey, senior, yearbook and newspaper; Cassandra Smith, senior, newspaper; Elizabeth Edgar, junior, yearbook; Marlena Irvine, senior, yearbook; Dustin Vickrey, junior, yearbook.
On Wednesday, April 4, fifty-three area seniors are named Kansas Honor Scholars. Cheyenne County seniors in the top 10 percent at St. Francis or Cheylin are to be recognized for their academic achievements. Students include Josh Johnson and Aubrey Kehlbeck of Cheylin and Russell Rogers, Lauren Ross, Addie Swihart and Alecia Zimbelman of St. Francis.

Stuart Bell, dean of the School of Engineering, will speak to the students, parents and guests at the ceremony. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. at The Gateway in Oberlin.

Honoring the students are the University of Kansas Alumni Association and Kansas University Endowment.

Besides ranking in the top 10 percent of their class, scholars are selected regardless of curricula, majors, occupational plans or high-education goals. During the ceremony, each student will receive an American Heritage Dictionary.

Mike and Brenda Day are the site coordinators for Cheyenne County.