Sept. 30, 2022

To: The judges of the Dave Pyle New Journalist Award for 2022

From: John Wagner, Managing Editor

County News Review, Cambridge, MN

Re: Nikki Hallman

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to submit the name of Nikki Hallman, Community Editor of the County News Review newspaper, as a candidate for the Dave Pyle New Journalist Award.

While I’ve worked for Nikki since she joined the County News Review roughly a year ago, I have worked more closely with her when I became Managing Editor of the paper in May. It is no coincidence that my respect and appreciation for Nikki began to grow at the same time.

My appreciation grew by watching her interact with our community. She has made connections with sources, developed leads that have blossomed into interesting stories, and conducted interviews that produce interesting information she uses in both features and government stories. Nikki also has been wonderful in dealing with customers of our paper as well.

My respect grew from watching her behind the scenes. Nikki is willing to work on improving her craft, asking good questions to learn, and turning feedback into improvement. Her willingness to tackle tasks – both important and mundane – is in short supply these days, a time when many people seem to want to ride the comet to the top of the heap. Instead Nikki seems driven to simply become the best writer, photographer, editor, and layout designer she can be, and she appears willing to put in the hard work to reach those goals.

Nikki has improved in her time at the County News Review, and I am fully confident she will continue to improve her craft in all ways. In short, she is a blessing to this newspaper.

She is a most worthy candidate to receive this award.

Best wishes,

John Wagner, Managing Editor

County News Review