

2009 Michigan Press Association Better Newspaper Editorial Contest Winners



Release

2009 Better Newspaper Contest Awards

Members of Iowa Press Association studied over thousands of entries submitted by Michigan newspapers when they judged the 2009 Michigan Press Association Better Newspaper Contest.

Judges' decisions and comments are listed on the following pages. Complete results are available online at www.michiganpress.org.

The 2009 "Newspaper of the Year" award is presented to the top newspaper in eight circulation classes based on points accumulated (100 for first, 70 for second and 40 for third – points are doubled in the General Excellence contest) in all Editorial contest categories. Winners of those awards are listed below.

Daily Newspapers of the Year			Weekly Newspapers of the Year		
Circ. Class	Total Points	Newspaper	Circ. Points	Total	Newspaper
Class A	2,400	Detroit Free Press	Class A	2,030	News-Herald, Southgate
Class B	1,410	Kalamazoo Gazette	Class B	950	Grosse Pointe News
Class C	1,120	Traverse City Record-Eagle	Class C	760	Leelanau Enterprise
Class D	870	Ludington Daily News	Class D	970	State Line Observer, Morenci

Circulation Class Breakdown: *Daily Class A – 75,001 or more; Daily Class B – 30,001 – 75,000; Daily Class C – 12,001-30,000; Daily Class D – under 12,001; Weekly Class A – 25,001 or more; Weekly Class B – 10,001 – 25,000; Weekly Class C – 4,001 – 10,000; Weekly Class D – under 4,001.*

The MPA Public Service Award recognizes a distinguished example of meritorious public service by a newspaper or newspaper individual that has made a significant contribution to the betterment of their community. The three finalists are: Detroit Free Press for "Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick Scandal" series; Kalamazoo Gazette for the "Dying for Drugs" series and Lansing State Journal for their "Board of Water and Light" series.

The MPA Rookie Writer Award recognizes exemplary efforts of new writers just breaking into newspapers. The three finalists are: Clarie Cummings of the Jackson Citizen Patriot; Gabrielle Russon of the Kalamazoo Gazette and Peter Ryan Loew of the Lansing State Journal.

The winners of the 2009 MPA Public Service Award and the MPA Rookie Writer Award will be announced Saturday, January 30th, 2010 during the Awards Presentation in the Pantlind Ballroom, Amway Grand Hotel.

2009 Michigan Press Association Better Newspaper Editorial Contest Winners



01-General Excellence

Daily Class A

1st Place *Detroit Free Press*

It would be easy to say topics like the Auto Industry Crisis and Mayoral Scandal get handed to you, but it's what you do with these big stories that matters. The Free Press delivers with a solid paper with strong writing. A sense of being local, good use of photos. Excellent graphics and provocative opinion page.

2nd Place *The Flint Journal*

The Journal is well designed with strong reproduction values and solid local reporting. The paper has a strong sense of community throughout its pages.

3rd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Good writing and a strong local report. The regional report "ADA to Zeeland" is impressive. Good local opinion page too.

Daily Class B

1st Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Well-written local stories and plenty of them. Good use of photos & graphics. Good mix of viewpoints on editorial pages.

2nd Place *The Bay City Times*

Solid, interesting stories. Good use of photos.

3rd Place *The Saginaw News*

Some excellent stories, nice use of graphics. Sometimes design is a bit intrusive and takes away from the story-interrupts the reader, but overall good.

Daily Class C

1st Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Head and shoulders winner in this category. Strong design, strong local content, best writers. An easy choice.

2nd Place *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Solid in all categories, but suffers from a blocky design. Great use of photos puts the C-P into second place.

3rd Place *Livingston County Daily Press & Argus*

Consistent coverage. A commitment to local news earns the bronze medal. Better line-editing, passive leads and tense problems - could have put this entry in the top 2.

Daily Class D

1st Place *Ludington Daily News*

Excellent reproduction quality, clean design. Lots of local photos and content. Advertising is a strength. Be careful with heavy leads in news stories. In general, the paper grabs my eye and keeps it hooked.

2nd Place *Hillsdale Daily News*

Your redesign is sharp. Front page is full of features for the reader. There's a lot to read and look at without being cluttered. News is reader-friendly.

3rd Place *The Pioneer, Big Rapids*

Some solid writing, stepping out of the box with design and emphasis on local content shine in this paper.

HM *The Argus-Press, Owosso*

Clean, crisp design, good election coverage - you make news exciting to read. Printing is sharp.

Weekly Class A

1st Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

What sets this paper apart from the others is the design and use of photos. As well as the editorial page. Eye-catching.

2nd Place *The Source, Shelby Twp.*

Good writers, good editorial page, good local content.

3rd Place *Metro Times, Detroit*

No comment given.

HM *The Livingston Community News, Brighton*

The local content and writing were good, but just not as impressed with the over-all product.

Weekly Class B

1st Place *Grosse Pointe News*

There's something worth reading on every page. The design is open and inviting. The stories are often crisp and thorough. Clearly, this paper is a winner, it even has its own editorial cartoonist. Surprised mug shots are so large. Sometimes photographs get space they don't deserve. Edit and you'll have room for more content. That said, you cover your community like a blanket - something more newspapers need to do. Grosse Pointe is lucky to have you writing its story.

2nd Place *Press & Guide Newspapers, Dearborn*

Lively stories. Fascinating police coverage. Interesting columnists. They all add up to a fun paper, one that reflects the life of the community. If there's work to be done, it's in layout and design. Clearly, you could move to the head of the pack just by repackaging your content. Sometimes headlines are too big. Frequently, standing heads look dated. Also watch your sectionalization. I wouldn't put a weight loss story under arts and entertainment. It has a home. That's not it. Pay attention to the size of pictures that don't tell us anything. Then, enlarge the ones that do. I was intrigued with the movie that was being shot in town. That could produce a ton of stories. And you've got the staff to do it. Good work.

3rd Place *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

You pack a lot in a little package. Your broadsheet brothers and sisters could learn plenty from your playbook. In turn, you could take something from their writing sense. Don't overload your fronts with so much hard news. Give us a feature, we crave features. Also, think lively. The stuff is there, we just shouldn't have to wait for it. While your design is among the best, it is inconsistent. Do you put boxes on photos, for example? I enjoyed reading about your high school students and I loved some of your pictures. I know you can't have color on every page, but some of those sports photos deserve it. Watch your headlines (remember the rules) and give inside pages the same attention you lavish on your covers. With just three issues, I've become a hardcore "Hot Line" fan. That's great. Just don't make me hunt for it.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Ypsilanti Courier*

Outstanding work. Great paper in every way. Keep up the good work.

2nd Place *Leelanau Enterprise*

Great job. I like the size and amount of content in every issue.

3rd Place *Brooklyn Exponent*

Great product, keep working on it and I'm sure you can take this category next year. Very balanced.

HM *The Allegan County News*

Nice job. I love the design.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *The State Line Observer, Morenci*

Beautiful newspaper-hands down the winner! Photo layouts like "Stained Glass" are superb. Sports pages, easiest to read. Perhaps there was significance to the demolition pic in April 23 cover photo, but I'd have chosen the "Union of Genes" pic on page 11-Love it! Hope your readers appreciate your staff's efforts.

2nd Place *The Commercial Record, Saugatuck*

Clean, attractive design. Excellent press reproduction. Advertising great. Good placements of ads and use of color. News gets a little "busy"; could use more screens, boxes or varying fonts.

3rd Place *Saline Reporter*

Excellent (probably best in class) use of a dominant photo on front and inside pages. Library feature layout excellent. Only 1 point separated 1st, 2nd, 3rd and honorable mention placings.

HM *Milan News-Leader*

Good use of varying light and dark typefaces. Sept. 25 issue was your best front page. Could be a little more continuity in ad design.

02-Spot News Story**Daily Class A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

Staff *U.S. Shreds Auto Plans*
The Free Press staff sprung into action on a Sunday to produce a complete report about a critical event that had major local, state, national and international impact. Sidebars, columns were well done on short notice.

2nd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Shellenbarger, Agar, Roelfs, Murray *Aero-Med Crash*

The crash of an Aero Med helicopter into Spectrum Health Butterworth Hospital produced several story angles and press reporters hit them all. The main story had a gripping second-day lead. Good response to a big story that broke with no obvious notice.

3rd Place *Detroit Free Press*

Staff *I Lied*

The Free Press had plenty of material, by virtue of its stellar enterprise work ahead of time and put it all into perspective when the mayor of one of the nation's largest cities resigned. The 20-page special section provided solid information and context.

Daily Class B**1st Place** *The Saginaw News*

Corey Mitchell *Drive-By Kills*

6/2/2008

Strong use of witness. Tragedy brought to a personal level.

2nd Place *The Saginaw News*

Bohn, Wyche *Attacking Dogs*

3/6/2009

Good use of witness comments.

3rd Place *The Bay City Times*

Tom Gilchrist *Narrow Escape*

4/3/2008

Getting the victims' accounts - counts.

Daily Class C**1st Place** *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Bukowski, VanHulle *Pilot Killed In Crash*

Strong storytelling lead, fact-packed and tight writing. Lots of scene and official sources. Good photos and map brought readers to the scene. All under harsh conditions.

2nd Place *Livingston County Daily Press & Argus*

Lisa Roose-Church *Police Investigate*

Slaying

Outstanding, chilling lead and story-telling and perspective. Remarkable depth of info from official sources and woman who found the backpack.

3rd Place *Times Herald, Port Huron*

Gross, Ampezzan, Mullins *Police Shot In Capac*

Huge story covered well from many angles. A great team effort, with good photography, map and condition status of Hawks.

HM *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Flory, Chapin *Rocket Co-Owner Dead*

Strong, fact-packed reporting and great background on subject and perspective on him and hip-hop community.

Daily Class D**1st Place** *The Argus-Press, Owosso*

Adams, Bruttell, Basso, Peterson *Fire Destroys Shop*

10/25/2008

Good use of quotes. Nice to bring history into the mix. Nice package.

2nd Place *Grand Haven Tribune*

Vargo, Daining *Police Seek Clues*

7/3/2008

Good read. It just lacked quotes in the main feature about the incident.

3rd Place *Ludington Daily News*

Staff *Swamped*

6/13/2008

Lots of stories make for a nice package.

HM *The Daily News (Iron Mountain)*

Lisa Hoffman *Three Killed*

8/1/2008

No comment given.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Rene Cizio *Fire Destroys Dix Auto*

6/13/2008

Truly spot news, good quotes, dramatic pics. The whole package.

2nd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Jackie Harrison-Martin *In Broad Daylight*

7/11/2008

This story has good info, complete and informative.

3rd Place *The Ile Camera, Grosse Ile*

Lena Khzouz *Squirrel Insurance*

4/4/2008

Good, brief story about an injustice, like the lead too.

HM *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Jason Alley *Handicapped Woman Dies*

9/10/2008

Good story, but it seemed to have a little more preparation than the other three.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *Grosse Pointe News*

Brad Lindberg *Car Found In Lake*

10/9/2008

Story has an intriguing mystery element. Quotes from several different people involved strengthens the story.

2nd Place *The Voice Newspapers, New Baltimore*

Jeri Packer *Bomb Threat Gridlocks Local Ferry*

8/13/2008

The writer does a good job telling about the many ramifications a bomb threat can have while making good use of sources available.

3rd Place *The Citizen, Ortonville*

David Fleet *You Have To Be Calm*

5/17/2008

Great subject matter and hook into the story.

HM *Tri-County Citizen, Chesaning*

Marcello, Darling *STC Students Walk Away*

10/12/2008

No comment given.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Leelanau Enterprise*

Eric Carlson *Sailor Relieved*

Excellent article. Good rhythm and great details.

2nd Place *Tri-City Times, Imlay City*

Catherine Minolli *Forum Post Costs Jobs*

I like your work. Topic was out of the ordinary, but relevant not only in these times, but the issue of freedom of speech.

3rd Place *Tri-City Times, Imlay City*

Tom Wearing *Baiting Ban*

Nice job. Great way to capture action's effects on the local economy.

HM *Milford Times*

Philip Allmen *ATF Raids Highland Gun Barn*

Interesting stuff. Good presentation.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *Clarkston News*

Laura Colvin *Pineda Faces Long Prison Sentence*

While I appreciated many of the news articles in this category, most were really not "spot" news. The lead hooked me in this story. Well-written and concise considering it wasn't your typical interview, but taken from court testimony.

2nd Place *Saline Reporter*

Sue Collins *Family Finds Missing Teen*

This was certainly breaking news in this city and Collins did a great job relating how this teen came to be missing and was then found.

3rd Place *The Lake Orion Review*

John Counts *Arson Damages*
 This story is a winner for its clear writing style and I feel the writer went the extra step to learn Kelly was under surveillance already. Excellent work to tie previous fire incident to seriousness of the matter.

HM *The Commercial Record, Saugatuck*

Scott Sullivan *State Seizes*
 No question the topics important, but perhaps citizen John Breen's initial complaints back in June was the "breaking news."

03-News Enterprise Reporting**Daily Class A****1st Place *Detroit Free Press***

Schaefer, Elrick, Bell, Tanner *A Mayor's Friends*
 Strong examples of fearless reporting about those in power. The results of this reporting became evident as time passed. Real watchdog work.

2nd Place *Detroit Free Press*

Jeff Seidel *Hostages To Justice*
 Gripping narrative gives us a real-life courtroom drama. This is an amazing tale and was a close contender for 1st place. The writing was superb.

3rd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Beth Loechler *Teacher Tenure*
 Good look at how the education system deals with teachers with whom the public puts its trust. While focused regionally, the story could have state impact.

HM *The Flint Journal*

Kristin Longley *Super Salaries*
 Good analysis worth mentioning because the writer didn't just take the industry's explanation for granted.

Daily Class B**1st Place *The Bay City Times***

Gilchrist, Stanton, English, Kart *Man Froze Inside Home*
 Solid reporting, great follow through. It provided "official" sources, yet personalized one Morris' unnecessary death.

2nd Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Parikh, Nixon *Mortgage Investigation*
 Reporters showed great initiative, research abilities and use of people's "voices" in their stories.

3rd Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Parker, Rietsma *Big Farms, Big Debate*
 Took what can be a complete issue and broke it into understandable chunks. At times, organization could have been stronger. It felt a bit jumpy once in a while.

HM *The Muskegon Chronicle*

Medendorp, Hausman, Harrison-Wolffis *Seth Privacky: 10 Years Later*
 This made me cry. Sources' emotions are still raw a decade later. Reporters did a great job of connecting with them and with the reader.

Daily Class C**1st Place *Times Herald, Port Huron***

Mike Connell *Above & Beyond*
 6/22/2008

A good example of solid public service journalism. We too often forget to revisit public projects to determine if promises were kept, and especially, if projections were on target.

2nd Place *Midland Daily News*

Staff *The Ripple Effect*
 12/21/2008

An ambitious and admirable attempt to assess the effect of something that hadn't yet happened. The inherent challenge is to elevate the coverage past pure speculation.

3rd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Brian McGillivray *Meijer Saga*
 4/27/2008

Nice job of turning spot news into a richly detailed piece based on thorough prior coverage. Tough to do in this era of his staffs and reduced resources.

HM *The Mining Journal (Marquette)*

Renee Prusi *Candid Cancer*
 1/27/2009
 Not a big fan of first person diary approaches, but there's no denying that readers will embrace such treatment with the right topic. This was the right topic.

Daily Class D**1st Place *Ludington Daily News***

Diane Nemitz
 Very informative and timely. Lots of good information for everyone. Stories could have used some quotes.

2nd Place *The Pioneer, Big Rapids*

Martin Slagter
 Well written. Thought provoking information.

3rd Place *Daily Mining Gazette, Houghton*

Dan Schneider
 Interesting read.

HM *News Advocate, Manistee*

David Barber
 Nice package.

Weekly Class A**1st Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate***

Paul Evans-Neuman *The Boy Who's Allergic*
 This story was a great glimpse into this boy's world. Heartfelt content. Good job.

2nd Place *Metro Times, Detroit*

Sandra Svoboda *In The Blink Of An Eye*
 This piece looks at a concern not only in Detroit, but across the country. Poignant and well written.

3rd Place ***The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate***

Jason Alley *911 Call*
 This story is tragic. I think it was also a story that needed to be told because all police officers aren't there to protect and save. Well written.

HM ***The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate***

Jackie Harrison-Martin *Where Is Lizzie?*
 6/8/2008

You made me feel for this girl. I loved the quotes, they walk the reader through this woman's journey.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** ***The Voice Newspapers, New Baltimore***

Jeri Packer *Four Stricken With Wilm's Tumor*
 What began as a promotion for a routine fund-raiser became a health department investigation thanks to the efforts of The Voice and Jeri Parker. It is an example of how a newspaper can ultimately serve and protect its community.

2nd Place ***Northern Express Weekly, Traverse City***

Anne Stanton *Unholy Childhood*
 The hearts of readers had to break while learning of the abuse that transpired at a private school. Extensive work shed light on a story that broke in Grand Rapids.

3rd Place ***Tri-County Citizen, Chesaning***

Darling, Marcello, Salisbury *Parshallburg Bridge Series*
 A good example of how a staff kept on top of a transportation safety issue to keep readers informed.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** ***Belleville-Area Independent***

Rosemary Oztman *VBT Police Officers*
 1/15/2009

Great piece in the lost tradition of American journalism; especially hard to do in a small town. Great job! Resisting the pressure from the powerful and exposing the problem!

2nd Place ***Leelanau Enterprise***

Alan Campbell *Misspelled, Not Forgotten*
 5/22/2009

It is truly rare for a small newspaper to be able to set the historical record straight. Great job in researching and reporting it!

3rd Place ***Milford Times***

Aileen Wingblad *Milford Seniors Losing*
 6/26/2008
 Great job on spotlighting the fate of the vulnerable and the old. It's not easy to cover an important story like this.

HM ***Gratiot County Herald***

Phyllis McCrossin *Gratiot County Veterans*
 Great job on documenting these experiences. Love the quotes, add so much color and authenticity.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** ***Milan News-Leader***

Crystal Hayduk *Where Are All Your Taxes Going?*

Many excellent entries in this category making for tough decisions. We all care about taxes and Hayduk makes taxes understandable. The lone graphic is good; could have used 1 or 2 more graphics.

2nd Place ***The Commercial Record, Saugatuck***

Scott Sullivan *Pension/McClenden Land*

The sheer volume of text reveals how much work was put into this series of articles, but an explanatory letter might have helped earn 1st place. Stories Well-written and relied on numerous sources.

3rd Place ***The State Line Observer, Morenci***

David Green *Palm Plastics*
 It seems Morenci may have kept Palm with its positive emphasis on the business' impact on the local economy. Again, numerous sources were cited and readers were told what the city would lose if it lost Palm.

HM ***The Oxford Leader***

C.J. Carnacchio *Cityhood For Oxford?*
 Losing the first-person storytelling style might have placed this higher. Importance to community put this just above the high gas prices news article.

04-Design**Daily Class A****1st Place** ***Detroit Free Press***

This paper's vibrant, colorful, multi-layered design is a winner. Its visual approach does justice to the huge news stories it is covering.

2nd Place ***The Grand Rapids Press***

Nice pages. A lot going on. The "Our Call To Action" section looks really nice.

3rd Place ***The Flint Journal***

Some good stuff in places. Really liked the July 27 1A promos ad and a couple of the 1A display packages. Solid throughout.

Daily Class B**1st Place** ***Lansing State Journal***

Crisp, lively design. Creative, sophisticated use of art and typography.

2nd Place ***Kalamazoo Gazette***

Useful graphics, bold use of art and typography. Top of page 1 is a little too busy; less would be more.

3rd Place ***The Muskegon Chronicle***

took some chances with the concert display, but it works. A little too busy throughout, too many small photos.

Daily Class C**1st Place** *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Consistently clean, sophisticated, attractive design. Balanced use of art, white space and typography. Design appropriate to news value. Obama cover especially good.

2nd Place *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Bright and lively, creative graphics. A little busy above the flag, and beware of yellow screens! Overall, very inviting throughout.

3rd Place *Battle Creek Enquirer*

Subtle but effective box treatment for features. Good page 1 package at bottom, inside sections a little inconsistent. Beware of overplaying news value. (Dow headline).

Daily Class D**1st Place** *The Pioneer, Big Rapids*

Eye-popping, art dominated section fronts followed by clean, easy-to-follow design on the inside made this entry stand out in a strong field.

2nd Place *Ludington Daily News*

Great use of color beyond 1A. Lots on entry points on section fronts draw readers inside. Design remained clean and consistent throughout.

3rd Place *Sturgis Journal*

Another solid entry with numerous entry points on section fronts.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *Livingston Community News*

Clean design puts emphasis on the photos and headlines. You're not afraid of white space and that works to your advantage. There could be a few more pics inside to break up text, but overall good.

2nd Place *Metro Times, Detroit*

Nice, flowing, clean layout. I like you font choices and the placement of art and other design elements.

3rd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Nice looking paper. Some pages seemed a little over-stuffed, but not always. Good design for good photos. Some of your fonts seem a little dated and too many headlines are bold - didn't always know which story was the main one on the page.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *Grosse Pointe News*

Overall the stand-out design. Good use of photos and headline fonts. White space, features, content, visually pleasing.

2nd Place *Press & Guide Newspapers, Dearborn*

Photo usage is good. Headline fonts need to be dominant. Overall, design is good, but color boxes were distracting.

3rd Place *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

Good use of color and cutouts. Needs a dominant headline and photo. Good design, but lacks umph.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Ypsilanti Courier*

Excellent use of color, photos, graphics and departments on the front pages. "What Are People Saying?" is great addition to story. Pie-Eating photo on community section is strong. Good sports coverage and photos. Inside pages are strong but could benefit from some of the same attention to graphic design. Nice looking product!

2nd Place *Tri-City Times, Imlay City*

The horizontal rails at top/bottom of front page are creative and well planned. Good cover photography and color - could benefit from some use of creative graphics too. Sections are well organized and maintain consistent look and feel. Sports section photography is solid and well reported.

3rd Place *Gaylord Herald Times*

Redesign works here. Shows better coordination of photos and graphic elements. It was also an improvement to move away from the floating nameplate. Excellent use of type and story elements. Sections are well designed and work together as a unit. Paper thinks outside the box.

HM *Milford Times*

Another redesign. Excellent sports photography and writing. News departments inside have a fresher look. While the new design is more open, I think the loss of the rail (it was well done) and enlargement of the ad "hole" at the bottom of the page are a distraction. Nice rework, however.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *The Chelsea Standard*

Dominant centerpiece on the front "seeing double" feature really stood out. Really like the features packages on the community/living sections. Be careful not to take away from designs with heavy boxes.

2nd Place *Milan News-Leader*

Using non-traditional fonts helps the centerpiece stand out. Good use of photos - both with placement and size. Color and occasional use of sidebars and text boxes help draw the reader in.

3rd Place *The State Line Observer, Morenci*

Clean, simple and well organized. Like the cut outs teasers. Like the photo and feature packages inside.

HM *Saline Reporter*

Good use of photos, colors and headlines.

05-Feature Story**Daily Class A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

Rochelle Riley *Anatomy of a Death Trap*
Great story-loved the pace, drama, context.

2nd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Terry Finch Hamilton *Addiction Counselor*
Really great story. I can see her and hear her.

3rd Place ***Detroit Free Press***Elrick, Schaefer, Swickard *The View From Inside the Scandal*

Great detail behind scenes of a great story - reads a little like a timeline in places.

HM ***Detroit Free Press***Jeff Seidel *Great Expectations*
Awesome subject. Good story.**Daily Class B****1st Place** ***Lansing State Journal***Louise Knott Ahern *The Two Sides of T.J.*
2/15/2009

Tremendous story. Strong story-twilling lead. Excellent color. Crisp writing. Writer certainly benefitted by the compelling nature of the story, but the writing is exemplary. What's more, the page, in total, is excellently executed.

2nd Place ***Kalamazoo Gazette***Pamela Reed *Surviving The Polio Epidemic*
3/19/2009

A wonderfully written first-person account of an epidemic that once paralyzed the nation with fear. This entry stands out not only for its very personal approach to a story of past and current concern, but for its excellent story-telling and feeling.

3rd Place ***Lansing State Journal***Ryan Loew *Juan's Fight*
4/13/2008

Arguably the strongest lead in this category. We are instantly drawn into the "fight." Crisp writing. Great movement. Reads quickly. Not crazy about the subheads, and the ending is a little soft - we learn along the way it's not just Juan's fight.

HM ***Kalamazoo Gazette***Jeff Barr *Anorexia*
5/4/2008

This story is perhaps the best researched entry in the competition. Great sources, excellent in formation. The writing is very good. It does not rise to the exploratory story-twilling of another entry concerning Anorexia, 'The Two Sides of T.J.', but it is very well done.

Daily Class C**1st Place** ***Traverse City Record Eagle***Venessa McCray *Enduring Mystery*
6/22/2008

Reads like a good mystery story. Lots of legwork and research woven together into a compelling, readable yarn.

2nd Place ***Livingston County Daily Press & Argus***Christopher Nagy *Off The Beaten Path*
2/22/2009

Lead-in is irresistible, you just have to find out who these people are. Story doesn't disappoint.

3rd Place ***The Daily Telegram, Adrian***Brittany Husted *Celebrating 95 Years*
6/29/2008

Turned the "go write a story about this 95-year-old" assignment into a quirky, personal human story. (Flagged a little toward the end.)

HM ***Jackson Citizen Patriot***Danielle Quisenberry *Weight-Loss Journey*
9/7/2008

You really captured this young woman's personality. I could hear her voice through the quotes.

Daily Class D**1st Place** ***Petoskey News-Review***Ryan Bentley *Robison Murders*
7/3/2008

Compelling, intense writing separates this feature from the others. I want to read more from this reporter.

2nd Place ***Ludington Daily News***Patti Klevorn *Milestone Met*
3/28/2009

What a nice article about one man's passion. Makes me want to go out and run around the block.

3rd Place ***The Pioneer, Big Rapids***Kevin Hobart *One Man Band*
1/24/2009

Very entertaining feature about this man's passion for making others happy. Well written!

Weekly Class A**1st Place** ***The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate***Donna Abramczyk *Dismantling 83 Years of History*
1/4/2009

Good lead, interest topic. Well written.

2nd Place ***Metro Times, Detroit***Detroitblogger John *Shot Down*
This story made me relate to Jabari Akil. I love his perseverance.**3rd Place** ***The Source, Shelby Twp.***Chris Williams *When Ken Met Martie*
3/22/2009

This is a most interesting story, good quotes and storytelling.

HM ***The Grand Blanc View***Emily Caswell *Man Reflects On 40 Years*
1/29/2009

I love the way this story captures Larry Tilley's straight forward attitude. Fun topic too!

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *The Burton News*Elizabeth Lowe *Standing Out*

7/27/2008

Strong story dealing with the issue of stuttering. Engaging story with a good use of research studies interspersed with personal examples.

2nd Place *The Citizen, Ortonville*Susan Bromley *I Would Think, 'Tomorrow'*

12/6/2008

Subjects personal stories draw the reader in and cause readers to want more. Great use of quotes.

3rd Place *The Grand Blanc News*Scott Michael Atkinson *Reason To Celebrate*

3/8/2009

A strong narrative story about an immigrant striving for the "American Dream." Examples from his life help readers relate to the difficulties immigrants face.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Milford Times*Aileen Wingblad *Living In Lockup*

4/3/2008

Great initiative, access and writing. It all came together in a compelling story.

2nd Place *Leelanau Enterprise*Alan Campbell *Pee Wee All About Fun*

No comment given.

3rd Place *Tecumseh Herald*Deb Wuethrich *The Vietnam Experience*

11/13/2008

Two stories of war with one message, important cultural and historical document. The writer did a good job moving the narrative.

HM *Tuscola County Advertiser, Caro*Stacey Tucker *Man's Best Friend*

7/5/2008

Good job on focusing on blindness and the role of leader dogs.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *The State Line Observer, Morenci*David Green *Tracking Down The Google Car*

12/17/2008

This was such a fun feature story to read. I loved how you brought the reader along in your search. This story was unique among the 37 entries and the one I kept coming back to as the front runner.

2nd Place *The State Line Observer, Morenci*David Green *Treasurers Found Among Collections*

11/12/2008

Good work putting some excitement into what could have been a ho-hum library program story. The lead hooked me and took me through a lively story. It's a great piece of storytelling.

3rd Place *Milan News-Leader*Brian Cox *Community Says Goodbye*

5/29/2008

Wonderful story. Often times stories like these get cluttered with too many dates and facts and not enough about who the person really was. Your story made me wish I had gotten the chance to know this great guy!

HM *The Oxford Leader*C.J. Carnacchio *A Royal Visitor*

9/10/2008

It's the type of story that puts a smile on the reader's face. I enjoyed the tone of the story - calling her Lady Kelly and saying things like 'a shiny magic disc!' Nice work.

06-Editorial Writing**Daily Class A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

Ron Dzwonkowski

Creative, inventive, downright witty editorials that go out of their way to pull readers into significant issues.

2nd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Monica Scott

Functional, clean editorials on solid topics.

3rd Place *The Flint Journal*

Jackie Brown

2/26/2009

A good topic that's done well. Although a few clichés, a clear, effective attempt to engage readers.

Daily Class B**1st Place** *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Jim Borden

Of all the entries, these are the most creative and attention-grabbing while still being informative.

2nd Place *The Bay City Times*

Clark Hughes

A strong personality seeps through these editorials, one with some rhetorical flair, even when aimed at some easy target.

3rd Place *The Muskegon Chronicle*

Paula Holmes-Greeley

Solid, informative work-a-day editorials.

Daily Class C**1st Place** *Livingston County Daily Press & Argus*

Buddy Moorehouse

Clear, direct writing; strong local voice; unequivocal calls to action; lively and fun to read.

2nd Place *Times Herald, Port Huron*

Tom Walker

Nuanced, personal, intensely local. A real window into community values.

3rd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Mike Tyree

Well-researched, persuasive, focused. (Solutions would be strong than advice.)

Daily Class D**1st Place** *Hillsdale Daily News*Pruitt, Walters, Marcetti *Viewpoints*

Excellent, reasoned opinions make this newspaper stand out. Great analogy used in the 011 surcharge editorial.

2nd Place *Ludington Daily News*Begnoche, Klevorn, Evans *Our View*

Quality, sound editorials makes this newspaper a winner. You hit the nail on the head over the "un-library-like decision."

3rd Place *News Advocate, Manistee*David Barber *Opinion*

Your take on the local school board president's actions is right on. This guy has no business leading a school board. Great job!

HM *The Pioneer, Big Rapids*

Clark, Wahowiak

Important views expressed by your editorial writers – great editorial on Marvin's "silence" and a very clever not toward the importance of reading.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Karl Ziomek

Thoughtful, well-written editorials. You obviously understand your role in the community and the influence you have. Keep up the great work.

2nd Place *Lapeer Area View*

Mike Arnholt

These seem a bit more like columns than editorials, but I like your writing style. You don't shy away from sharing your opinions.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *The Davison Index*Mike Arnholt *No Free Lunch*

1/15/2009

Editorial is timely and informative. Having a local source is great. Well-written.

2nd Place *The Davison Index*

Gary Gould

Many Disappointed

12/11/2008

No comment given.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Belleville-Area Independent*

Rosemary Oztzman

Excellent work. Brief, effective and challenging; something we should all strive for.

2nd Place *Gaylord Herald Times*

Peter Comings

Good variety of topics. Pithy and effective.

3rd Place *Gladwin Co. Record & Beaverton Clarion*

Stephanie Buffman

I liked your positive messages. They were well-crafted and served as reminders that good editorials can highlight as well as spotlight.

HM *Tri-City Times, Imlay City*

Catherine Minolli

The picture you painted in "Unsung Hero" was clear and touching. Your other editorials were outstanding, but the "Hero" style was best. Good job.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *Clarkston News*

Staff

Kudos for not being afraid to call out the school district administration and township board's actions. These were well thought-out arguments.

2nd Place *The Oxford Leader*

C.J. Carnacchio

These editorials left no doubt as to your opinion and that is how a well-written piece should be. The writing style made it seem as if you were talking with a friend and not giving a lecture.

3rd Place *The Clare Sentinel*

Alan Blanchard

The editorial on withhold judgment was thought-provoking and nicely stated. All were focused on hot topics in the area that needed more discussion than a news story could give.

HM *The State Line Observer, Morenci*

David Green

Nice job explaining the issues and supporting your opinions.

07-Editorial Pages**Daily Class A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

Even without the page one editorial, these pages are well designed to interact with readers with the page one editorial. This entry is a shoe-in.

2nd Place *The Flint Journal*

Strong mix of local focus and analysis.

3rd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Lots of space, good visuals. Could have a stronger local personality and voice.

Daily Class B**1st Place *The Muskegon Chronicle***

Good quality pages with a strong local presence. Design and editorial works well to draw in readers and request participation.

2nd Place *Lansing State Journal*

Good quality pages with a strong local presence. Paper striving to get community conversation.

Daily Class C**1st Place *Livingston County Daily Press & Argus***

Strong stands on local issues. Attractive pages, excellent local columnist, a very good total package.

2nd Place *Midland Daily News*

the local columnists and forum feature stand out.

3rd Place *Times Herald, Port Huron*

Talkback is a fun read. A friend's presentation with Our View, Your View and Another View.

Daily Class D**1st Place *Ludington Daily News***

Clean, crisp layout. Good job making sure each entry had a editorial from the paper.

2nd Place *Hillsdale Daily News*

Loved the "5 things we would like to see happen next week! Innovative and easy way for reader to understand the paper's views.

3rd Place *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant*

No comment given.

Weekly Class A**1st Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate***

Great pages! Not only do you have an editorial and a columnist, you incorporate letters to the editor, a cartoon and a "man-on-the-street" question that gets citizen's opinions on the page. Very impressive!

2nd Place *Lapeer Area View*

Pages look nice and it's nice that there's a column to go along with letters to the editor. An editorial and a cartoon would have made this stronger.

3rd Place *The Grand Blanc View*

Just printing letters to the editor leaves me wanting more. What about a column or an editorial or a cartoon? These would enhance your pages.

Weekly Class B**1st Place *Grosse Pointe News***

Perfect formula for editorial pages. Editorial, letters, cartoon, guest column, columnists and man-on-the-street. Great topics, great layout. Overall the best.

2nd Place *The Voice Newspapers, New Baltimore*

The elements are all there, but needs work in distributing it.

3rd Place *The Davison Index*

Good letters space and short column, but I felt like there should be more content.

Weekly Class C**1st Place *Leelanau Enterprise***

Excellent analysis of community issues. Editorial on Suttons Bay Public Schools showed readers various impacts of factors on the district's budget. Airline crisis piece was localized well. "Candidates Charisma" was very well done and covered many interest

2nd Place *Houghton Lake Resorter*

"The Comments" editorial was excellent - good way of introducing issues into the editorial and highlighting individual views on funding schools. "Make It Plain" was fun to read. "Free Speech Denied" was very well done and balanced.

3rd Place *Gratiot County Herald*

Very conversational and readable Opinion Section. Not too hard hitting on issues, though. I liked the wide variety of "things" covered by both Jim Sherman and Phyllis McCrossin. It would have been nice to have more "meat on issues."

HM***Tri-City Times, Imlay City***

Editorials are well-written, but too short. For example, the DDA article offered much more potential. "Disconnect With Government" was another well-done editorial, but it could have benefitted from more localization. Strong letters section.

Weekly Class D**1st Place *The State Line Observer, Morenci***

Wow! Every newspaper with entries in this category was worthy of an award. The State Line Observer's modular, attractive and consistent design helped put it at the top. Great balance. Excellent staff columnists.

2nd Place *Clarkston News*

As a tabloid it's great. You devote two pages to opinions. Staff columnists do a great job. Emphasis on "letters" column results in good response from community.

3rd Place *The Clare Sentinel*

Great balance. The number of letters to the editor reveals how well read your opinion page must be. Overall design could use a little updating.

08-Local Columnist

Daily Class A**1st Place *Detroit Free Press***

Rochelle Riley

The Detroit city council gives her a lot to work with, but Riley delivers drama, passionate and personality every time.

2nd Place *Detroit Free Press*

Brian Dickerson

Dickerson can tell a story with wit and power. These columns provide a compelling view of the slice-of-city life.

3rd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Charles Honey

Honey addresses the religious life of his city with an attention to detail and a person's inquisitiveness. The emotion comes through.

Daily Class B**1st Place *Kalamazoo Gazette***

Linda Mah

While conversational, these columns offered depth. I enjoyed the perspective offered in the election column, but I most enjoyed the other 2 selections. Each made me tear up, especially the one about the father's death.

2nd Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Julie Mack

Wonderful personal writing style. I felt as if I were being educated and entertained. Particular kudos on the Halloween column. Quite poignant!

3rd Place *Lansing State Journal*

John Schneider

I loved the conversational style - like sitting down with you for a chat. Especially enjoyed the "Folks In Need" piece. So true! Your columns made me want to be a regular follower.

HM *Lansing State Journal*

Derek Melot

Obviously, a lot of work went into these pieces. I appreciated the additional perspective offered on an incredibly intricate topic. Good work!

Daily Class C**1st Place *Livingston County Daily Press & Argus***

Buddy Moorehouse

Moorehouse consistently pulls off satire - which is not easy. What's more, he generously uses local references which no doubt have the effect of pulling readers in, making them feel as if they're in on the joke.

2nd Place *Livingston County Daily Press & Argus*

Rich Perlberg

Column was tough as nails and the use of personal insult, lampooning appropriate considering the Senator's hypocrisy. Could have been 1st place, but lost points by reaching for low hanging fruit with attack on Hillary Clinton sniper story.

3rd Place *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Brad Flory

Race track story and piece on term "retarded" were well-done.

HM *Times Herald, Port Huron*

Mike Connell

'Man Lives Miracle' is a great feature piece, which should have been packaged as such. It read like a wonderfully reported feature. Great writing. Wrong category.

Daily Class D**1st Place *News Advocate, Manistee***

Pauline Jaquish

She's not afraid to write about herself, her size; definitely woman's point of view, but should be humorous to all. Makes ordinary life funny.

2nd Place *Ludington Daily News*

Steve Begnoche

A gardener's eye - lovely; a non-sappy trip down a country lane. Changes gears in "Dear President" - good, simple advice.

3rd Place *Petoskey News-Review*

Kendall Stanley

Factual column, what he thinks about hot political issues. Photos of war - birth control. And his opinion on what should be done. Living will good info for everyone.

HM *The Daily Globe, Ironwood*

Joe Karius

Clever look at major issue. City birds pretty funny problem for a city to have. Comparing gardening to Shakespeare a bit of a reach.

Weekly Class A**1st Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate***

Jackie Harrison-Martin

Making Good Choices

This columnist is frank and honest. She's willing to share intensely personal stories and does it in a way that flows easily and grabs the reader's attention.

2nd Place *Metro Times, Detroit*

Larry Gabriel

Stir It Up

Great, strong columns. A close second. I particularly like that he addresses local issues like crime and city government and gives his thoughtful opinions.

3rd Place *Livingston Community News*

Rick Fitzgerald

Graduation Speeches

He clearly cares about the community and has a writing style that conveys those feelings. The final column broke my heart. Great job!

HM *Metro Times, Detroit*

Jack Lessenberry

Politics and Prejudices

This columnist has a different writing style than most, but one I really enjoyed. Very competitive category - wish I could award more first places. The Martin Luther King, Jr. column nearly brought tears to my eyes.

Weekly Class B**1st Place *Grosse Pointe News***

Bob St. John

I Say

A lengthy column that kept me reading. Great topics - both local and personal. Great writing.

2nd Place *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

John McKay

Technically Speaking

Technology isn't easy to write about, but you make it interesting. Well-written columns.

3rd Place *The Grand Blanc News*

Scott Michael Atkinson
Fun to read, Well-written columns.

HM *Northern Express Weekly, Traverse City*

Robert Downes *Random Thoughts*
Well written, relevant topics.

Weekly Class C**1st Place *Leelanau Enterprise***

Alan Campbell
Thoughtful, community-centered style and subject, unassuming narrative; insightful and relevant.

2nd Place *Tecumseh Herald*

Cristina Trapani-Scott
Personal style, motivational scope and treatment of subject matter.

3rd Place *Iron County Reporter (Iron River)*

Allyce Westphal
Truly an involved voice; I am convinced it adds an important perspective to the paper's coverage; love the dialogue.

HM *Houghton Lake Resorter*

Glenn Schicker
Great historical perspective, a look at national issues and psyche from a thoughtful, local writer great job!

Weekly Class D**1st Place *Clarkston News***

Laura Colvin *Out Loud*
Your columns are bold and though-invoking. You make good arguments, have interesting topics and I'm guessing create reaction in readers.

2nd Place *The Advance, Blissfield*

Tran Longmoore *Trans Missions*
Your columns do a good job of taking topical news and asking the questions readers really want answers to. They have a goal mix of background info, personal feelings and a suggestion on how to solve the problem

3rd Place *The Advance, Blissfield*

Marcia Loader *Dialogue*
Reading these columns is like chatting with a friend. Your writing style is personable, yet direct and informing.

HM *Milan News-Leader*

Ryan Michaels *Movie Reviews*
Your movie reviews are well-written, thoughtful and impressive for your age. You have a future of writing ahead of you - keep up the good work!

09-News Picture**Daily Class A****1st Place *Detroit Free Press***

Andre Jackson *Last Call*
This is an unusual image from an event that's tough to cover. The body language is nice.

2nd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Paul Newby II *Shocking Sight*
The people are dwarfed by this dramatic scene. A vantage point further on the right may have added more, but a great image.

3rd Place *Detroit Free Press*

William Archie *Hug*
The face to face bear hug is nice but this crop is not! There were other nice court images. This one was unique because the victim and accused came together.

HM *Detroit Free Press*

Rashaun Rucker *Witness To History*
A peaceful expression and nice light (shame on your toning dept!) make this a winner.

Daily Class B**1st Place *Kalamazoo Gazette***

Mark Bugnaski *Meth Under Ground*
This photo has great impact and although some of that is from the nature of the story.

2nd Place *The Muskegon Chronicle*

Cory Morse *House Fire*
All the elements are needed to tell the story and composition is well done.

3rd Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Jonathon Gruenke *Michigan Backs Obama*
A nice environment paired with the emotional face are great, but the photographer could get in closer while still keeping the background.

Daily Class C**1st Place *Midland Daily News***

Nathan Morgan *Seizing The Moment*
7/23/2008
Solid photo! Perfect crop, composition and moment. Clear winner. The expressions put the photo over the edge.

2nd Place *Battle Creek Enquirer*

Trace Christenson *Chaos In The Courtroom*
5/13/2008
Way to go. When most would have hid under a table, you had the presence of mind to shoot. Way to stay with the moment.

3rd Place *Midland Daily News*

John Tully *Children Die In Fire*
3/11/2009
Would have liked a better composition maybe less of the man on left, but still a heart wrenching photo.

HM *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Doug Tesner *Like a War Zone*
6/14/2008
No comment given.

Daily Class D**1st Place** *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant*Lisa Yanick-Jonaitis *Cornfield Capture*

7/9/2009

Way to go on being at the right place at the right time. Most spot news depends on patience and luck and I believe this photographer has both.

2nd Place *Daily Press, Escanaba*Jenny Lancour *Fire Heavily Damages Home*

11/4/2008

This was the only fire entry with any sort of emotion. I like seeing the damage caused by the fire in the home and the emotional damage to the owners. Although I'm not a fan of the straight on shot. Work the angles - move.

3rd Place *Ludington Daily News*Steve Begnoche *Big Burn*

5/1/2008

Love the pictorial of spot news. I wish the helicopter was a bit bigger in the frame or against a darker portion of the background.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*Larry Caruso *One Killed*

8/27/2008

No better way to show the result of this high speed crash. You essentially know the horrific outcome without reading a word.

2nd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*Larry Caruso *Candle Light*

3/11/2009

A tough, emotional photo to look at and to take... of a sad time in these people's lives.

3rd Place *Livingston Community News*Jamie Pisella *Shelters Full*

Not your normal "shelter is full" photo. Very cute.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *Tri-County Times, Fenton*Sharon Stone *House Goes Up*

2/8/2009

You captured a beautiful moment in an otherwise awful situation. Sensational!

2nd Place *Press & Guide Newspapers, Dearborn*Millard Berry *Fire Under Snow*

1/14/2009

The photo perfectly shows the dangerous predicaments fire fighters put themselves in for the greater good.

3rd Place *Tri-County Times, Fenton*Jennifer Alexander *It's Open*

11/9/2008

Fantastic way to display an otherwise boring photo op. Way to get down low to your subject's level.

HM *Tri-County Times, Fenton*Sharon Stone *Truck Collides*

3/1/2009

A grim look at the result when train meets truck.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Tri-City Times, Inlay City*Maria Brown *Almont Woman Injured*

7/30/2008

Just a few feet off the ground, the helicopter shows action and the photographer provides efficient use of space (less dead space) while using the blades to help frame the crash scene. Nice crisp picture, too.

2nd Place *Gaylord Herald Times*Frank Michels *Fiery Destruction*

5/31/2008

Photographer captures the violence of the burning car against the contrast of the police officer who can do nothing but watch. Strong and eye-catching.

3rd Place *Tuscola County Advertiser, Caro*Stacey Tucker *Head-on Collision*

3/21/2009

Helicopter clearly the entry point to this photo. Nice shape against the blue sky. Would be stronger with less dead space between it and accident scene.

HM *Houghton Lake Resorter*Glenn Schicker *Providing Comfort*

1/29/2009

The photo takes you to the cutline, and the cutline takes you back to the photo and now the photo touches your heart. The picture is a bit dark, but the role-reversal of a son comforting his father is memorable. Bravo.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *The State Line Observer, Morenci*David Green *Grass Fire Season*

4/9/2008

Head and shoulders above the rest. Crisp, clean picture with good color. Nice framing. Captures single clear scene. Smoke and fumes look like rippling water.

2nd Place *Cass City Chronicle*Tom Montgomery *Accident*

3/18/2009

Darkness of photo detracts, but other photos on page attribute some of that to press. But the action in the picture-this photographer was in the right place at the right time. Chopper, truck and onlooker all point to rolled van.

3rd Place *The Advance, Blissfield*Tran Longmoore *Fire in Riga*

4/16/2008

Often photographers sent to a fire feel obligated to show flames. But the smoke in the background tells us enough about how close the fire is. Our attention focuses on the grunt work that firefighting often can be.

HM *The State Line Observer, Morenci*Dale Bates *Field Fire*

10/1/2008

Like the first-place picture, this shows a single clear scene and good framing. But hick smoke difficult on photographers' efforts to get crisp focus and good color. Still, exceeded others in category which didn't make top four.

10-Feature Picture**Daily Class A****1st Place *The Flint Journal***Ryan Garza *Pedaling For Progress*

the subject's motivation really comes through in this image. Well done!

2nd Place *Detroit Free Press*Susan Tusa *Living Reflection*

What made this picture stand out for one is the placement of the infants hand and the mood of the photo.

3rd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*Mark Copier *Freedom Flight*

This is a nice, story-telling image and a good all-in-one feature.

Daily Class B**1st Place *Lansing State Journal***Becky Shink *Raising The Flag*

A clean image with a nice use of light. Without the light flare this image would lose interest and become a traditional silhouette.

2nd Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*Jill McLane Baker *Wild Goose Chase*

The humorous quality and happy ending made this photo a winner. It could have looked better from a different angle.

3rd Place *The Muskegon Chronicle*Kendra Stanley-Mills *Painting Pals*

Color and contrast are very nice and add to the graphic quality of this image. Nice job!

HM *The Muskegon Chronicle*Cory Morse *A Marine Stands Alone*

Nice use of the flag and reflection, but the body seems a bit stiff and could have been positioned better.

Daily Class C**1st Place *Traverse City Record Eagle***Doug Tesner *Fowl Attitude*

5/2/2008

This photo made me laugh out loud. That's what a great photo should do. It was the only photo that I knew right away would place. Features are supposed to be fun and quirky, and this one is both. Photos (great photos) should cause some sort of emotion.

2nd Place *Midland Daily News*Kevin Benedict *Lose Yourself*

8/15/2008

I saw a lot of entries of fair rides and the people's reactions to the ride. This one stood out because the photographer actually go on the ride with the subjects (or it at least appears that way).

3rd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*Jan-Michael Stump *Dancing In the Dark*

8/4/2008

I like the idea of this photo. The silhouette is nice, but the photo could have placed higher if the composition was better. I don't like how small the action is and how its dead center of frame.

Daily Class D**1st Place *News Advocate, Manistee***Jeanne Barber *Winter Weather*

1/19/2009

Nice feature with a news angle as well. Very clean, simple, well composed.

2nd Place *The Pioneer, Big Rapids*Martin Slagter *The Science of Things*

3/25/2009

Funny, well anticipated moment.

3rd Place *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant*Ryan Evon *Wait For Me*

5/22/2008

Fun feature, could use a tighter crop to bring out chic.

Weekly Class A**1st Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate***Dave Chapman *Power On Display*

3/25/2009

Powerful shot-literally. You don't even need to see the weight at the end of the bar to understand just how heavy it is.

2nd Place *Metro Times, Detroit*Doug Coombe *Invincibility*

Sharp photo with nice colors that don't distract from your subject.

3rd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Larry Caruso *Thunder Over Michigan*
 8/13/2008
 difficult shot to pull off because of the speed these planes are moving. Also has a nice "then and now" feel.

HM *Metro Times, Detroit*

Marvin Shnouri *Let's Be Frank*
 Photo portrays young "Frank" in an intimate setting. A shot that takes us back in time.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *Press & Guide Newspapers, Dearborn*

Millard Berry *Not Dead*
 5/21/2008
 You caught a brief comical moment during what seems to be a somber education on the dangers of distracted or drunk driving. His bright smile is a direct contradiction to the "wound" on his face.

2nd Place *Northern Express Weekly, Traverse City*

Peg Muzzall *Snowboard Girl*
 4/6/2009
 A little action, a little fun. A perfect cover for the 'adventure sports' story inside.

3rd Place *Tri-County Citizen, Chesaning*

Hillary Darling *Remembering Veterans*
 6/1/2008
 A nice distraction from the sad reality. Everyone loves a baby! Everyone loves the flag!

HM *South Haven Tribune*

Kelly Weber *I Won?*
 8/10/2008
 Pure emotion. Fun shot!

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Brooklyn Exponent*

Jeff Steers *Tackling The Issues*
 9/2/2008
 What a fantastic shot. Right place, right time. Original shot. Says so much about the boy's effort and his family's concern and pride. Great crop. Great action.

2nd Place *Milford Times*

Hal Gould *Getting Some Air*
 7/17/2008
 Nice action, perfect focus, even lighting, clean shot. Subject pops from background. Well-balanced, eye-catching. Difficult shot.

3rd Place *Leelanau Enterprise*

Ken Scott *Blue Heaven*
 8/28/2008
 This picture reminds me of those motivational posters. Gorgeous. Photos like this make reads appreciate their town.

HM *Houghton Lake Resorter*

Thomas Reznich *Happy Landing*
 1/29/2009
 so many great photos competed in this category. I wish I could give multiple honorable mentions, including a second to Reznich. This photo kept pulling me back to the girl's expression.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *Harbor Light Newspaper*

Brady Donnelly *The Many Faces of Memorial Day*
 5/28/2008
 What gave this an edge over 2nd place: Meaning. Yes, nice clear shot with good color and framing.

2nd Place *Harbor Light Newspaper*

Paul Glahn *Crawling the Coast*
 8/6/2008
 This picture is beautiful! On a hot day, I'd feel cooler just looking at it. The dripping water is surprisingly clear-no significant blue-while providing texture to swimmer's arm. The eye is determined.

3rd Place *Milan News-Leader*

Gaines Collins *Animal Magic*
 7/10/2008
 It's not just that the ring frames the boy's face, but the expression of delight, surprise and curiosity. The cartoon rabbit in the background adds to the bright, fresh picture. The long vertical crop helped make this picture eye-catching.

HM *The Oxford Leader*

C.J. Carnacchio *How Low Can You Go*
 3/4/2009
 So many entries could earn an honorable mention in this category, mostly because photographers were ready when that unique picture came along. This one had an edge by bringing that little bit extra. Great frame, simple subject pops from background.

11-Picture Story**Daily Class A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

Kathleen Galligan *Boys of Christ Child House*
 It's nice to see the time and space commitment on a worthy subject. Many nice moments which are full of life. Perhaps narrow the number of subjects included? (Save them for online).

2nd Place *The Flint Journal*

Ryan Garza *Trying Times*
 The photographer conveys an intimacy with the family but could have used more variety in images, even if only a few more details or wide shots.

3rd Place *Detroit Free Press*

Rashaun Rucker *Obama Election*
 Strong images are brought down by a few weaker ones. Needs more cohesion.

Daily Class B**1st Place *The Muskegon Chronicle***

Cory Morse *Karim's Journey*
 There is a nice variety of images and strong moments. To be even stronger, reduce some images which may be redundant.

2nd Place *The Muskegon Chronicle*

Kendra Stanley-Mills *The Flag*
 Clean, crisp and easy to ready images. The windmill photo is weaker because of the size and perhaps a tighter shot would show the color better.

3rd Place *The Muskegon Chronicle*

Kendra Stanley-Mills *Hidden Danger*
 This is a tough subject, so hard to illustrate. Good job. Get in tighter on a few faces so we get a better feel for the family.

Daily Class C**1st Place *Midland Daily News***

Brett Marshall *Resurrecting The Kind*
 5/30/2008
 Great story, kept me engaged and made me laugh. Really nice images. May have used a fighter edit. But well done.

2nd Place *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Dave Weatherwax *Preparing For Life*
 8/17/2008
 Great story. Would have liked to see some images from her civilian life. Given the title of the story, story didn't feel complete.

3rd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Jan-Michael Stump *Living On the Edge*
 7/1/2008
 No comment given.

Daily Class D**1st Place *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant***

Lisa Yanick-Jonaitis *Cat Vet*
 3/23/2009
 Nice variety and details. I could understand story without looking at captions. Could use a tighter edit. Always quality over quantity.

2nd Place *Ludington Daily News*

Jeff Kiessel *Girl Power*
 8/23/2008
 Nice moments, every photo offered something different to the package. Nice use of image sizes.

3rd Place *The Pioneer, Big Rapids*

Brandon Fountain *Ice Racing*
 2/9/2009
 I liked the fact that all the photos were well thought out. Nice details, simple.

Weekly Class A**1st Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate***

E.L. Conley *Haunted Heritage*
 10/19/2008
 Good mix of scenes that really tell the story of this 'Heritage' event. Shows even a cemetery can be both educational and entertaining.

2nd Place *The Source, Shelby Twp.*

Eric Perry *Off To The Races*
 3/1/2009
 Fun look at what seems to be a fun time out for these kids. Makes the reader want to make his own sled.

3rd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Larry Caruso *Rouge River Recovery*
 11/2/2008
 Gives a glimpse into the lives of underwater rescue teams and surprises readers with the amount of cars recovered.

Weekly Class B**1st Place *Press & Guide Newspapers, Dearborn***

Millard Berry *Toxic Recovery*
 11/5/2008
 A great pictorial look at what looks to be an interesting and successful "day at the beach."

2nd Place *Tri-County Citizen, Chesaning*

Jeanne Marcello *Ice Flood*
 2/15/2009
 Devastating floods shown wonderfully in print.

3rd Place *Press & Guide Newspapers, Dearborn*

Brad McFarland *Lions Jr. Football*
 11/19/2008
 Action, emotion and fun, exactly what youth sports are all about!

HM *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

Darling, Salisbury *Saginaw County Fair*
 8/3/2008
 From animals to entertainment and everything in between. This package was exactly what a day at the fair should be.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Milford Times*

Hal Gould *Inside Camp White Lake*

4/3/2008

The razor wire-and-flag picture of the front is the strongest grabber of the entries. The variety of the remaining photos talks much about people and operations without reading story. Good job! Actual faces and crimes of inmates interesting.

2nd Place *Houghton Lake Resorter*

Thomas Reznich *Memories of Detroit's Heyday*

12/4/2008

Good mix of then and now, as well as simply showing the 89-year-old with current hotel staffers. We get to understand how grand a place it was to work in the 30s & 40s. Rich.

3rd Place *Gaylord Herald Times*

Bill Serveny *A Family's Anguish*

5/3/2008

Good pictures capture grief of family and friends as well as the crisp beauty of the military ceremony honoring a single soldier.

HM *Milford Times*

Hal Gould *And All That Jazz*

8/21/2008

Tight crop on saxophonist an eye-grabber showing enormous facial detail. Ambiguous cropping on musicians distracting, but close ups on hands make up for it. Nice variety.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *The Advance, Blissfield*

Tran Longmoore *River Raisin Festival*

7/16/2008

Good shapes, stunning pictures, great variety. Lots of close-ups. It's fun just to look at the pictures, must have been a blast to be there.

2nd Place *The Oxford Leader*

C.J. Carnacchio *Cats Got Spirit*

10/15/2008

Good variety of pictures showing kids having lots of fun. Good expressions and good angles.

3rd Place *Clarkston News*

Laura Colvin *Racing For The Finish*

8/6/2008

Nice variety of shots. Good crops. Zooming in could help two larger scenes and could have overtaken 2nd place in category. Photographer made effort to seek out fresh photos.

HM *The State Line Observer, Morenci*

David Green *Encampment*

7/16/2008

Nice variety of shots. Lots of good scenery shots, but some opportunities to zoom in missed. Still, this was a strong contender.

12-Sports Picture**Daily Class A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

Rashaun Rucker *Good-Bye*
The smashed mascot face and pair of burly arms with a great scene behind it made for a first place moment.

2nd Place *The Flint Journal*

Ryan Garza *Austin 'screwed up' Chance*

The crowd and body language of the golfer are great. The image may have had more impact as a vertical.

3rd Place *The Flint Journal*

Stuart Bauer *Grand Blanc Falls*
It's not easy to get peak reaction from both teams like this. Image quality is also nice for indoor action.

HM *Detroit Free Press*

Julian Gonzalez *Z-Lightful*
Great action and getting the goal tender face is a nice bonus. I think the space at the top of the frame takes away from the action.

Daily Class B**1st Place** *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Jonathon Gruenke *Poise And Pride*
The framing of other players draws attention to a telling moment.

2nd Place *Lansing State Journal*

Becky Shink *Ready For Anything: Mitch Zajac*
Nice use of negative space. The window tells much of the story here.

3rd Place *The Muskegon Chronicle*

Cory Morse *Beach Vault*
A creative angle tells two stories in one photo. This is also good because it's unusual.

HM *The Muskegon Chronicle*

Ken Stevens *Whoops!*
A better crop would have helped this photo, make it vertical and get to the point. A great moment.

Daily Class C**1st Place** *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Dave Weatherwax *Still The Best*

10/31/2008

Nice moment. Love how close the photographer got to the action. Good use of entire frame.

2nd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Jan-Michael Stump *Three-armed Man*

3rd Place *Midland Daily News*

Kevin Benedict *Cause For Celebration*
 6/11/2008
 Nice reaction on both players, but photo should have been cropped to a vertical. Too much dead space.

Daily Class D**1st Place** *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant*

Ryan Evon *Ball Bobble*
 11/9/2008
 Great moments. Leaves the reader wondering if the ball was caught. Definitely would have cropped this photo tighter to bring the action straight to the reader's eye. Crop down to top of football, crop into the right shoulder and crop up to bottom of elbow.

2nd Place *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant*

Lisa Yanick-Jonaitis *Safe At Second*
 6/1/2008
 Shows good peak action. I had to read the caption to see if the guy was safe or not. Engages the reader to want to know more about the photo. Also, could crop in on the sides to bring the eye straight to the action.

3rd Place *The Daily Globe, Ironwood*

Jason Juno *Hurley Senior Dylan Levra*
 6/14/2008
 Nice use of foreground and background to show victory and defeat. Could crop at the top down to the helmet and also crop up from the bottom a bit. This would help draw your eye right to the players.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Larry Caruso *Going Back To Work*
 7/27/2008
 Full effort, full extension, nice action.

2nd Place *Metro Times, Detroit*

Cybelle Codish *Fighting*
 Calm before the storm. Sometimes the best photos are the simplest.

3rd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Dan Chapman *Play Ball*
 8/13/2008
 This photo makes the reader feel the emotion and the disappointment on the one player's face.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *Press & Guide Newspapers, Dearborn*

Millard Berry *Play At Home*
 7/8/2008
 A perfect T-ball shot with smiles on the kids faces, a little action and emotion from the crowd.

2nd Place *Grosse Pointe News*

Renato Jamett *ULS LAX*
 5/29/2008
 Right angle, right time. Good shot by both the photographer and player.

3rd Place *The Flint Township News*

Pardeep Toor *Soccer Header*
 10/19/2008
 Three guys, one ball and you caught it at just the right moment.

HM *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

David Troppens *Eagle's Celebrate*
 11/12/2008
 A celebratory moment these players and your readers will always remember.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Milford Times*

Hal Gould *Up and Over*
 5/22/2008
 This category was very difficult with so many excellent photos. It came down to difficulty of the shot. The photographer captures the action and the jumper, pole and bar look like three straight lines, interesting with artistic purpose Just beautiful.

2nd Place *Tecumseh Herald*

Mickey Alvarado *Edwards Flips*
 8/21/2008
 the photographer knew this was coming and got himself in the right position, timing his shot. Great shape of the driver against contrasting background. Focus a tad off, but the action overcomes.

3rd Place *Gaylord Herald Times*

Bill Serveny *Perfect Sync*
HM *The Clio Messenger*
 Scott Schupbach *Lunging For a Save*

5/11/2008
 I wish I could give three honorable mentions, because that would be easier. And another judge could argue this picture earns a higher spot. Good crisp clear action shot. Story about the athlete, and picture captures that athleticism.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *The State Line Observer, Morenci*

David Green

I've got It

9/10/2008

Good action, good angle, crisp focus. (I can read the lettering on the ball). Great facial expression. Eye-catching photo makes you read the cutline because you've got to find out if he caught it. Love it!

2nd Place *The Oxford Leader*

C.J. Carnacchio

Houston, We Have Lift-Off

No comment given.

3rd Place *The State Line Observer, Morenci*

Dale Bates

Facing The Inevitable

7/2/2008

Good action, clear picture, good facial expression photographer was ready. Port of the subject gets lost in the background. Greater depth of field would help this pop, but good picture.

HM *The Chelsea Standard*

Burrill Strong

Up and Over

12/18/2008

Eye-catching, good facial expressions, good contrast with background, fresh picture. Photographer couldn't have known this was coming, but was ready. Slight blur kept it out of top 3.

13-Sports Writing**Daily Class A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

Mitch Albom

Eight

8/17/2008

The column is classic Mitch Albom - eloquently describing and analyzing one of the biggest sports stories of the century with stylish wordsmanship.

2nd Place *Detroit Free Press*

Nicholas Cotsonika

Woetown

12/29/2008

Nicholas Cotsonika vividly brings the struggles of the worst team in NFL history to life. Clear explanation of the Lions' epic struggles.

3rd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

Brian VanOchten

Will We See Rampage Again

1/11/2009

Brian Van Ochten covers every angle of a breaking news story well and examines the impact and the NFL folding on rampage players, fans and the Grand Rapids community while boiling all sides of issue.

HM*The Flint Journal*

Bill Khan

Flushing Ousts Davison

3/11/2009

From the great, abstract, drawing lead "It's State Tournament Time, So Larry Ford Had To Be Selfish," to the vivid details of the game, Bill Khan jazzes up the traditional play off story and makes it a compelling dead-even for the non Flushing or Davison fans.

Daily Class B**1st Place** *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Graham Couch

Broncos bow out in familiar fashion

3/11/2009

Good lead. Was interesting throughout. Too good of a story not to have made it the lead for the day. Needed a photo. Really good story though.

2nd Place *Lansing State Journal*

Chris Solari

Sweet upset

3/25/2009

Enjoyed the story. The lead grabbed me, and then good description keeps in interested.

3rd Place *Lansing State Journal*

Joe Rexrode

Detroit dream

3/30/2009

The paper did a nice job packaging the MSU pieces. It was hard picking between these 3 top stories. All very good reads.

Daily Class C**1st Place** *Midland Daily News*

Dan Chalk

Dolphin Dream

A great story for the community that is very well written. The quotes fit into the story perfectly and there's a nice range of individuals interviewed. Particularly liked the mention of teams he played for going back to your leagues.

2nd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Mike Eckert

State Champs

A great sports story that is about more than sports. Mr. Eckert was able to convey the school's passion for football and its program set against the backdrop of a state championship. A tough choice between this and the winner.

3rd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Dennis Chase

Wings' Drake Retires

A strong article about a player at the end of his career. Good quotes and a good history on a player who people outside the area may not know.

HM*Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Mike Pryson

Knocking off No. 1

The strongest of the "game" stories in the class. Was able to grab the attention and hold onto it of someone unfamiliar with the players and teams.

Daily Class D**1st Place** *Daily Mining Gazette, Houghton*Brandon Veale *Sault Denies Hancock*

12/30/2008

Terrific lead set the hook for this outstanding story. Details set apart from other entries. Made me wish I was at the game. Best among a fantastic field.

2nd Place *News Advocate, Manistee*Matt Wenzel *It's Just Incredible*

2/24/2008

There are a number of reasons why I love a small town paper and this is one of them. Great stories about the local team winning a state title. Very worthy of a top three finish in a strong category.

3rd Place *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant*Nate Schneider *Stinging Defeat*

1/15/2009

Very, very quality lead, lured me in to an exciting story. Enjoyed the responses from both coaches and how they were blended in to the story. Well done.

HM *The Pioneer, Big Rapids*Zeke Jennings *Taking Aim At No. 1*

12/4/2008

Most of the time, game preview stories can be all about the game, but not so much about the people of the game. Great lead to capture the personalities within the game. Solid story previewing the big weekend series.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *Livingston Community News*Jason Deegan *No Margin For Error*

10/17/2008

Tough category-hard to pick a favorite. Clear, focused writing and good use of sources made this one the winner.

2nd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*Francesca Chilargi *Red Hot Start*

7/23/2008

Great lead, and good coverage of a very large community event.

3rd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*Scott Held *Three Is Not To Be*

6/18/2008

Very good game story.

HM *Lapeer Area View*Michael Selecky *Local Athletes Compete*

Talking to the athletes and using quotes from them would've added a lot to the story.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *Tri-County Times, Fenton*David Troppens *Strong 1-2 Punch*

11/5/2008

Good story. Would've been interesting to follow him back to the team tent to chronicle the reunion with his dad.

2nd Place *The Grand Blanc News*Pardeep Toor *Powers Beats Goodrich*

3/15/2009

Conveyed well the emotion of the game, especially in the opening.

3rd Place *Grosse Pointe News*Brad Lindberg *Let The Racing Begin*

5/22/2009

Good story with a nice local angle. Be careful muddying the waters with too many metaphors and over-writing.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Milford Times*Mike Rosenbaum *Whitewash*

I like how the story was reported in a concise manner. Props to

2nd Place *Leelanau Enterprise*Alan Campbell *Game Called Off*

Something you don't see often in a sporting contest. Well covered from both sides of the story.

3rd Place *The County Press, Lapeer*Andrew Selich *Bronco's Stunned*

Upsets make great stories and this one was well written.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *Milan News-Leader*Brian Cox *Close*

Tough competition as Brian narrowly edges his co-workers. Great writing, felt like I was at the game.

2nd Place *Milan News-Leader*Jerry Hinnen *Not To Be*

Add a pull quote to these stories. Great writing, tough to judge this category.

3rd Place *Milan News-Leader*Brian Cox *Young Guns*

A better photo would have moved this entry up a spot.

14-Sports Column**Daily Class A****1st Place** *The Flint Journal*

Bruce Gunther

Great sports columnists entertain, inform and provoke emotional reactions from their readers. Bruce Gunther's work strikes an emotional chord with his audience and compels them to read and keep reading, no matter what the subject.

2nd Place *Detroit Free Press*

Mitch Albom

Mitch Albom is one of sports journalism's best storytellers and commentators. He captures the voice and pulse of his city - as he does in his columns on the Lions frustrations and the trials and tribulations of Detroit's homeless - better than almost anyone in the country.

3rd Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

David Mayo

Good column writing is finding stories behind the story and David Mayo brings them to vivid, entertaining life. May is a great illustrator.

HM *Detroit Free Press*

Drew Sharp

Eloquent, intelligent, entertaining sports writing and commentary.

Daily Class B**1st Place** *Lansing State Journal*

Joe Rexrode

Solid informative opinion pieces that made the reader easily understand what the writer wanted to portray.

2nd Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Graham Couch

Great variety of opinion pieces. Graham shared his versatility in to these different, and interesting columns.

3rd Place *The Bay City Times*

Lee Thompson

Good variety of pieces. Jeff Bisel column was outstanding. You truly portrayed what a unique man he is.

Daily Class C**1st Place** *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Chris Iott

Crisp copy connected to local coverage. Willing to make a strong opinion about local college's disciplinary decision. A good read all fans can relate to on a consistent basis.

2nd Place *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Gary Kalahar

Great mix of topic content. Adept at detailed observation and telling a story. "Tough Loss" took readers inside the team's psyche, and "perfection" showed a recipe for success.

3rd Place *Battle Creek Enquirer*

Bill Broderick

Terrific columnist from a great newspaper. Nice depth and diversity of content, ranging from the prep rematch to the Tiger stadium tribute.

HM *Midland Daily News*

Fred Kelly

Gripping account of hearing of father's death while on the job.

Daily Class D**1st Place** *Petoskey News-Review*

Andy Sneddon

This is what sports columns should be - a story about someone or something. Columnists are story-tellers, something that often gets lost. These painted a picture in my mind.

2nd Place *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant*

Drew Ellis

Hard-hitting columns that take a stand with an issue better than any others in class. Good use of facts to back up opinions.

3rd Place *Daily Mining Gazette, Houghton*

Brandon Veale

Your well-placed humor pushes this above the others. I'm not a huge fan of "picks" columns, but these work.

HM *News Advocate, Manistee*

Matt Wenzel

Short paragraphs make for an easy read that hit the reader right. Column has a very small-town feel, which seems ideal for your audience.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *Livingston Community News*

Jason Deegan

Engaging writing on a variety of topics really draws the read in. Clear and succinct and keeps you reading until the end.

2nd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Karl Ziomek

Enjoyable reads. Three fitting tributes to important community members.

3rd Place *Lapeer Area View*

Michael Selecky

Clearly stated opinions. Nice research in "Thinning the Herd" column.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *The Grand Blanc News*

Pardeep Toor

Humorous, unique style. Enjoyable read; would've liked more.

2nd Place *The Davison Flagstaff*

Bill Marshall

Well thought out and researched.

3rd Place *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

David Troppens

Clearly articulated point of view and you support your opinion with facts. Strong writing.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *The County Press, Lapeer*

Andrew Selich

Interesting subjects, well written, enjoyed Andrew's take "New Sports Policy."

2nd Place Gladwin Co. Record & Beaverton Clarion

Clint Kern
Great idea, one that any newspaper can take and run with.

3rd Place Gaylord Herald Times

Chris Engle
I love outdoor columns. As an avid hunter, you brought me right into your stories.

Weekly Class D**1st Place Saline Reporter**

Jana Miller
Ms. Miller takes on some tough issues and does a great job with her opinions.

2nd Place The State Line Observer, Morenci

Rich Foley
I'm a big NASCAR fan and really enjoyed your take on the sport.

3rd Place The Advance, Blissfield

Tran Longmoore
Very east reading, love the name of your column.

15-Sports Feature**Daily Class A****1st Place Detroit Free Press**

Shawn Windsor *Over-Exposure*
3/8/2009
Entertaining, informative, timely investigative piece on one of the most pressing issues in pro and amateur sports. This is issue sports journalism at its best.

2nd Place Detroit Free Press

Mark Snyder *Sideline Saviors*
3/8/2009
A well-crafted feature story with a brilliant lead. Mark Snyder details a new story too much-written about subject. Vivid, entertaining recollection of 1997 Northwestern game.

3rd Place Detroit Free Press

Mick McCabe *Trying Times*
1/25/2009
Touching human interest piece. Mick McCabe strongly conveys emotion of story through the words of the Borchard family. Good narration with some terrific lines.

HM The Flint Journal

Dan Nilsen *Snapshot Senior*
4/5/2008
Entertaining feature story that brings the personality of its subject, 90-year-old hockey player John Burnosky, to life. Dan Nilsen has clean, articulate writing style.

Daily Class B**1st Place Lansing State Journal**

Joe Rexrode *Perfect Storm*
Great twist on an annual in-state rivalry.

2nd Place The Muskegon Chronicle

Dave Le Mieux *Back in the Game*
Great story and a comeback story for this young athlete. Great storytelling.

3rd Place Lansing State Journal

Geoff Kimmerly *The Don*
Unique piece and a long-standing building. Geoff found a way to bring the building to life in this story.

Daily Class C**1st Place Jackson Citizen Patriot**

Chris Iott *Winning Spirit*
Wow, what a tough class. Can't go wrong with any of the 4 award winners. As all are great. What made this the winner was Mr. Iott's ability to capture the spirit of the featured individual. You feel like you know her after reading.

2nd Place The Daily Telegram, Adrian

Scott McNeish *Out of a Jam*
Almost a coin flip between this and the winner. So descriptive and engaging. A job very well done.

3rd Place Traverse City Record Eagle

Mark Urban *Coaching Constants*
Although not as dramatic as the top 2 features. This had the most research, etc. Mr. Urban obviously put a lot of time in, and the stories, such as the bus and watching film on the wall in the hall. Were perfect in the piece.

HM Battle Creek Enquirer

Jeff Karzen *Boys To Men*
A very strong article about a very strong family. He captured it just right.

Daily Class D**1st Place Petoskey News-Review**

Andy Sneddon *Best Ever, Best Buds*
2/13/2009
Hands down the best entry in a very tough field of entries. Great lead had me hooked from the start. Fantastic profile of two terrific friends and basketball players. Very well done!

2nd Place The Pioneer, Big Rapids

Bob Allan *An Assist For Dad*
Outstanding lead. Story flows well throughout. You can definitely feel for the family and what they were going through throughout the story. Very worthy of second place. Well done!

3rd Place Hillsdale Daily News

R.J. Walters *Built-In, Best Friends For Life*
5/24/2008
Well-written and crafted story on sisters who have had to overcome some difficult circumstances together. I really liked how each sister's voice came out in the story. Well done!

HM Morning Sun, Mt. PleasantNate Schneider *Critics Choice*

1/19/2009

I like this story right when I first began reading it. Fantastic feature on a local player who has excelled both on the court and in the classroom...and to the next level. Well done!

Weekly Class A**1st Place Metro Times, Detroit**

Michael Jackman *Fighting for Life*
Incredibly vivid descriptions take readers deep into the story. Well done.

2nd Place Livingston Community NewsJason Deegan *Attention Getter*

5/16/2008

A great example of the importance of research. Well researched, well reported package. Great job.

3rd Place The News-Herald Newspapers, SouthgateJason Alley *Bass Fishing Derby*

6/8/2008

Solid writing and reporting in a piece that successfully straddles the like between sports and news reporting.

HM Livingston Community NewsLeanne Smith *Talent X 3*

8/1/2008

Good lead and well-written story.

Weekly Class B**1st Place Tri-County Times, Fenton**David Troppens *Down 'n Dirty*

8/3/2008

A lot of research went into this piece and you cover all the bases - the history, the stadium and the game day experiences.

2nd Place Tri-County Citizen, ChesaningHillary Darling *Lets Go Guys*

6/15/2008

A very difficult category with a lot of worthy contenders. Well written. Would've liked to hear from Chip, and I'm curious as to what his letter to the coach said.

3rd Place Tri-County Times, FentonJohn McKay *Young Fan's Plight*

9/28/2008

Clear, focused writing and a well-crafted story.

HM The Voice Newspapers, New BaltimoreAndrew Benoit *A Dream Come True*

3/11/2009

Weekly Class C**1st Place The Clio Messenger**

Greg Chrapek *Beating the Odds*
This family faced a up and down roller coaster ride and this young man did beat the odds. Thank you for telling his story, great job.

2nd Place Gaylord Herald Times

Jeremy Speer *Great Scot*
What a unique story to be able to tell and you made it an interesting one.

3rd Place Tuscola County Advertiser, Caro

Chad Wingert *Love & Basketball*
I've witnessed these events on TV, first time reading about it. You really brought me into their story.

Weekly Class D**1st Place The Advance, Blissfield**

Tran Longmoore *The Right Attitude*
Wow! A lot of work went into this. Great story may have made a better 2 or 3 part series though.

2nd Place Milan News-Leader

Jana Miller *Four Brothers Battle*
A unique story, well-written and all 4 brothers get an opportunity to tell their experiences. Only thing missing is a photo of the four.

3rd Place The State Line Observer, Morenci

David Green *Roll A Ball & See The Country*

Neat story. Great use of photos from previous tournaments. Well written.

16-Sports Coverage

Daily Class A**1st Place Detroit Free Press**

Staff

The Free Press uses its vast graphic reporting resources to give readers vivid, entertaining, informative coverage in a 3-dimensional package - excellent writing, photos, graphics and presentation.

2nd Place The Grand Rapids Press

Staff

The Press has terrific photo and graphic use and placement. Inside pages boast front page energy. Polished layout gives mid-sized paper big-city feel. The section is anything but boring.

3rd Place The Flint Journal

Staff

The Journal's layout has strong energy and focus. It's very easy to read with a nice balance of reporting and editorial coverage. Buick Open coverage holds its own and ranks even with a major metro's presentation of a major pro sporting event.

Daily Class B**1st Place** *Lansing State Journal*

This paper is by far the best. I loved the Michigan/MSU issue the other 2 papers were good, too. They do look too alike though. Love the photos and sizes.

2nd Place *The Muskegon Chronicle*

I like front pages. But not much to like anywhere else. The photos need to be bigger. Idea is nice, but needs more to that idea.

3rd Place *The Bay City Times*

the front pages of all their entries are really good. The other pages are just too plain in my opinion.

Daily Class C**1st Place** *Battle Creek Enquirer*

Unanimous choice for first place, Stood head and shoulders above with sharp design, stories that took readers to the action, good use of breakouts and reader-friendly digests. Attractive photo page, outdoor life, gold sections.

2nd Place *Jackson Citizen Patriot*

Great combination of headlines, subheads, photos and graphic elements, complete and solid reporting.

3rd Place *Times Herald, Port Huron*

Great feature photos with lead stories. Terrific prep section. Insightful story by Hayes on 3/20 on defensive stand, and nice variety of local columnists. Clean layout with good headline mix.

HM *The Daily Telegram, Adrian*

Nice use of bold headlines to catch reader's attention. Good balance of local coverage and national news. Good use of graphic elements and score lines. I liked the reverse type package on Adrian College. Tecumseh stat title coverage well-done.

Daily Class D**1st Place** *Petoskey News-Review*

There is a lot to like here: good photos, solid writing and a solidly local slant. I like the dominant story approach on your front page and the depth of local coverage inside.

2nd Place *Sturgis Journal*

Outstanding depth of coverage makes this entry stand out. You have many by-lines and photos with most stories. Some of your stories have outstanding depth.

3rd Place *The Argus-Press, Owosso*

Dominant front-page stories make these papers effective. You have solid photos and good depth of coverage inside.

HM *Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant*

Strong college coverage as would be expected in a college community. Better photos would put this in the top three.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

bold headlines, eye-catching photos and extensive local sports coverage make this the top paper in its class. The News-Herald staff has done a great job.

2nd Place *Livingston Community News*

It's clear why the Livingston Community News is one of the top papers in its class - great photography, combined with extensive feature-oriented pieces take readers far beyond the scores and game recaps.

3rd Place *Lapeer Area View*

Much like the Grand Blanc View, has good mix of reporting and columns/opinion. Nice format, including sports shorts makes the most of the tabloid format.

HM *The Grand Blanc View*

No comment given.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *Press & Guide Newspapers, Dearborn*

Scott Salowich

Solid all-around coverage and good mix of writing and photography.

2nd Place *Grosse Pointe News*

Bob St. John

The sheet breadth of coverage by Bob St. John is impressive. Grosse Pointe News readers are lucky they have one of the best.

3rd Place *Rockford Independent*

Geopry, Rozema

Eye-catching, high-quality photos and extensive, well-written game coverage.

HM *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

David Troppens

Quality coverage and strong writing by David Troppens.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Tri-City Times, Imlay City*

Great sports section, tons of good reading.

2nd Place *Brooklyn Exponent*

Another great sports section. Easy-to-read, great layout. "My Favorite Frames" and "Exponent Express" really add to this paper.

3rd Place *Gaylord Herald Times*

Nice mix of stories and columns. Good use of graphics.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *Milan News-Leader*

A coin flip would have had a hard time picking between this paper and your sister publication. Great sports coverage top to bottom.

2nd Place *Saline Reporter*

A great mix of reporting, feature writing and columns. Easily could of placed 1st.

3rd Place *The Chelsea Standard*

Great photos to go along with Well-written stories.

17-Lifestyle Pages

Daily Class A

1st Place *The Grand Rapids Press*

I really liked some of the writing in this section. One story that stood out was the Sunday profile on addiction counselor Annessia Freeman.

2nd Place *Detroit Free Press*

There is a lot going on in these sections. Vibrant design and content.

3rd Place *The Flint Journal*

No comment given.

Daily Class B

1st Place *Lansing State Journal*

Staff

Nice use of graphics and packaging for section cover. A good and consistent selection of content inside.

2nd Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Staff

Lacks a front section cover that "jumps out." Good follow-through with story selection inside - broad and appealing. Unappealing headline font. With color available throughout section, could do more.

Daily Class C

1st Place *The Daily Telegram, Adrian*

Outstanding and eye-catching layouts. Great detail on features and broad subject coverage.

2nd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

Attention getting headlines and layout. A wealth of interesting topics organized to keep readers moving through sections.

3rd Place *Livingston County Daily Press & Argus*

Top choices were interesting to me, however, there may be a little too much focus on the feminine in these submissions. Found Livingston Entertainment and Livingston Moms To be preferred layouts.

HM *Midland Daily News*

Good local content on cover pages of section with ample photographs. Good mix of topics.

Daily Class D

1st Place *The Pioneer, Big Rapids*

Julie Tyler

Eye-catching layouts and presentation draw in the reader. The writing is solid and entertaining. Good use of alternate story form on the four featured bands of "Guitar Heroes" and the cartoonist Stephan Pastis "Smart Cookies" layout a bit busy.

2nd Place *Sturgis Journal*

Dennis Volkert

Interesting, colorful layouts. But different elements tended to compete with one another. Excellent break outs, especially like "Memories of Barbie." Very little staff-written stories, the only one of significance by a correspondent.

3rd Place *Ludington Daily News*

Melissa McGuire

Excellent "Wine" presentation - events list easy-to-read, organized. The other two layouts were "close" but dearly needed a dominant photo and a least one less each. Interesting "Rock Star" story. Good "Harvest Festival" schedule.

HM *News Advocate, Manistee*

Staff

"Living at Work" layout pretty good. Nice topics for lifestyle articles. Overuse of color and competing photos hamper overall look.

Weekly Class A

1st Place *Livingston Community News*

Casey Hans

Great layout with varying photo sizes, headline types and information boxes that offer additional information. Also, nice addition of a local column and I like how you handle submitted photos with a "Community Scrapbook."

2nd Place *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Staff

A close second. Nice use of color and unique page design to keep the section looking different each week. Good mix of community stories about events and features alongside local columns.

3rd Place *Lapeer Area View*

Caswell, Gould, Angellotti

A nice size section with stories, photos and information that attracts different kinds of readers. It's nice that you've been able to incorporate photos, even on simple announcements, not just feature pieces.

HM *The Grand Blanc View*

Nice section of announcements about community events and activities. Good job of mixing text, photos, other elements to make for some lively pages.

Weekly Class B

1st Place *Grosse Pointe News*

What a great section. Good cover, good coverage, includes health and entertainment. Overall, the best.

2nd Place *Northern Express Weekly, Traverse City*

Anne Stanton

What a detailed entry. Good writing. Good interviews. Good package.

3rd Place *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

Good content and design.

Weekly Class C

1st Place *Gaylord Herald Times*

Excellent use of photography! Excellent organization of area activities! Volunteer salute was exceptional, on-target community journalism. "One More Cast" is a great column. The entire package is well-designed and presented.

2nd Place *Leelanau Enterprise*

Solid sections with excellent snapshots of local personalities and events. The Memorial Day Honor section was great! Solid selection of stories and art of interest to community. Loved the "Things You Should Know" content could have been expanded. Better

3rd Place *Tri-City Times, Imlay City*

Good features, good art and creative use of graphics on the covers. Unfortunately, this "fresh" design and writing isn't carried throughout the section. The covers are excellent; the inside is less reader friendly.

HM *Gladwin Co. Record & Beaverton Clarion*

Section lead features are solid. I like the Q & A format and art - although the art could be more creative. The left rail "Around Town" doesn't work for me. It is too hard to read.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *Saline Reporter*

Great mix of informative, human interest and community-related stories. Photos are eye-catching and the design nicely fits each story topic.

2nd Place *The State Line Observer, Morenci*

A good variety of community topics. Stories are Well-written and informative. Nice work on the photography and design.

3rd Place *Clarkston News*

The writing and content were good, but it could use a change in layout or an added design element such as a cut-out or a pulled quote.

18-Special Section**Daily Class A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

I Lied

Great journalism.

2nd Place *Detroit Free Press*

The Boys of Christ Child House

This is a poignant, untold story. The commitment of the Free Press' photo department was outstanding.

3rd Place *Detroit Free Press*

Motown At 50

Solid section very nicely put together. I really liked the storytelling in certain places. Bill McGraw's column was great!

Daily Class B**1st Place** *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Mah, Esters, McMichael *Back To School*

8/6/2008

Packed with good information and useful tools for parents. The opinion pieces from various voices bring added perspective. Front page illustration works well. "What you need to know" a list every parent should save.

2nd Place *The Muskegon Chronicle*

Kendra, Leverance, Mattson *All Four #1*

12/4/2008

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a section, sports writers took full advantage of it. Great photos and columns - hats off to sports editor Tom Kendra. The game-by-game synopsis made the whole package a wonderful keepsake.

3rd Place *Kalamazoo Gazette*

Staff *The Fall Arts Preview*

9/14/2008

This section is well put together with great information across the board on the area arts scene. You don't often find a whole section run-down on the arts, but it's valuable information for readers. Nice use of photos to break up listings.

HM *Lansing State Journal*

Staff *High School Football*

8/27/2008

Lansing State Journal staffers pulled together tons of information in an easy-to-read fashion for area prep football fans. The "fourcast" for each team were great, readable, bite-size pieces.

Daily Class C**1st Place** *Times Herald, Port Huron*

Crisp layout and strong story, photo and content in an easy-to-handle and read format. Love the color throughout too.

2nd Place *Traverse City Record Eagle*

An outstanding commemorative section backed with historical facts. A modern perspective. Love the dramatic old photos and simple layout.

3rd Place *The Mining Journal (Marquette)*

The sheer section size and content volume are impressive enough for a placing. Strong business reporting, photographer and layout.

Daily Class D**1st Place** *News Advocate, Manistee*

Staff *Greatest Generation of Manistee County*

5/1/2008

An exhaustive and wonderful dedication to a generation past. The mix of old and new photographs was a huge plus. Each individual story was thoroughly researched and interesting. This will be used by historians hundreds of years from now.

2nd Place *Sturgis Journal*

Dennis Volkert *Snap It*

7/1/2008

Could any other paper cram as many reader photos into one special section? Probably not, but readers - and this judge - enjoyed them. The six main features put a face on some of these locals in well-written fashion.

3rd Place *Daily Press, Escanaba*

Mary Cancilla 2/25/2009
Great idea, well executed. Talk about appealing to younger readers! Consistent layout. Too bad it all couldn't have been color. The pull-out profile boxes were a nice touch.

HM *Daily Mining Gazette, Houghton*

Staff Copper Country 2008
8/21/2008
Comprehensive look at the subject matter. Layout a bit inconsistent. Liked the short story approach.

Weekly Class A**1st Place** *The News-Herald Newspapers, Southgate*

Wow! An impressive special section that was obviously put together as a service to your readers. The content is great. This is amazing.

2nd Place *Livingston Community News*

One-stop-voting. Great information for voters-everything from when and where to vote to a run-down of every candidate. What a great resource for your readers.

3rd Place *Metro Times, Detroit*

What a great idea for a special section. And you took it further with interesting stories and art. Great job in a difficult category.

Weekly Class B**1st Place** *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

David Troppens Sports Fall Preview
8/31/2008
Comprehensive and detailed. This section is beautifully designed, easy to follow and very informative!

2nd Place *Grosse Pointe News*

Bob St. John Winter Sports
11/27/2008
Well-written long stories. Sports are well covered and laid out. Good coverage of local sports.

3rd Place *Tri-County Times, Fenton*

Staff Good Ole Summertime
6/29/2008
Fun section; topics are great. There's a diverse story list and it's a well thought-out section.

Weekly Class C**1st Place** *Tecumseh Herald*

Wuethrich, Alvarado 2008 Fan Guide
5/1/2008
Good balance, original stories contrast between past and present; range of images very informative. Does NOT assume that the reader is already a racecar fan. I like its inclusive approach.

2nd Place *Brooklyn Exponent*

Jeff Steers 12/9/2008
I am not a fan of the blue on the front page, but the overall product is excellent, both content and design. Variety of display and profiles, not just the usual. Good job!

3rd Place *Gladwin Co. Record & Beaverton Clarion*

Staff Synergy
4/8/2008
Good job on the front cover. The table of contents images are lost in the type on top. Good job on providing continuity from page to page.

HM *Milford Times*

Staff Graduations
6/5/2008
Good job on making it an interesting and meaningful product.

Weekly Class D**1st Place** *Presque Isle County Advance (Rogers City)*

We Remember
11/13/2008
Excellent coverage of an historic event. The old newspaper stories and old photos were mixed wonderfully with news of the ship today. Design and layout of this special section were excellent. Very nice work.

2nd Place *Saline Reporter*

59 Things That Make Saline Great
4/24/2008
What a fun special section. Very creative to take the news of being named one of the top 100 places to love and expanding it. I loved how you involved the community by soliciting their favorite features of the town.

3rd Place *Saline Reporter*

Saline School Directory
This is an excellent source of information as the Saline Schools. It is also nicely designed and includes a good mix of stories. This is definitely a section readers will have on to all school year.

HM *Vassar Pioneer Times*

One The Horizon
3/11/2009
This section did a nice job of featuring the town's business. I liked the use of both the Q & A format and traditional story form.

Best Web Site**Division A****1st Place** *Detroit Free Press*

Legible, newspaper-looking layout and fonts. Good navigation organization. Especially like "lick-worthy" items on home page. Internal pages also are extremely well-organized. Good newsy content. Blogs and columnists are well-presented and use of teasers the reader know what they're about. Online-only content (live chats, transcripts, etc.) are integrated into the design, not pulled out for special treatment.

2nd Place ***Lansing State Journal***

Ultra-busy; seems to be a little less attention to images and headlines "fitting" in the way we think of a news page, but well-organized. Red text is a little hard to read. Very clear navigation. Corrections page is a great step.

Division B**1st Place** ***Midland Daily News***

Very nicely presented news content on home page. Tabbed design allows user to choose top news, most commented, most popular, most emailed. Extremely clean internal pages, simply presenting the latest headlines in chronological order. Very clear navigation.

2nd Place ***Livingston County Daily Press & Argus***

Clean design, "carousel" presentation lets them get a lot onto the top of the home page. The "belt" area on the home page links to special feature sections. Very clear navigation. Good emphasis on local news, community events. Advertising is very local.

3rd Place ***The Mining Journal (Marquette)***

Blue/white head/text combo is super-legible. Layout is a little confused by white space in odd spots, and a tangle of topics and head lists below the first screen of home page. Navigation is the basics, but easy to use.

Division C**1st Place** ***The Daily News (Greenville)***

Top home page module with rotating images and scrolling news headlines are engaging. Navigation bar is spot on; great use of "homepage photo gallery" drop down box. Headlines are well written. Interior pages are clean and well laid out.

2nd Place ***Ludington Daily News***

"Local News" has dominant position on home page, setting up clean format for "more news", "Local Videos," and "AP in Michigan." Rotating images gives site a fresh look/feel, landing pages "stories commented recently" is engaging, ads are well positioned .

3rd Place ***Grand Haven Tribune***

Top home page navigation bar makes for easy routing, nice use of video with pre-roll ad on home page, the "poll" above the video player is unique, well-written headlines. "AP State News" below the scroll adds value, could be more effective on left hand side.

HM ***The State Line Observer, Morenci***

This site is pretty cool. I like the overall scheme and simple navigation bar and menu. But is this a blog or news site? Your "About Us" page answers that. However, you have so much more potential if you made this a daily news site.

2008 Michigan Press Association Better Newspaper Editorial Contest Winners

