



Contest Keeps Growing & Inspiring

For the second year in a row, more members have submitted more entries in the Michigan Press Association's Better Newspaper Contest. Members of Wisconsin Newspaper Association reviewed 3,417 entries submitted by 119 Michigan newspapers this year. The increased competition inspires all journalists to produce better work, which in turn, nurtures stronger communities.

"As newspapers evolve and grow in these "platform agnostic" times, they remain the foundation of vibrant communities across the Great Lake State," said MPA Executive Director Mike MacLaren. "We've seen double-digit increases in this contest and the tougher competition helps our members capture audience attention and build better communities."

The 2014 "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.

***** Due to a clerical error, The Ann Arbor News was judged in Daily Class D. We are awarding Newspaper of the Year in Daily Class D to both the Grand Haven Tribune and The Ann Arbor News. MPA apologizes for the error.**

Daily Newspapers of the Year			Weekly Newspapers of the Year		
Circulation Class	Total Points	Newspaper	Circulation Class	Total Points	Newspaper
Class A	1,930	Detroit Free Press	Class A	2,200	The News-Herald, Southgate
Class B	1,660	Flint Journal	Class B	1,210	Tri-County Times, Fenton
Class C	830	Saginaw News	Class C	880	Gaylord Herald Times
Class D***	550	Grand Haven Tribune	Class D	510	State Line Observer, Morenci
	610	The Ann Arbor News			

Circulation Class Breakdown: Daily Class A – 60,000 or more; Daily Class B – 30,000-59,999; Daily Class C – 15,000-29,999; Daily Class D – under 15,000; Weekly Class A – 25,000 or more; Weekly Class B – 10,000 – 24,999; Weekly Class C – 4,000-9,999; Weekly Class D – under 4,000.

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: Leelanau Enterprise for "Leelanau High Way," Detroit Free Press for coverage of the Detroit bankruptcy and Traverse City Record-Eagle for "Transparency at Northwestern Michigan College."

The MPA Rookie Writer Award recognizes exemplary efforts of new writers just breaking into journalism. The three finalists are: Matt Troutman of the Traverse City Record-Eagle, Katrease Stafford of the Detroit Free Press and Sarah Schuch of the Flint Journal.

The winners of the 2014 MPA Public Service Award and the MPA Rookie Writer Award will be announced during the Michigan Press Association Annual Convention -Feb. 6-7, 2015 at the Amway Grand Plaza in Grand Rapids.

General Excellence

Daily A - General Excellence

2 Entries

1st Place

Detroit Free Press

Nice to see Detroit still has a great newspaper, though not delivered as often. Broad, deep, excellent on the big stories. Design is busy but generally clean and clear. Bit overboard on reverses and all caps. Strong editorials; great Sunday opinion section. Writing is a bit wordy at times but still clear. Alternative story forms are good addition to the mix. Clear winner.

2nd Place

Grand Rapids Press

Strong, well-designed paper with great local feel, but not in the same league as the Free Press in terms of subject matter, volume or depth. Not many papers are.

Daily B - General Excellence

3 Entries

1st Place

Lansing State Journal

Clean, attractive design and packaging set this paper apart. Local content is strong, especially out front, but volume is occasionally lacking. Nice job on big stories - state contracts, storm follow. Good Sunday opinion section. Love feature on letter writers. Strong nation/world coverage. Sports section covers much ground, hits MSU hard. Love special section on Rose Bowl champs.

2nd Place

Flint Journal

Solid front pages - both content and design. Tornado coverage was extensive, including map and photos inside. Inside content seemed a bit light - community oriented but not hard hitting. Design was clean but not terribly exciting.

3rd Place

The Oakland Press

Major design improvement with redesign. From clunky to clean. Still dated in some areas. Good volume of content overall, including local. Inside local was solid but not strong. Inside designs were lacking on some pages.

Daily C - General Excellence

6 Entries

1st Place

Muskegon Chronicle

Clean, attractive design, like many in this category. Set apart by the quality of its content and photos. Strong, deep pieces on mental health and the criminal justice system and Wal-Mart's impact on a small town. Great coverage of trooper's funeral with compelling photos, especially the lead picture on page 1. Good opinion and entertainment packages with right mix of local and beyond. Nice touches with typography in sports and entertainment.

2nd Place

Saginaw News

Redesign came just in time. Big improvement. Needed badly. Content always good. Stays strong. Good local volume. Hard-hitting lead stories. Good local throughout. Love four-page local sports pullout. Nice opinion content. A fulfilling paper. Packaging a little confusing at times; too many decks, often unrelated, run together. Simplify.

3rd Place

Kalamazoo Gazette

Clean, colorful look. Good use of white space. Appealing typography. Strong local content. Meaty topics - youth arrests, open meetings violation - mixed with softer features and much in between. Good volume overall, including sports. Full package of entertainment, travel, etc., along with good opinion package, including local edits. Intrigued by "In case you missed it." Probably useful, but is repeating news a good use of space?

Hon. Mention

Traverse City Record-Eagle

Attractive, well-designed paper. Typography is clean, classy. Local content reasonably strong, but volume is a bit light. Strong opinion package, including local edits. Pictures are good. Sunday package is solid with all five sections. Good watchdog story on politician who ignored pledge.

Daily D - General Excellence

18 Entries

Tough class with a half-dozen papers all within reach of the winner. Many entries lacked local content - just not enough volume. Hard to generate with smaller staffs, but that's what sets papers apart, along with overall package.

1st Place

The Ann Arbor News

Excellent package from front back. Clean, clear design and reproduction. Front could be newsier in several editions, but volume throughout made up. Package on diversity at UM was solid and well-presented. Good opinion package with solid local edits. State, nation and world coverage good. Same with entertainment and sports. Liked local touches in sports - Team of the Week, Athletes of the Year.

2nd Place

Livingston County Daily Press & Argus

Excellent front pages in all three editions. Strong, newsy lead stories. Loved feature on "Gusts of the Past." Excellent package on meningitis sufferers; well written and presented. Solid local content throughout with nice mix of state, nation and world news. Good opinion package, including local edits.

3rd Place

Battle Creek Enquirer

Best design in class. Good looking paper from front to back. Good local fronts, solid stories, excellent poverty series. Inside a bit lacking in local content. Strong package of state, nation and world, especially with USA Today supplement. Sports looked good, too, and was stronger with good local content, which was missing in one issue. Opinion package solid with good local edits two of three days. All in all, an excellent package.

Hon. Mention

Petoskey News-Review

Strong 1A with good local news and features. Local Lowdown takes on important local issues. Kudos. Nice mix of news and features. Nice volume of people news with lots of names and faces. Good mix in sports. Decent local photos. A strong package with emphasis on local from front to back.

Weekly/Specialty A - General Excellence

3 Entries

1st Place

Grand Valley Advance

Great reproduction, type a little small, headlines good for most part. Enjoyed reading the Appleseed. Ads are crisp inviting and design uses them to their advantage. Really like the overall presence of this newspaper!

2nd Place

The News-Herald

Judge did not comment.

3rd Place

Lapeer Area View

Judge did not comment.

Weekly/Specialty B - General Excellence

6 Entries

1st Place

Detroit Jewish News

Wow, this paper has everything! Nice layout, design, ads are exceptional and photography is wonderful. Very, very nice!

2nd Place

Tri-County Times

Too many competing graphics or this paper would be a top contender. Nice photos, great reproduction.

3rd Place

Press & Guide Newspapers

Judge did not comment.

Weekly/Specialty C - General Excellence

14 Entries

Very strong division with only a few points difference. Good job everyone!

1st Place

Grosse Pointe News

Clean, easy read, interesting content and has great ads. Very clean design and reproduction is crisp. A+

2nd Place

Oceana's Herald-Journal

Wonderful content. Front page needs to breathe and not so many graphic elements. One of the top papers!

3rd Place

The County Press, Lapeer

Judge did not comment.

Hon. Mention

Very nice. Some color issues on a few pictures.

The Exponent

Weekly/Specialty D - General Excellence

14 Entries

1st Place

The Boyne City Gazette

Great paper! Layout, reproduction, color, ads all add up to a great package. Enjoyed reading stories and photo captions. Work a little more on headlines.

2nd Place

Ile Camera

Would have been a 10 but too many posed pictures. Nice clear reproduction and great story reads. I enjoyed looking at all the ads too! Nice job.

3rd Place

Frankenmuth News

Need to have dominant front page photo but overall a nice paper.

Hon. Mention

Allegan County News

Judge did not comment..

Spot News Story

Daily A - Spot News Story

11 Entries

1st Place

Detroit Free Press

Federal judge rules Detroit bankrupt

I'll say one thing -- the Detroit Free Press knows how to cover a breaking story. Whether it's a long-anticipated event or a daily news development, the staff comes together to provide comprehensive, well-written coverage in a variety of formats.

2nd Place

Detroit Free Press

Federal judge strikes down Michigan gay marriage ban

3rd Place

Detroit Free Press

Prisoner escapes from Detroit courthouse

Jim Schaefer, Gina Damron, Mandi Wright, Brian Kaufman, Andre Jackson, Elisha Anderson

Daily B - Spot News Story

16 Entries

Two of the three top stories were poignant tales of the aftermath of the overturning of Michigan's ban on gay marriage. The winning entry did a great job of covering an anticipated event -- the visit of President Barack Obama.

1st Place

Lansing State Journal

Mid-Michigan a witness to history

Staff

2nd Place

The Oakland Press

Same-Sex Marriage Ban ruled Unconstitutional; Group reacts to

Judges Overturning of Ban

Dave Phillips, Andrew Kidd

3rd Place

Lansing State Journal

Same-sex marriage ban overturned: Legally married

Lindsay VanHulle, Louise Knott Ahern

Daily C - Spot News Story

31 Entries

The winners in this category provided crucial reaction and context to breaking news of various types, from a state trooper's funeral to an attempted murder suicide to a controversial city manager's contract. Congratulations!

1st Place

Muskegon Chronicle

Funeral of Trooper Butterfield

Heather Peters

2nd Place

Traverse City Record-Eagle

Kelli Stapleton

Matt Troutman, Brian McGillivary

3rd Place

Bay City Times

Bay City manager's contract includes \$120,000 salary, car allowance, potential raise after 6 months

Andrew Dodson

Hon. Mention

Traverse City Record-Eagle

Mayor's drunk-driving arrest

Brian McGillivary, Matt Troutman, Michael Walton, Nathan Payne

Daily D - Spot News Story

58 Entries

1st Place

Ludington Daily News

"It doesn't bring Paul back"

Brian Mulherin

Good details. Coverage was thorough and provided a sense of immediacy.

2nd Place

Cadillac News

Child survives bear attack

Rick Charmoli, Chris Lamphere, Antonio Coleman

This story was thorough. I couldn't think of any other angle to cover, except maybe to talk to the bear's family.

3rd Place

Greenville Daily News

Devon Morrison Missing

Cory Smith

Good job getting the story and staying with it.

Hon. Mention

The Pioneer

Ferris student shot, two arrested

Elizabeth Badovinac, Lonnie Allen

Nice to see other students' reactions here.

Weekly/Specialty A - Spot News Story

21 Entries

1st Place

The News-Herald

Popular Coffeehouse Closes After Apparent Rental Dispute

Erica McClain

Balanced story that is well written with multiple sources. Good work.

2nd Place

The News-Herald

House Fire Claims Life of Woman, 58, and Her Dog; Family is Homeless

Jim Kasuba

Well written with numerous sources and voices in the story.

3rd Place

The News-Herald

Woman dies after driving pickup into Detroit River

Frank Wladyslawski, Jim Kasuba, Dave Herndon

Solid reporting. Information from numerous sources and flows well.

Hon. Mention

The News-Herald

Resident Living in Unsafe Conditions Says Enough

David Komer

Would have liked to see any comments from the management of the facility or from health inspectors comparing it to other places.

Weekly/Specialty B - Spot News Story

23 Entries

1st Place

The Citizen, Ortonville

I'm so grateful they got out of there alive

David Fleet, Susan Bromley

Excellent reporting. Loved the interviews with the survivors. The stories they tell are amazing. Good job.

2nd Place

Huron County View

Judge exceeds sentencing guidelines for bath salts kingpin

Kelly Taylor-Jerome

Great article. Liked hearing both sides of the story, it was certainly interesting! Nicely done.

3rd Place Press & Guide Newspapers

Vigil draws hundreds to riverfront park

Joe Slezak

I liked the lead. Article was well written; I could tell how many lives she touched through the quotes you used. Well done.

Hon. Mention Detroit Jewish News

Historic Ruling

Ronelle Grier

Lots of good articles. Keep up the good work!

Weekly/Specialty C - Spot News Story

35 Entries

The winners in this category tackled a variety of subjects. What set them apart was placing their stories in context and reaching real people to discuss the importance of what had happened.

1st Place The County Press, Lapeer

Bank Robber Nabbed

Phil Foley

2nd Place Gaylord Herald Times

Friendship Shelter to close

Judy Wagley

3rd Place Leelanau Enterprise

Leelanau's Loss: John L. Burgess

Amy Hubbell

Weekly/Specialty D - Spot News Story

26 Entries

Readers in Michigan are well-served by the newspapers in this category. Reporters used persistence, hustle, snowmobiles, public records, police scanners, and deep relationships with community members to inform the public about a wide range of stories.

1st Place The Boyne City Gazette

\$1.3M H2O

Benjamin Gohs

The reporter was barred from a community meeting, but persisted. Readers were provided with insights into a controversial decision to drop a criminal investigation of the owner of a private water system -- and a proposal to purchase the system with \$1.3 million in public funds.

2nd Place The Commercial Record

Burns, "sorry for borrowing," ends campaign

Scott Sullivan

Thorough interviews and use of court records outline a candidate's withdrawal and his admission of mistakes in handling the money of client who suffers from dementia.

3rd Place Ile Camera

Fatal fire

Lena Khzouz, Jackie Harrison-Martin

Congratulations on this thoroughly reported story on a fatal fire and its impact on the community, including the closing of a school. The additional story on the victim is moving.

News Enterprise Reporting

Daily A - News Enterprise Reporting

11 Entries

There were many really good entries. Some were great but not quite good enough to knock others out of the ring. One strong one didn't quite make it due to insufficient balance.

1st Place Detroit Free Press

How Detroit Went Broke

Nathan Bomey, John Gallagher, Eric Millikin, Brian Todd, Kristi

Tanner, Martha Thierry, Kofi Myler, Moses Harris, Romain Blanquart,

Kimberly Mitchell

This is outstanding enterprise work. It's relevant and clear, with multiple entry points so that the thoroughness of it is not a burden. Detroit may face challenges, but journalism there endures.

2nd Place Grand Rapids Press

House of Judah: Deadly anniversary for West Michigan religious cult

John Agar, Chris Clark

This well-written enterprise work draws the reader in. Initial disappointment that people who lived through the horrors aren't better represented is resolved for those who keep reading, and most will.

3rd Place Grand Rapids Press

Crying wolf: How half-truths, falsehoods and one farmer distorted

reasons for historic hunt

John Barnes

This is good, solid work. Love the wolf daycare story that's not real.

Hon. Mention Detroit Free Press

Super-heavy loads, busted-up roads

Paul Egan

This is important, relevant enterprise work. It's journalism that could truly save taxpayer money and make things better.

Daily B - News Enterprise Reporting

12 Entries

1st Place The Macomb Daily

Save the Great Lakes from Nuclear Waste

Gina Joseph

Great enterprise work that recognizes the big local story may not be local.

2nd Place The Oakland Press

Pontiac Housing Commission employed multiple felon as building manager

Dustin Blitchok

Good use of open records to hold officials accountable for hiring of felon.

3rd Place Lansing State Journal

Tax delinquencies

Steven R. Reed

Lots of good probing to get closer to an issue of importance.

Hon. Mention Flint Journal

The life of a gun

Blake Thorne

Nice execution of an interesting concept.

Daily C - News Enterprise Reporting

28 Entries

1st Place Kalamazoo Gazette

Portage superintendent Open Meetings Act

Julie Mack

Strong use of open records requests and clear writing makes this investigative project work. Undaunted by the fact that officials don't want to stand up and admit they ignored the law, the Gazette skillfully lays out the facts that add up to an improper lack of openness. Great work.

2nd Place Jackson Citizen Patriot

Stuck in the slow lane

Lisa Satayut

Just about every news reporter in the world has written stories about road construction or infrastructure. This piece sets a standard worth reaching for, giving us something highly relevant, well researched, focused, clear and readable with a human face for it.

3rd Place Jackson Citizen Patriot

Hope after heroin: Two friends' stories

Danielle Salisbury

Great coverage of a pressing issue with multiple entry points, nice writing and ordinary people grappling with the problem.

Hon. Mention

City of Kalamazoo's pension program

Emily Monacelli

Great watchdog work, holding officials accountable.

Kalamazoo Gazette**Daily D - News Enterprise Reporting****68 Entries**

This category attracted a large number of entries (nearly 70), and at least a dozen of them presented high-quality enterprise that served readers strong journalism. It was difficult to decide on the top four.

1st Place**Battle Creek Enquirer**

Granting wishes

Justin Hinkley, Jennifer Bowman, Olivia Lewis

This entry stands out among a strong group of top contenders because of the depth and breadth of the community issue it exposes. The series clearly lays out a grant-dependent community that is showing little effectiveness in solving long-term problems.

2nd Place**Manistee News-Advocate**

Prescription drug abuse

Meg LeDuc

The writing alone put this story toward the top in the category. It is strong, poetic, visual. The reporter also weaved in supporting data without bogging down the narrative.

3rd Place**The Pioneer**

Teaching Success

Lauren Fitch

This entry does a masterful job at covering the complex issue of teacher evaluations. The reporter used a variety of sources, including students and a teacher who quit when she lost passion for the job, as well as nontraditional methods such as panel discussions and live chats.

Hon. Mention**Grand Haven Tribune**

Sky's the limit

Krystle Wagner, Jordan Haenlein

The Tribune made smart use of a vivid, graphics-oriented presentation and a reporter's own survey of hundreds of local high school graduates. The result was an easy-to-consume but highly informative package on local graduates' future plans.

Weekly/Specialty A - News Enterprise Reporting**20 Entries**

Having what appear to be three very different journalistic entities submitting entries made a fair judging of this category quite difficult, as it was clear each has its own audience and base of issues to cover, and greatly varying mandates and perhaps resources to do it. In this judge's humble opinion, this category should comprise stories that go beyond continuing coverage and dwell deeply into explanation and illumination. Nonetheless, many fine stories were offered by all three.

1st Place**Bridge Magazine**

Building a better teacher

Ron French

Extremely comprehensive look at the problem arguably "the" root of the whole education/teacher debate. Well, planned, sourced and smartly written put vital subject into spotlight. Only quibbles: just a little too long and occasional strays into analysis/commentary.

2nd Place**Bridge Magazine**

The incredible vanishing middle class

Pat Shellenbarger, Nancy Derringer

Thoughtful examination of the various aspects daily life is evolving. Great use of everyday folks and stats. Despite being several parts, tight writing made this a good read. A close second.

3rd Place**Michigan Capitol Confidential**

Series on Michigan's film incentive program

Tom Gantert, Jarrett Skorup

Solid outlining of various aspects of wasted government money. Tone a bit haughty at times.

Hon. Mention**The News-Herald**

Dearborn/Melvindale fire department merger coverage

Dave Herndon, Joe Slezak

Continuing coverage kept readers apprised of developments in major change to key public service.

Weekly/Specialty B - News Enterprise Reporting**24 Entries**

Many fine continuing coverage stories in this category.

1st Place**Detroit Jewish News**

Helping Hands

Ruthan Brodsky

Comprehensive report on a timely issue. Use of multiple sources set this apart. Breakouts gave this one slight edge.

2nd Place**Huron County View**

Meth use hits home

Kelly Taylor-Jerome

"Hits Home" and "Meth 101" stories were strong stories that outlined new drug problem and increased understanding of readers.

3rd Place**The Citizen, Ortonville**

Fight for marriage equality

Susan Bromley

Stories make the debate over marriage personal. Good job at highlighting the various points in the public discussion.

Hon. Mention**Detroit Jewish News**

High-Tech Medicine

Ruthan Brodsky

Overall, good handling of interesting subject; could have used additional editing.

Weekly/Specialty C - News Enterprise Reporting**30 Entries****1st Place****Birmingham Eccentric**

Heroin's Tragic Impact

Nathan Mueller, Jay Grossman, Larry Ruehlen, Sandra Armbruster,

John Stormzand, Christopher Dye, Dan Dean

Judge did not comment.

2nd Place**Ypsilanti Courier**

Number of homeless students continue to rise in Washtenaw County

Krystal Elliott, Nichole Seguin

Judge did not comment.

3rd Place**Leelanau Enterprise**

Leelanau High Way

Alan Campbell, Mike Spencer, Amy Hubbell, Patti Brandt

Judge did not comment.

Hon. Mention**Ypsilanti Courier**

Yankee Air Museum seeks large donors to save bomber old plant

Krystal Elliott

The Courier's Yankee Air Museum is a class example of local newspapers providing their readers information that are not likely to find on the internet.

Weekly/Specialty D - News Enterprise Reporting**17 Entries**

Judge did not comment.

1st Place **Saline Reporter**

Honoring the Fallen: Profiling local lives lost in the Iraq War
Austen Smith, Ben Baird, Jim Pruitt, Krista Gjestland, Krystal Elliott,
Sean Dalton, Kathleen Murphy, Amy Bell

2nd Place **The Commercial Record**

Work with camps' developer, church leader pleas
Scott Sullivan

3rd Place **The Advance**

*Double Whammy..... Jan. 8.....Area digs out after blustery
blast.....Jan 15*

Melissa Burnor

Hon. Mention **Oxford Leader**

*Single mom needs new home to gain independence, give family a
future*

C.J. Carnacchio

Design

Daily A - Design

2 Entries

1st Place **Detroit Free Press**

*From the Rose Bowl issue to legislative and mileage claim graphics to the
back page, plenty of design eye candy to look at in this paper. They do a
great job of using the design to trump up their stories and letting readers
know they're a big deal.*

2nd Place **Grand Rapids Press**

*Very different design and style by both papers, but each excelled and
flourished in their own style.*

Daily B - Design

3 Entries

*Another competition that runs the gambit of different design styles.
Ultimately, all three followed their style to the letter and stayed true to it.*

1st Place **Flint Journal**

*Love the clean and modern look to the paper and the "Across the
Generations" package was a masterpiece. Excellent use of white space.*

2nd Place **Lansing State Journal**

*Really great presentation of the Wolf package. Ominous and powerful, like
the animal.*

3rd Place **The Oakland Press**

Bold colors and bold headlines

Daily C - Design

7 Entries

*Every entry was excellent, but the top winners showed a little more boldness
in their design than the rest.*

1st Place **Monroe Evening News**

*Not as many graphics as other newspapers, but the overall quality of this
design was impossible to ignore. Great use of fonts, colors and white space.*

2nd Place **Times Herald**

*Solid use of fonts and colors and incredible graphics. The bridge graphic was
a masterpiece.*

3rd Place **Saginaw News**

The wolf stories with their pictures, graphics and headlines carried this entry.

Hon. Mention **Jackson Citizen Patriot**

*Another paper that had a singular story design carry its entry. Would love to
see more of the creativity and graphics shown on the story of a mother and
her two imprisoned sons.*

Daily D - Design

12 Entries

*It seemed like the design just got better and better in this category and the
top two in particular were tough to choose between.*

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

Circulation Class Breakdown: Daily Class A – 60,000 or more; Daily Class B – 30,000-59,999; Daily Class C – 15,000-29,999; Daily Class D – under 15,000; Weekly/Specialty Class A – 25,000 or more; Weekly/Specialty Class B – 10,000- 24,999; Weekly/Specialty Class C – 4,000- 9,999; Weekly/Specialty Class D – under 4,000.

*The fronts were solid, but really drove it over the top was that the lifestyle
pages were the most memorable design of almost any classification. That
designer deserves a raise.*

2nd Place **The Mining Journal**

*The JFK feature package was a classroom made lesson in how to design
two equal elements, in this case stories, together and make it look great.*

3rd Place **Petoskey News-Review**

*Really great design of the bay home prices, but would love more of that
throughout the paper.*

Hon. Mention **Ludington Daily News**

Lots of good graphics and design throughout

Weekly/Specialty A - Design

1 Entry

1st Place **The News-Herald**

*I really enjoyed the feature page layouts, especially the kitten photo page
and the sports sections also showed great creativity. I would like to see more
creativity in the headline treatment making them more attention-grabbing on
the front pages.*

Weekly/Specialty B - Design

3 Entries

1st Place **Detroit Jewish News**

*Maintained great consistency throughout the whole paper. Maintained use of
same colors and fonts and made great feature page layouts. Felt like I was
reading the same paper from start to finish.*

2nd Place **Tri-County Times**

*Lots of creative photo and headline treatments with nice rails. The paper
didn't have as much consistency, especially with pull out quotes and was too
busy in several places.*

3rd Place **Press & Guide Newspapers**

*Simplistic layout and design making it easy to navigate and read. I would like
to see more creativity in the feature page layouts with less of the shadow
function on text overlaid on photos.*

Weekly/Specialty C - Design

10 Entries

Very good entries with many deserving winners at the top.

1st Place **The County Press, Lapeer**

*Really good and unique design, looked like a one-of-a-kind publication. It had
a creative and technically sound design, but was approachable like a weekly
should be.*

2nd Place **Ypsilanti Courier**

Big bold headlines and creative feature packages.

3rd Place **Gaylord Herald Times**

Another publication that's not afraid to flaunt its best stories and photos.

Hon. Mention **Leelanau Enterprise**

Nice use of white space to air the paper out.

Weekly/Specialty D - Design

13 Entries

*Plenty of creativity in this competition, but ultimately the winners knew when
to dial back the creativity and give the readers something they could pay
attention to and follow easily.*

1st Place **Michigan Lawyers Weekly**

*Hands above the rest with the simple, clean modern look. Feature stories
limited to the front and are done perfectly.*

2nd Place **Chelsea Standard**

*Big attention-grabbing headlines and great feature pages. Love the Maize
Craze feature. Need to temper the overuse of crazy headlines in photos
though.*

3rd Place **Saline Reporter**

*This designer took a lot of chances. Many were home runs, but a few were
strikeouts as well.*

Hon. Mention

The Boyne City Gazette

Love the modern look and use of graphics, but never felt like they had lead stories or photos.

Feature Story

Daily A - Feature Story

14 Entries

Very tough competition. All four places could easily have won, in addition to a couple of others that could have placed as well. Kudos to the quality of many good feature writers in this division.

1st Place

Detroit Free Press

The awful sadness of losing a funny friend

Mitch Albom

What sets Mitch's piece apart is his obvious passion for his subject. He writes from the inside out, and the reader feels the incredible journey of his friends last days.

2nd Place

Grand Rapids Press

'God told me to give you one of my kidneys' - A transplant story

Sue Thoms

This is a wonderful look at human sacrifice in its finest form. Sue is a gifted writer, and her use of sidebar packaging makes the rather mundane topic of kidney transplant much more compelling.

3rd Place

Detroit Free Press

Into the fire, into chaos, a 2-day series

John Carlisle

A fabulous look at the heroes in the fire department. What makes this so much more amazing is the incredible adversity the firemen face in dealing with the urban decay around them.

Hon. Mention

Detroit Free Press

Seeking utopia in Detroit

John Carlisle

Somewhere out there Stanley Kubrick would approve of this feature. It is a bit surreal, and the writer does a wonderful job of showing us a slice of emerging life in the middle urban blight.

Daily B - Feature Story

20 Entries

1st Place

The Macomb Daily

Macomb pathologist Spitz offers observations from JFK assassination

Gina Joseph

Very well done and engaging. This anecdote about hearing of the president's death on the boat over from Germany ties the piece together perfectly.

2nd Place

Lansing State Journal

A Michigan folk treasure

Matthew Miller

Well written, concise and engaging. This story transports the reader along with the archivist.

3rd Place

Lansing State Journal

Back from the Dark

Louise Knott Ahern

This well-told story helps readers see through the eyes of someone they may never encounter - or may encounter, but never know it.

Hon. Mention

The Oakland Press

New Bassist gets to the bottom of Elton John's sound

Gary Graff

Excellently told story. This concise piece packs much history and sentiment into a tight package.

Daily C - Feature Story

33 Entries

1st Place

Monroe Evening News

Overcoming Hurdles

Caitlin VanOverberghe

Imaginative writing that paints a compelling picture right away. Fine word choices. Very good lead photo.

2nd Place

Traverse City Record-Eagle

More Than a Regular

Nathan Payne

The writer paints a beautiful picture, patiently and with much skill. Good imagery.

3rd Place

Saginaw News

Peewee reunion

Hugh Bernreuter

Great approach to what could be a ho-hum story. Writing carries you along and successfully recreates the players' world as youngsters.

Hon. Mention

Times Herald

Keeping the lights on

Beth LeBlanc

Beautifully relates the "magic" of movies under the stars. Great lead photo and design.

Daily D - Feature Story

77 Entries

The competition in this category was very high. There were many well thought out and interesting articles about people, places, pet,s animals and events.

1st Place

The Ann Arbor News

Julia Niswender's family as one-year anniversary of her death nears: 'Nothing will ever be the same'

Katrease Ord

Powerful and tragic story. Well done. You can really tell the long hours and sensitivity that went into writing this story.

2nd Place

The Mining Journal

Shelter from the storm

Jackie Stark

Great local connection to a national tragedy.

3rd Place

Petoskey News-Review

Organs needed - You could save a life

Rachel Brougham

Great profile on Michigan's need for organ donors. I enjoyed the personal stories of the individuals.

Hon. Mention

The Pioneer

A home in sight

Karin Armbruster, Justin McKee

This dog stole my heart. I'm glad she found a good home and I'm sure the story is the reason. Good use of video and photos to tell the story.

Weekly/Specialty A - Feature Story

44 Entries

The features had a wide variety of subjects, some of which were more in the opinion category. Quite a few were marked down because of proofing and grammatical errors.

The award winners stood out because of their subject matter and quality of writing.

1st Place

Bridge Magazine

13 Miles to Marshall: Tough times lead very different high schools to merge

Ron French

The graphics and pictures, along with great writing made this my first choice. How two communities made a school merger work made for a great read.

2nd Place **Bridge Magazine**
Black Thursday, or who to throttle first at the Thanksgiving table
 Nancy Derringer
A very enjoyable feature about a very real problem in today's society. The ending said it all.

3rd Place **The News-Herald**
Second Chance
 Andrea Blum
The pictures of Libby were as compelling as the story. Wonderful layout.

Hon. Mention **Bridge Magazine**
Fortress Grosse Pointe: In world of school choice, community says "stay out"?
 Nancy Derringer
An interesting look at how two schools handle the school choice issue.

Weekly/Specialty B - Feature Story

56 Entries
It was so hard to choose a winner. There were so many interesting and well written stories.

1st Place **Detroit Jewish News**
Night Of Broken Glass
 Esther Allweiss Ingber
The personal remembrances in this story make something that you study in history books so much more real and personal.

2nd Place **The Citizen, Ortonville**
When they were soldiers
 David Fleet
I very much enjoyed reading the stories of these men who had such different experiences during the different wars in which they served.

3rd Place **Detroit Jewish News**
Sally's Story of Courage and Love
 David Sachs
It was interesting to read this story about a woman that not only survived something terrible, but left a lasting legacy for others to follow.

Hon. Mention **Huron County View**
A doggone good match
 Kelsey Block
This is a story that I hope will lead others to finding their own pet/companion that might give them comfort and help them through their war related problems.

Weekly/Specialty C - Feature Story

48 Entries
This was extremely hard to judge. So many excellent entries. Some should have been entered in news as they leaned more toward news than features but all were good pieces.

1st Place **Grosse Pointe News**
Rigging high
 Brad Lindberg
In a tough competition this entry came out on top. It is well written, well illustrated, and completely interested from start to finish. A great piece that is well worth the read. Congratulations.

2nd Place **Gaylord Herald Times**
Could OMH hold the key to solving a 300-year mystery?
 Judy Wagley
This is a great story about something that is very interesting. It captures what it needs to capture and tells the reader about it. This is a story I would love to follow. It is as good as it gets.

3rd Place **Gaylord Herald Times**
Alexis Freeman finds a special mission
 Kurt Kolka

A special story about a special person who hopes to achieve her dream. Would like to know how it all comes out for her. I really enjoyed this story and it adds to the saying it is not about getting knocked down but about getting back up. Great job

Hon. Mention **The Exponent**
One Frame at a Time
 Jeff Steers
This one brought a couple tears so I knew it was worth a special mention. Told the story well and can't beat the illustrations. As good as any story in the competition when it comes to feelings. Nice work

Weekly/Specialty D - Feature Story

46 Entries **Oxford Leader**
Triumph turns to terror for Oxford runner in Boston
 C.J. Carnacchio
Detailed account of a terrible tragedy, with the resiliency of the human spirit shining through at the end.

2nd Place **Oxford Leader**
OMS students' cards touch 9/11 first-responder
 C.J. Carnacchio
Great connection between young students and their appreciation for a true 9/11 hero.

3rd Place **Ile Camera**
Robert Briggs, 100 years
 Lena Khzouz
Perfect portrait of a gentle man's century milestone.

Editorial Writing

Daily A - Editorial Writing

4 Entries **Detroit Free Press**
1st Place
 Detroit Free Press Editorial Board
Complex topic of extreme public interest thoroughly explored and explained well with the human element.

2nd Place **Grand Rapids Press**
 Shandra Martinez, Editorial Board
Grand Rapids entries are all solid topics with solid writing.

Daily B - Editorial Writing

4 Entries **Lansing State Journal**
1st Place
 LSJ Staff
Solid topics important to readers. Writing is solid.

2nd Place **Flint Journal**
 Kristin Longley, The Flint Journal editorial board
Good topics, to the point, but still a tad wordy at times.

Daily C - Editorial Writing

15 Entries **Saginaw News**
Lots of good local material here, most of it well written, made this category a joy to judge--though difficult to pick winners.

1st Place **Saginaw News**
 Bernie Eng
Best topics of strong local interest and well written put this entry over the top.

2nd Place **Bay City Times**
 Editorial Board
More solid local topics written in an easy-to-read style.

3rd Place **Muskegon Chronicle**
 Editorial Board
Strong local issues, written well.

Hon. Mention

Staff

Good topics, and the editorials are short and to the point.

Jackson Citizen Patriot

Daily D - Editorial Writing

20 Entries

Some of the entries would have been stronger with more emphasis on local topics and not such obvious ones (Ex.: governor's budget address, bad roads, Great Lakes cleanup). Simpler sentences, without so much hyphenation, might enhance readership, as well.

1st Place

Staff

Good local topics, breezy, easy-to-read writing style.

The Ann Arbor News

2nd Place

Elisabeth Waldon

Good topics. Appreciate local and transparency topics. Could have been tougher on low-ranking school.

Greenville Daily News

3rd Place

Dave Shane

Solid local editorials. Appreciate the mix of topics and that one involved open government.

Huron Daily Tribune

Hon. Mention

Michael McCullough

Kellogg's was a strong local editorial. Simpler sentence construction overall might have pushed this batch into the top three.

Battle Creek Enquirer

Weekly/Specialty A - Editorial Writing

2 Entries

1st Place

Michael Jackman

Provocative introductory paragraphs led to very entertaining, and informative, content. Very well done.

Metro Times

2nd Place

The News-Herald Newspaper Editorial Board

Judge did not comment.

The News-Herald

Weekly/Specialty B - Editorial Writing

1 Entries

1st Place

Robert Sklar

Lede paragraphs need to be condensed and provide a more interesting hook for readers. Aside from that, the editorials were very informative and well balanced.

Detroit Jewish News

Weekly/Specialty C - Editorial Writing

10 Entries

1st Place

Joe Warner

"Not the news" seems very personal and honest. Enjoyable to read. "Drops ball" is biting, fair and exemplifies the paper's attitude of "oh, WTF? C'mon!" Editorials were easy to read and entertaining.

Grosse Pointe News

2nd Place

Jeff Hogan

Judge did not comment.

The County Press, Lapeer

Brad Katrich

Jeff Hogan

Judge did not comment.

Canton Observer

Hon. Mention

Brad Kadrich

I would have ranked this paper higher had it not been for a blunder on first glance. "Video policy" leads with a quote, which also happens to be a cliché. Aside from that, I found the writing to be well informed and interesting.

Plymouth Observer

Weekly/Specialty D - Editorial Writing

8 Entries

1st Place

Marcia Loader

"Ours opinion" offers a nice variety of local, national and world news.

"Dialogue" tends to be long-winded, but an interesting read regardless.

The Advance

2nd Place

Maria Brown

Clean, concise and conveys a respectful message without getting on a dramatic soap box.

The Tri-City Times

3rd Place

David Green

Editorials are to the point and not long-winded.

State Line Observer

Hon. Mention

Scott Sullivan

I liked what I read: editorials that were well-informed and based on fact, but the columns were sometimes long-winded and repetitive. The poor digital quality of the submissions also made reading the column difficult.

The Commercial Record

Editorial Pages

Daily A - Editorial Pages

2 Entries

Two entries in this category. Hard to choose one over the other.

The one thing that tipped the scale for Detroit was the fact that it allotted more space to editorial content and column than did the Grand Rapids Press. Grand Rapids submissions contained a higher percentage of reader feedback. Both have editorial pages that offer a good mix for the reader. The topics are outlined and presented well. The lay-out of the Detroit page is much darker and content heavy. The lay-out of the Grand Rapids page seemed airy with less content.

1st Place

2nd Place

**Detroit Free Press
Grand Rapids Press**

Daily B - Editorial Pages

2 Entries

The Lansing editorial pages were very inviting to the eye of the reader.

The subject matter is offered in a very thoughtful manner --- issues are outlined--explained---and observations are made, along with suggestions for the eventual outcome of the issue in question. Lay-out and design very nice. Editorial cartoons get an A+

1st Place

2nd Place

**Flint Journal
Lansing State Journal**

Daily C - Editorial Pages

5 Entries

All submissions included a variety of editorials and letters/postings to the editor. The best newspapers localized the editorial opinions and/or included local commentary on a national topic. Cartoons were excellent. The top winners also demonstrated exceptional appearance in layout..

1st Place

Effective layout which calls attention to important information; well-written editorial and opinion pieces--thoughtful, challenging, pertinent articles; great editorial cartoon; variety of opinions from mail and website.

Jackson Citizen Patriot

2nd Place

Content is varied and well-written. Text appears dense--layout could be more attractive. Diverse viewpoints, fair & balanced editorial. Good choices of op ed pieces on Mandela; excellent personal reaction to Mandela from Hardiman; pertinent editorials; May 5--Killing the Message--excellent pieces.

Kalamazoo Gazette

3rd Place

Broad editorial coverage--many pages. But most stories and some layout come from standard source. You could use more cartoons. Submission were via Issuu.com and most of the text was too small to read.

Muskegon Chronicle

Hon. Mention

Traverse City Record-Eagle

Good editorials, background included with balanced presentation of POV. Content could be broader and layout needs variety.

2nd Place

Ile Camera

Organization of content is clean and interesting. But the "Editorial" section lacks an "Editorial" from newsroom staff.

Daily D - Editorial Pages

7 Entries

1st Place

Ludington Daily News

Don't Take Law Enforcement for Granted is a topic every citizen needs to think about. These were every day officers just doing their job. They are the hero's and should be recognized.

2nd Place

Midland Daily News

Telfer brings his personal family experience into the argument for this school investment. He argument comes across as a person who really cares about the future of education even though he no longer has kids in the system.

3rd Place

Grand Haven Tribune

This topic is something we all know about but it continually needs public attention. Good perspective on an old but important topic that effects everyone when making a purchase.

Hon. Mention

Livingston County Daily Press & Argus

Jim Totton's "Alzheimer's care take lots of patience" story about his personal journey with his mother-in-laws battle was up close and personal. Writing like this as well as the impact of coach Mark Oglesby at Howell H.S. will no doubt keep readers interested.

3rd Place

The Boyne City Gazette

Judge did not comment.

Local Columnist

Daily A - Local Columnist

7 Entries

1st Place

Detroit Free Press

Mitch Albom

The Mother's Day column was best of all entries -- very touching. And "We're broke" was written to inspire. The 33-year-later burglary story is well told. There's no doubt this author is a pro.

2nd Place

Grand Rapids Press

Tom Rademacher

The personal story regarding the lemonade stand was a highlight. Profiles of interesting people also well done.

3rd Place

Grand Rapids Press

Julie Hoogland

Nice job explaining the records request. Series on the river featured a deep explanation of local history. The lovely feature obit rounded out a good mix of entries.

Hon. Mention

Grand Rapids Press

Sue Thoms

Nice lead in to the feature obit and well told story on a blended family.

Daily B - Local Columnist

5 Entries

1st Place

Flint Journal

Marjory Raymer

Great variety of topics and styles, all well done.

2nd Place

Flint Journal

Andrew Heller

Phone intrusion column was very clever among solid offering of entries.

3rd Place

Lansing State Journal

Stephanie Angel

Author provided a nice peek behind the newsroom's "curtain."

Hon. Mention

Flint Journal

Blake Thorne

The two columns focused on Flint were compelling.

Daily C - Local Columnist

10 Entries

1st Place

Jackson Citizen Patriot

Brad Flory

The pair of humor columns were truly funny. The more serious column about brain injuries was compelling. All were well written.

2nd Place

Saginaw News

Jessica Shepherd

The author uses a very approachable tone and has a nice writing style. The personal sentiments expressed regarding a name change and police academy made these columns stand out a bit from many of the entries.

3rd Place

Traverse City Record-Eagle

Nathan Payne

The selfie column was particularly relatable. The author's writing style draws readers in.

Hon. Mention

Saginaw News

Jodi McFarland

Ghost signs interesting and "walking downhill" is a strongly written perspective.

Weekly/Specialty A - Editorial Pages

1 Entry

1st Place

The News-Herald

Judge did not comment.

Weekly/Specialty B - Editorial Pages

5 Entries

1st Place

Tri-County Times

I love the design and feel to the pages. The headlines and photos are neatly packaged along ads and columns. I do feel that the content could be a bit "harder," but for a section primarily concerned with entertainment and features, this is perfect.

2nd Place

Livonia Observer

The content is well informed and interesting. The design is neat and tidy, but I would like more color and visual elements. From afar, the page looks like columns upon columns of text. Spruce the page up a bit to match the colorful writing.

3rd Place

Huron County View

I'm a big fan of the VIEWpoint format. The bold section title and the red and blue columns are easy on the eye. Leading paragraphs are a bit long-winded, though.

Hon. Mention

Detroit Jewish News

Judge did not comment.

Weekly/Specialty C - Editorial Pages

7 Entries

Judge did not comment.

1st Place

Grosse Pointe News

2nd Place

Leelanau Enterprise

3rd Place

The Exponent

Hon. Mention Houghton Lake Resorter & Roscommon Co. Herald News

Weekly/Specialty D - Editorial Pages

5 Entries

1st Place

State Line Observer

Interesting content, bounces from local news to national news to critiques on pop culture. Police news and "Through the Decades" help break up columns. I would like to see more color and graphics, though.

Daily D - Local Columnist

29 Entries

There were a ton of entries and a strange mix of harder newsy columns to advice, food, outdoors -- I felt the "slice of life" columns were best written, but perhaps if there were more categories for these folks to enter under it'd make more sense.

1st Place

Morning Sun

Rick Mills

Nice writing style, using very accessible language and addressing interesting topics. Particularly enjoyed the "eBay" problem.

2nd Place

Petoskey News-Review

Rachel Brougham

Another writer with great style. "This is 5" a highlight among solid entries.

3rd Place

The Daily Globe

Cortney Ofstad

Content was easy to relate to and well written.

Hon. Mention

Daily Mining Gazette

Mark Wilcox

Enjoyed the Garrison Keillor feel to the stories.

Weekly/Specialty A - Local Columnist

8 Entries

Some very strong contenders in this group.

1st Place

Grand Valley Advance

Cathy Runyon

Easily the best entry in the category. Your columns made me think, smile and laugh, especially the surgery one! You take on topical, even trendy, subjects in an engaging way that makes the reader want more and crosses generational lines. Great job.

2nd Place

Bridge Magazine

John Schneider

Your easy style allows you to take on topics that may be a bit controversial without preaching and with the right touch of humor. Your writing flows well and keeps the reader's attention.

3rd Place

The News-Herald

Jackie Harrison-Martin

Good storytelling. Use of quotes and personal stories draws readers in.

Good variety in selections.

Hon. Mention

Lapeer Area View

Robert Jones

You choose interesting topics and your style offers keen observations and unexpected twists and endings. You could benefit from tighter editing, however, to move readers through more smoothly.

Weekly/Specialty B - Local Columnist

10 Entries

Lots of variety here, so it was hard to choose with so many different styles.

There is certainly some talent in this pool!

1st Place

Detroit Jewish News

Sy Manello

These are very clever, fun, well-written columns. You put a smile on my face and this column is a nice, welcome break in the reader's day. The refreshing tone put this one in first place.

2nd Place

Huron County View

Jane Vanderpool

A collection of touching, very personal stories that show how much you care about your family and business. The surprise, sad ending on the story about your father is priceless.

3rd Place

Penasee Globe

Sherry Kuyt

This is a great idea for a column series. It takes you out of the box many writers get into, and they are entertaining and flow nicely with an easy narrative style.

Hon. Mention

Detroit Jewish News

Robert Sklar

These are very deep, well-researched columns on important issues. The length is perhaps a bit daunting, but you write well for your local audience and know your material thoroughly.

Weekly/Specialty C - Local Columnist

22 Entries

Big category. I feel some of these entries would have fit better into other categories, such as features. Good writers overall, but some of these papers need tighter editing for typos as well as length. Fun reads, though.

1st Place

The County Press, Lapeer

Carolyn LeDue-Krehel

Clearly the best among the large number of entries. Great storyteller, whether serious or funny. Your columns made me want to read more and are the perfect length with great flow and pace. The story about your dog brought tears, and the retirement home made me laugh. Great work!

2nd Place

Gaylord Herald Times

Jeremy Speer

Just edged by the first-place entry. Warm, engaging stories about a stage in life we all have experienced or will have one day. Great flow and keeps the reader wanting to read more from you.

3rd Place

Tuscola County Advertiser

Henry Passenger

Clean, crisp, well-paced columns, bringing us all into your memories with a bittersweet edge. Enjoyable reads.

Hon. Mention

The County Press, Lapeer

Krystal Johns

Every mom can relate to these columns, but the appeal goes beyond those with kids. Your writing is descriptive and vibrant.

Weekly/Specialty D - Local Columnist

18 Entries

This was a tough competition with a lot of entries and many contenders. I wish I could award more placings. A couple either did not enter enough columns or the jump was cut off, which was unfortunate, still I think the cream rose to the top.

1st Place

Tecumseh Herald

Mary Kay McPartlin

Your great use of language and touching tributes put you on top of a very strong field of entries. The motherhood column was particularly moving and the ending tribute to your own mom was a bittersweet surprise.

2nd Place

The Boyne City Gazette

Anne Thurston-Brandley

Your memories leap off the page and I can see what you are describing. Your thoughts of the past cross generations with your treatment of them.

3rd Place

The Tri-City Times

Catherine Minolli

A very good writer with an easy style that connects with the reader. Would have been higher, but this was a very tough division with lots of strong entries.

Hon. Mention

State Line Observer

David Green

Very clever, well-written columns that made me smile and nod.

News Photograph

Daily A - News Photograph

10 Entries

1st Place

Detroit Free Press

Deported

Ryan Garza

Highly emotional moment captured here. Images like these rely on access and trust established by the journalist.

2nd Place **Grand Rapids Press**
5 children rescued from submerged car
 Chris Clark
The reaction of the child who is being carried makes the photograph what it is.

3rd Place **Grand Rapids Press**
Fatal underpass crash
 Chris Clark
A crash scene we've never seen before. Otherworldly and ghastly.

Hon. Mention **Grand Rapids Press**
Duck peers into Anderson Eye Care
 Cory Morse
All of us agreed we have never seen a flooding photo like this taken from the inside of a dry building looking out. The duck and cityscape put it in context. Would have been even stronger with something identifying inside.

Daily B - News Photograph

8 Entries
1st Place **Flint Journal**
Tears of a Triple Homicide
 Jake May
The clear winner, and perhaps the best photograph we have seen in the contest, all divisions. Such strong, sad emotion captured in this frame with incredible closeness and strong composition.

2nd Place **Flint Journal**
Total loss
 Jake May
Great job by the photographer backing-up and finding a different way to shoot a house fire and make it visually interesting. This type of photograph humanizes the destruction of a home. They're less structures and more where we live and play.

3rd Place **Flint Journal**
A Mother's Woe
 Jake May
A strong moment, but including the generally expressionless police officers greatly distracts from it. The right third of the frame is what really matters, and it should be cropped accordingly.

Daily C - News Photograph

33 Entries
Also a very strong category.
1st Place **Monroe Evening News**
"We Want People To Know"
 Kim Brent
A very strong caption helped us understand this photo.

2nd Place **Jackson Citizen Patriot**
Hit by car
 Sam Gause
Very nice moment.

3rd Place **Jackson Citizen Patriot**
Biohazard hoarding
 Mike Mulholland
Nice photo, beyond what is expected from a situation like this.

Hon. Mention **Muskegon Chronicle**
Grief stricken testimony
 Ken Stevens
Very nice emotion in this photo.

Daily D - News Photograph

25 Entries
Judge did not comment.

1st Place **The Ann Arbor News**
Partners to marry in front of the Washtenaw County Clerk's office
 Patrick Record

2nd Place **Grand Haven Tribune**
Asleep on the bus
 Becky Vargo

3rd Place **Midland Daily News**
Fire in the Cold
 Sean Proctor

Weekly/Specialty A - News Photograph

8 Entries
A lot of great journalistic scenes in this category, but would like to see more wherewithal on the technical details of photography.

1st Place **The News-Herald**
Blaze Destroys House
 Ian Kushnir
A lot of interesting action going on in this photo.

2nd Place **The News-Herald**
Program Surprises Former Marine and His Family With New House
 Mary Rosecrans
Great reaction from the family.

3rd Place **The News-Herald**
Five Stations Respond to 'Big' Fire
 Ian Kushnir
Interesting light and good cloud of smoke make this photo

Hon. Mention **The News-Herald**
Voters overwhelmingly choose public safety
 Dave Herndon
Liked the angle of photo, but would like to see tighter focus

Weekly/Specialty B - News Photograph

8 Entries
First place was a runaway favorite in this category. Many other photos were lacking in technical aspects of photography: focus, framing and white balance.

1st Place **Tri-County Times**
"Historic lows, historic snows"
 Tim Jagielo
Now this is showing the pain of cold. Great way to tell the story and fill the frame with important details.

2nd Place **Tri-County Citizen**
Rollover in Chesaning
 Jeanne Marcello
This is not a shot you see every day.

3rd Place **Tri-County Times**
Fire destroys historic Holly home
 William Axford
Nice framing

Hon. Mention **Huron County View**
Rally protest church closure
 Kelly Taylor-Jerome
First place was a runaway favorite in this category. Many other photos were lacking in technical aspects of photography: focus, framing and white balance.

Weekly/Specialty C - News Photograph

27 Entries
The best photographers balanced great journalistic moments with technical photography such as focus, white balance and framing.

1st Place **The Exponent**
Star Struck
 Jeff Steers
The photographer got something new out of a routine assignment. Great moment with the hands reaching and the face is priceless.

2nd Place **Gaylord Herald Times**
Snowmobile goes up in flames
 Matt Wenzel
Fire in winter, a great picture with so many good colors. Nice work filling the frame with firefighters.

3rd Place **Grosse Pointe News**
Crazy pets
 Renee Landuyt
White balance could use some tweaking, but a great look from the child as he's unsure of the pet.

Hon. Mention **Gaylord Herald Times**
Hot Wheels
 Matt Wenzel
Exposure is a little hot, like the scene, but excellent framing and great work by the photographer getting there while it was still engulfed.

Weekly/Specialty D - News Photograph
9 Entries
The hardest news also turned out to be the photographs in this category.
1st Place **Oxford Leader**

Therapy dog dies in crash
 C.J. Carnacchio
This photo did the finest job of integrating great journalism with great technical photography. The photographer sold this moment by framing the scene using the firefighter and truck.

2nd Place **State Line Observer**
Field fire
 David Green
You can feel the heat in this photograph and there is good use of the rule of thirds and lines as well as being journalistically important.

3rd Place **The Commercial Record**
Saugatuck planners vote on camps' fate
 Scott Sullivan
While journalistically not the greatest moment, this shot deserved some recognition because of finding something behind the scenes and letting it tell a more unique story. Also great framing and lines running you down to the beach and water.

Hon. Mention **The Advance**
Firefighters get water on the pickup truck which was engulfed in flames
 Chad Hutchinson
This was a great scene and the photographer did a great job getting there quick enough to still shoot the flames.

Feature Photograph

Daily A - Feature Photograph
12 Entries
1st Place **Detroit Free Press**
Drum major
 Kimberly Mitchell
A solid captured dynamic moment.

2nd Place **Grand Rapids Press**
Overwhelmed
 Chris Clark
Graphic qualities of repetition and spot color help this photo.

3rd Place **Detroit Free Press**
Signs of praise
 Kimberly Mitchell
Beautiful light and color.

Daily B - Feature Photograph
6 Entries
1st Place **Flint Journal**
Sprinkles
 Zack Wittman
Joyous moment. Sometimes a portrait makes a great feature.

2nd Place **Flint Journal**
Halloween Kiss
 Jake May
A great moment. Graphic with spot color.

3rd Place **Lansing State Journal**
Isle Royale
 Rod Sanford
A beautiful scenic taken at the right time of day, and the right moment with the cloud shielding the moon.

Daily C - Feature Photograph
40 Entries
A lot of strong entries in this category.
1st Place **Saginaw News**

Hospital wedding
 Sammy Jo Hester
Very nice powerful photo.

2nd Place **Monroe Evening News**
Grief-Stricken: Bedford Mourns Senior Football Player's Death
 Kim Brent
Nice feature, well composed.

3rd Place **Monroe Evening News**
World of Sound: What Malaki Can't See He Embraces in Other Ways
 Kim Brent
Nice moment between these two.

Hon. Mention **Monroe Evening News**
Saying Goodbye to TRE
 Tom Hawley
Good photos from hard assignment.

Daily D - Feature Photograph
48 Entries
1st Place **Ludington Daily News**
Science fun
 Jeff Kiessel
Very nice moment. Very funny.

2nd Place **Midland Daily News**
Thrill ride
 Neil Blake
Has been done before, but still works.

3rd Place **Cadillac News**
Mother nature offers trick, no treat
 Chris Lamphere
Judge did not comment.

Weekly/Specialty A - Feature Photograph
13 Entries
Entries were all around in this category. Some scenic, others event related. A definite need for getting closer to the subjects and finding good expressions to draw the viewer in.

1st Place

Turn up the heat ...it's blanket season

Robert Jones

Vivid colors, leading lines, nice composition - great photo.

2nd Place

Snow Days

Dave Chapman

The photo is crisp with good interaction between the subjects.

3rd Place

Bring it on

Paula Barbee

The framing is interesting but a closer view of the subject would have had a greater impact.

Weekly/Specialty B - Feature Photograph

15 Entries

While there were a few entries that stood out, many in this category were somewhat mediocre. Look for candid expressions and get closer to the subject and on their level.

1st Place

Blackhawks move on

Patrick McAbee

Sweet moment is a nice change from tossing the cap graduation pics.

Getting down to their level helped bring me into the frame.

2nd Place

Area colt's lineage— Kentucky Derby winner

Tim Jagielo

The light from the stable gives a natural view of this intimate meeting, so kudos for not using the flash. Good composition overall. The subject on the right is somewhat distracting from the horses.

3rd Place

Frog on lily

Patrick McAbee

Neat find, though a closer view of the frog with the flower out of focus may have created a more stunning image.

Weekly/Specialty C - Feature Photograph

32 Entries

A lot of great entries in this category. Those that rose to the top took the photographer effort, skill and patience to compose and catch the right moment. Overall nice job.

1st Place

Sunset Fish

Andrew Skinner

Great composition of a sunset over the water. The silhouetted people on the hill added another dimension to an already beautiful shot. I'd like to see a bit more space on top.

2nd Place

Sledding party

Chris Engle

Nice timing with the girl catching snowflakes in this fun, colorful shot. Slightly too tight of a crop on the bottom and right.

3rd Place

Tally-Ho

Brad Lindberg

Positioning yourself directly under the bird was risky, but the move paid off. The clouds and bright blue sky are a nice contrast to the picture, which also has good depth of field.

Lapeer Area View

The News-Herald

Grand Blanc View

The Citizen, Ortonville

Tri-County Times

The Citizen, Ortonville

Oceana's Herald-Journal

Gaylord Herald Times

Grosse Pointe News

Hon. Mention

EFF

Andrew Skinner

The light, movement and color intrigued me enough to give this honorable mention. I'm left wishing it was taken from a lower angle though.

Weekly/Specialty D - Feature Photograph

29 Entries

Some of the entries would have been better suited for the news or spots photo category. Those that stood out connected with the viewer in an honest way.

1st Place

Let me think about this

Wendi Reardon

Priceless expression and candid moment. Good use of depth of field and color. I'm eager to see the counselor's reaction, perhaps moving slightly to the right would have given a better profile.

2nd Place

Stars and ice

Ryan Lewis

Interesting angle and pictorial. Nice find during a season when not much is going on. The icicle nearly in the center of the photograph is a little jarring.

3rd Place

Soakin'!

C.J. Carnacchio

Although both of their eyes are closed, there is a lot of movement in the photograph. Fun pic.

Photo Story

Daily A - Photo Story

5 Entries

1st Place

Wolf hunt begins in Michigan

Cory Morse

Good mix of various angles of the story. It was the only entry that really examined a theme visually, as opposed to being a larger edit of event or location coverage.

2nd Place

Last chance prom

Jarrad Henderson

High quality photography with a collection of moments. Still, the edit could have been tighter.

3rd Place

Lake Michigan: A world of ice

Chris Clark

A set of visually enticing photos of a seasonal event but scenic-heavy. Could have used more visual variation and more of a human or emotional element to what visitors feel and experience.

Daily B - Photo Story

7 Entries

1st Place

Search for stability

Michelle Tessier

An intimate look at a family's struggle with finding adequate affordable housing. The communicative aspects of this work exceed its creative aspects, but it strongly does so.

2nd Place

Remembering Doug Halstead

Jake May

This story featured excellent coverage of a very difficult situation to cover as a visual journalist. A tighter edit would have weeded out a few of the weaker

Oceana's Herald-Journal

Clarkston News

Allegan County News

Oxford Leader

Grand Rapids Press

Detroit Free Press

Grand Rapids Press

Flint Journal

Flint Journal

images, but the strong ones really sing. The photographer does a wonderful job of capturing emotion, as well as a sense of place.

3rd Place **Flint Journal**
 Warrior Dash
 Zack Wittman

This collection of images exhibited the photographer's graphic eye, but it is lacking a narrative or storyline to elevate it above event coverage or a photo "essay."

Daily C - Photo Story

19 Entries
 Judge did not comment.
1st Place **Jackson Citizen Patriot**

Elizabeth Vacha's normal life with EDS
 Sam Gause

2nd Place **Jackson Citizen Patriot**
 Shelby Maldonado's Surprising Recovery
 J. Scott Park

3rd Place **Muskegon Chronicle**
 Electric Forest
 Ken Stevens, Theophil Syslo

Daily D - Photo Story

24 Entries
1st Place **Midland Daily News**
 'Fight for Katie K'
 Sean Proctor

Fantastic story! Head and shoulders ahead of other entries.
2nd Place **Grand Haven Tribune**

A place to shine
 Krystle Wagner
 Judge did not comment.

3rd Place **The Ann Arbor News**
 An act of love: Michigan woman's kidney donation helps save her husband and 3 others
 Patrick Record

Weekly/Specialty A - Photo Story

7 Entries
 The number of photos should not outshine the quality of photos. Pick an interesting, dominant image to carry the page and use a variety of shots to fill in if possible.

1st Place **The News-Herald**
 "THUNDER OVER MICHIGAN" AWES CROWD
 Dave Herndon, Carol Brown

Each photo was superb, and the design of the page was interesting. Would have liked to see more crowd shots, though.
2nd Place **The News-Herald**

Melvindale students win annual donkey basketball game!
 Dave Herndon, Dave Chapman

Great action photos of prominent figures in the community having fun. The photo of the man looking left doesn't make sense until reading the caption, but otherwise strong story-telling.
3rd Place **The News-Herald**

Record-setting crush of fans on hand for the Motor City Comic Con
 Dave Herndon, Erica McClain, David Komer
 The top middle photo could have been enlarged on the page for better impact, but overall a variety of nice views from the event.

Weekly/Specialty B - Photo Story

5 Entries
 If there is a full page to fill, make a few photos dominant rather than all the same size, because they tend to be looked over. Try to get a variety of angles, depths of field and subject matter.

1st Place **Press & Guide Newspapers**
 Thousands attend Homecoming at Ford Field
 Joe Slezak

Great variety of scenes, distances and people on one event. Straightforward but clean layout.
2nd Place **Press & Guide Newspapers**

Tigers winter caravan stops in Dearborn
 Joe Slezak
 Crisp, interesting visuals to complement this story. Looking for one image to just grab me though.

3rd Place **Press & Guide Newspapers**
 Fallen Hero
 Joe Slezak

Too many similar-looking photos dropped this entry a few spots, but the reader impact is still strong. More photos isn't always better.

Hon. Mention **Tri-County Times**
 "This is no job, It's a way of life" & "There's no other job like being a trooper"

Tim Jagielo
 I'm not sure I would have categorized this as a photo story since there are only two pics, but the main photo is definitely strong enough to earn this an honorable mention and secondary art offers a unique view from above.

Weekly/Specialty C - Photo Story

29 Entries
 This was a tough category to narrow down - many nice entries. Some phenomenal photos did not make the cut because they were too repetitive in the layout. Variety is key when many photos take up a page. Give the reader a reason to focus on each shot.

1st Place **Houghton Lake Resorter & Roscommon Co, Herald-News**
 Monument Hunters
 Krista Tacey-Cater

Superb photos were really highlighted with this layout. Easy and interesting to follow, and really drew you into the story. Good variety of shots to explore this topic.

2nd Place **Gaylord Herald Times**
 Alpenfrost 2014
 Bill Serveny, Judy Wagley

Polar plunge was the real attention-grabber but all the photos contributed to the winter event story. Some photos would have been stronger if closer to the subject or tighter crop.

3rd Place **Gaylord Herald Times**
 St. Baldricks Day 2014
 Chris Engle

Each shot was strong enough to have stood alone, but together they created a nice compilation with interesting descriptions. The picture of the girl holding up the pink hair easily could have been the dominant photo on the page.

Hon. Mention **Oceana's Herald-Journal**
 Pic a day
 Andrew Skinner

Good idea. Even without captions, the photographer's challenge to take a photo of something orange every day in October was a new idea that was visually entertaining and deserves recognition.

Weekly/Specialty D - Photo Story

22 Entries

Some entries could have been stronger without having so many posed photographs. Also, if you're going to feature one person in a great shot - take the time to get his or her name. Readers want to know who they are seeing in the paper.

1st Place **Oxford Leader**

Lest we forget

C.J. Carnacchio

Interesting visuals that represent many different aspects of the Memorial Day observance. Well composed photos, although some were cropped a little tight, perhaps to fit the space.

2nd Place **Oxford Leader**

A doggone good cause

C.J. Carnacchio

Even published in black and white these photos have a lot of color. Great angles and expressions, especially the dog frisking pic. Nice job.

3rd Place **Chelsea Standard**

Up, up and away

Nichole Seguin

I was looking for more vivid expressions in the main photo, but overall a nice compilation of pictures. Could have cut down on the number to give better photos more play.

Hon. Mention **State Line Observer**

Exploding art

David Green

Although the headline is a bit misleading since no photos actually show an "explosion," good work getting different activities and angles for this feature.

Sports Photograph

Daily A - Sports Photograph

11 Entries

All the entries were keepers. It was hard to narrow them down to the top four.

1st Place **Grand Rapids Press**

Calder Cup finals

Cory Morse

It's a train wreck in front of the goal, but the readers' eye naturally follows the action to the puck inside the net. Everything comes together here to make a great action shot.

2nd Place **Detroit Free Press**

Tough loss

Julian Gonzalez

Appling is the loneliest man in a crowded room. This photo perfectly captures the dejection both he and all MSU fans were feeling.

3rd Place **Detroit Free Press**

Brawl

Kirthmon Dozier

Capturing an angry moment during an intense rivalry game, this photo gives the flavor of Michigan/Ohio State football.

Hon. Mention **Grand Rapids Press**

Warrior Dash celebration

Chris Clark

Those big smiles pierce through all the mud and chaos to make this an intriguing photo.

Daily B - Sports Photograph

7 Entries

Every entry in this category was very strong. First and second were tough to decide, but I was swayed by the emotion shown by the high school players.

Flint and Lansing have some great photographers on their staffs.

1st Place

Won by one

Samuel Wilson

The sheer exuberance of the players, the fans behind them...this perfectly captures the winning moment in high school sports.

2nd Place **Lansing State Journal**

MSU Big Ten Champs

Greg DeRuitter

Perfectly framed photo that puts an exclamation point on a championship season.

3rd Place **Flint Journal**

Defeated

Katie McLean

The reality of a tournament loss sinks in on the face of this basketball player.

Hon. Mention **Flint Journal**

Heart

Jake May

I can tell the photographer put thought into composing this shot. It is tastefully done. I hope the feature story it went with was equally compelling.

Daily C - Sports Photograph

34 Entries

Overall I saw solid images catching moments unique to sports.

What separated the top pictures was each image telling one small story, one brief moment, at a glance.

1st Place **Jackson Citizen Patriot**

Wipe Out

J. Scott Park

This is one of hundreds or thousands of moments in a tough race, and in this shot, the reader feels the participant's pain.

2nd Place **Kalamazoo Gazette**

Portage Central Mustangs celebrate historic win

Mark Bugnaski

A unique jubilation shot, not from eye level or an overhead Hail Mary, but low down and intimate in a crowd.

3rd Place **Bay City Times**

Sorrow in the dugout

Rachel Sonnenshine

Loss is different for every player, and this image isolates one player's reaction in a clean, well composed image.

Hon. Mention **Saginaw News**

Millington halftime through the legs

Neil Barris

Good use of coach as a framing device. Like the look of the different players.

Daily D - Sports Photograph

46 Entries

These winning photos give a range of reaction, I am amazed at the many faces seen in first, several meaningful stories with good photos and then images taken at a deeper level.

1st Place **Grand Haven Tribune**

Breathtaking victory

Matt DeYoung

Capturing euphoria and lots of faces, Very rare to have this many 'yeah' faces visible.

2nd Place **The Ann Arbor News**

Michigan sophomore Trey Burke flies through the air as he is fouled during the second half of the national championship game at the Georgia Dome in Atlanta

Melanie Maxwell

A true, above the rafters, other players, horizontal, circus like action photo.

3rd Place

Mud run

Jason Juno

Yuck, you may have braved the mud, or getting splashed in this shot, but way to get the dirty of it.

Hon. Mention

Livingston County Daily Press & Argus

Howell girls fall to Kettering

Gillis Benedict

I believe this is a more difficult capture, than some of the more colorful entries, great expression is not difficult, but a look of squished up against a hand is.

Weekly/Specialty A - Sports Photograph

5 Entries

All entries were from one paper, the News-Herald. Dave C. and Dave H. do a nice job showing non-traditional sports.

1st Place

Cheer Champs

Dave Chapman

The facial expressions on the girls make this a winner.

2nd Place

Downriver's Strongest Man

Dave Chapman

Instead of the actual competition, you captured the "strongest man" getting ready to do battle.

3rd Place

Grand Prix Madonna's top Devil's Night Dames

Dave Herndon

This "Madonna" looks tough. Nice picture.

Weekly/Specialty B - Sports Photograph

10 Entries

Only 10 entries in this group, but all are solid sports photos.

1st Place

Patriot Brendan Ballard regains control of the ball after shot is blocked

Kelly Taylor-Jerome

The intensity of this tournament game comes through in this photo. Nice job.

2nd Place

Swan Valley's Ben Hart gets tripped up by Essexville Garber's Noah Bargouthy...

Jon McQuinn

This is a very good photo, catching action at the peak. Needed to be played larger on the page for more impact.

3rd Place

Fenton's Brent Nakkula (right) congratulates Brant Cassidy

David Troppens

State meet...record set...emotion captured. Good job.

Hon. Mention

FLY TO THE BALL

Keith Salisbury

Judge did not comment.

Weekly/Specialty C - Sports Photograph

40 Entries

This was a big category to judge with a lot of good photos that didn't quite rise to the top. But keep up the good work!

The Daily Globe

The News-Herald

The News-Herald

The News-Herald

Huron County View

Township View

Tri-County Times

Tri-County Citizen

1st Place

State Champs (top photo)

Renato Jamett

Winners and losers of the state championship game wrapped up in one great photo. Brings to mind the old ABC Sports opening, "Thrill of Victory, Agony of Defeat."

2nd Place

5K Whee!

Mike Spencer

Shooting a road race can be mundane, until you get a kid like this to liven it up.

3rd Place

Sports, Illustrated

John Cook

This just makes you smile. The youngster is listening so intently.

Hon. Mention Houghton Lake Resorter & Roscommon Co. Herald-News

MAKING THE PLAY

Krista Tacey-Cater

This is a solid entry that begs for tighter cropping. You caught the action at its peak.

Weekly/Specialty D - Sports Photograph

24 Entries

1st Place

Wayland suffers stunning loss to Linden in regional final

Jason Wesseldyk

This photo has a million interesting things to look at, which makes it great. From the players, to the umpire, to the coach, to the fans in the background, and the dust flying. Well done.

2nd Place

Drew sets new school records in shot, discus

Scott Sullivan

This is a well composed photograph. the main subject is in focus with good bokeh and blurriness in the background. The expression on the runner is clear and the shadows from the sun are not distracting. The school name visible on the hurdle is an added touch.

3rd Place

Secured Save!

Vicki Stenglein

An extremely difficult moment to capture as the goalie is often obstructed in situations like this. With that said, the photograph is a bit blurry due to all of the other players in the frame.

Daily A - Sports Writing

10 Entries

Winning entries showed a good combination between intelligent analysis and storytelling elements which set a compelling scene.

1st Place

Rose up!

Joe Rexrode

2nd Place

Michigan football and the two-point conversion that didn't convert

Brendan Quinn

3rd Place

Jordan Morgan's last stand sends Michigan to Elite Eight, debunks mismatch questions

Brendan Quinn

Hon. Mention

Michigan State football changes national narrative: there's a new Big Ten boss, and it wears green

Mike Griffith

Grosse Pointe News

Leelanau Enterprise

Tuscola County Advertiser

Allegan County News

The Commercial Record

Frankenmuth News

Detroit Free Press

Grand Rapids Press

Grand Rapids Press

Grand Rapids Press

Daily B - Sports Writing

10 Entries

1st Place

Defining play of the season

Chris Solari

A great inside look zeroing in on one turning-point moment.

2nd Place

Irish are state champs

Drew Ellis

This is the way game stories should be written. Compelling lede, some play-by-play, a little behind the scenes detail and good transitions to tie it all together.

3rd Place

Pressure keys MSU victory

Chris Solari

Judge did not comment.

Hon. Mention

Three-team deal nets Tigers Iglesias

Matthew Mowery

Judge did not comment.

Lansing State Journal

The Oakland Press

Lansing State Journal

The Oakland Press

Daily C - Sports Writing

25 Entries

1st Place

Eric Fisher's rise to the pros

Cory Butzin

Judge did not comment.

2nd Place

Fear in Boston

Dennis Chase, James Cook

Judge did not comment.

3rd Place

Grass Lake High School senior Julia Covill races one final inspiring race less than two years after nearly dying in crash

Rich McGowan

Judge did not comment.

Saginaw News

Traverse City Record-Eagle

Jackson Citizen Patriot

Sports Writing

Daily C - Sports Writing

Entries

Hon. Mention

Ithaca football seniors extend lasting legacy and graduate undefeated with 56-game winning streak

Cory Butzin

Judge did not comment.

Saginaw News

Daily D - Sports Writing

49 Entries

1st Place

Hail yes!

Matt DeYoung

Sharp writing, great use of quotes, story flowed perfectly. Turned a mundane soccer game into something exciting to read.

2nd Place

Something special

Marc Vieau

Wonderful job of capturing a special moment. The piece flowed nicely and the writer made judicious use of terrific quotes. Made the reader feel part of the event.

Grand Haven Tribune

Cadillac News

3rd Place

Brighton christens its new home with win

Tim Robinson

Solid gamer, really makes you feel the athlete's sense of exhaustion. Well-organized story that's packed with information.

Hon. Mention

CMU gymnastics has a day, posts fourth-best score in program history en route to quad win

Jim Lahde

Love the use of the word "cataclysmic." Shows that sport writers don't need to dumb it down for their audience. Well-written piece that keeps a reader riveted.

Livingston County Daily Press & Argus

Morning Sun

Weekly/Specialty A - Sports Writing

17 Entries

lot of good stories, in fact all of them were good. the ones that won were a cut above with description, action accounts, quotes and personal thoughts.

1st Place

Lincoln Park breaks 66-game losing streak with 34-20 victory

David Komer, Dave Herndon

This could have been just another game story or it could have been a casual story about a win that ended a losing streak.

Instead this story is about as great as the win that ended the longest losing streak in Michigan history. It is well told and the best thing about it is when you read it you feel like you just witnessed history. You almost feel as if you were there.

Good story for a first place winner.

2nd Place

Trenton wins D2 crown in battle of league champs

Samantha Elliott

I have been writing sports for over 40 years and I played some college soccer so I am familiar with both writing sports and playing soccer. It is great to see someone actually write a strong soccer story with good play by play and quotes.

The game itself was somewhat lopsided but the writer kept it interesting throughout. Best soccer story I have read in a long time....maybe ever. Nice work.

3rd Place

Two Downriver natives to compete in Olympic speed skating events

Dave Herndon

Even though this is a unique story and isn't one that can be found often the writer does more than just report it. The writer introduces the competitors and tells how they got there, bringing in some personal history about both young women. An enjoyable story worth telling and reading. good job....

Hon. Mention

A familiar sight: Trenton dominates Hartland and wins 14th MHSAA state hockey championship

Hank Minckiewicz

Hockey is a fast paced game and this is a fast paced story. There is some excellent description here and the account of the match was just as excellent. I come from an area with little high school hockey and I wish I could have the opportunity to cover it to see if I could come anywhere close to being this good. nice work

The News-Herald

The News-Herald

The News-Herald

Weekly/Specialty B - Sports Writing

8 Entries

1st Place

Fenton's Garcia caps outstanding prep career with third straight state title

David Troppens

A complete story in every way. When I finish a story and feel I would know the person written about if I ran into him I know it did what it was supposed to

Tri-County Times

do. A very good story which actually covers four years of wrestling and four years of success. Liked it a lot.

2nd Place **Tri-County Times**

Lake Fenton's Donoho shocks field, caps career with D3 171-pound crown

David Troppens

A come out of nowhere wrestler that provided the writer a chance to tell a very good story. Liked the quotes and how the article really focused on the young man and what he set his mind to win the title. Very good job.

3rd Place **Huron County View**

Deering: 'I want to be the best of the best'

Kelly Taylor-Jerome

A good look at a young athlete as to where she is today, how she got there and where she wants to go. Told in a way you could almost see the beads of sweat coming of her as she works to reach her goal. Would have liked to know more about her family and school life which I feel would have made this better but still an excellent entry.

Hon. Mention **Bay Voice**

Marine City overpowering in claiming state championship

Brian Marshall

This entry caught all the excitement that comes with a state title and told the story well through stats, scoring, quotes and solid descriptive writing. A good sports story which is what this contest is all about.

Sports Writing

Weekly/Specialty C - Sports Writing

45 Entries

A lot of entries were just game stories and some of them did not include following pages where the story continued.

The winners took the extra step and found something other than the game to write about. I was impressed with how they developed the stories and how well written they were.

1st Place **Plymouth Observer**

A night for Fred

Tim Smith

A very special story about a special person. It was good from the start. Some stories fall off as they go but this one was strong throughout. I felt I know the late coach after reading this. An excellent entry and I am glad I got to read it. Nice work.

2nd Place **Farmington Observer**

State Champs

Dan O'Meara

This story captures the complete story of the win and how special it was for the players for other reasons than just the game. The story was attention getting from the start and the game recap was well done too. A good entry. good work

3rd Place **The Exponent**

Repeat complete

Jeff Steers

Not a conventional story because many states do not have high school bowling. But this one told the story of a great accomplishment by a close group of girls who were there for each other. A very good story about a very good team.

Hon. Mention **Plymouth Observer**

The Great Outdoors

Tim Smith

A different experience for a hockey team. Reminds me of the pond hockey that was popular in areas before facilities were built. It was a fun story to read and one I am glad to have done so. Keep up the good work

Weekly/Specialty D - Sports Writing

16 Entries

Some wrote basic game stories and some took the extra step. The extra step got the top awards though there were a couple others that were very, very close.

1st Place **Allegan County News**

State champs: Saugatuck boys claim first state track title in school history

Jason Wesseldyk

When it comes to covering track this entry had a bit of everything in it and was a very good portrayal of the state title. interesting about the thrower and about everything else that went into getting the title. took some time, I'll bet to get this done but the effort was well worth it. Nice work.

2nd Place **Tecumseh Herald**

Tecumseh's varsity softball teams wins third state final

Mickey Alvarado

About as good as it gets in presenting a story that does more than recount the game. This story flows well and the supporting pictures tell a great story too. I feel this is a very complete attempt at covering a special event. Nice job.

3rd Place **The Advance**

Blissfield's Cairo Top County Runner

Melissa Burnor

I would imagine the hardest part of this article was getting a 14 year old to talk. The writer must have put her at ease as she told what it was like to compete as well as what she wants the future to hold for her. It was a good, solid story. Good work.

Hon. Mention **Tecumseh Herald**

Nearly half of THS wrestling team contracts staph infection

Mickey Alvarado

Some investigating reporting as well as sports reporting here. The question I came away with was about the coach. You refer to him as "former coach." I felt the story needed how "former" came about. Was he released from his duties or did he resign? But other than that the story was very well done.

Sports Columnist

Daily A - Sports Columnist

10 Entries

1st Place **Grand Rapids Press**

Nick Baumgardner

All three columns entered show writer has an impressive, in-depth knowledge of subject matter. The "no regrets" and Izzo/Beilein comparisons were particularly well written.

2nd Place **Detroit Free Press**

Mitch Albom

Strong look at impact of PEDs in baseball. Interesting take on the N-word.

3rd Place **Grand Rapids Press**

Brendan Quinn

The "songs of reality" column was cleverly crafted -- a stand out among generally solid entries.

Hon. Mention **Detroit Free Press**

Jeff Seidel

Suicide column was highlight -- a compelling story very well told.

Daily B - Sports Columnist

6 Entries

1st Place **Lansing State Journal**

Graham Couch

Columnist provides a nice voice and used great descriptive words. The first few paragraphs really draw readers in.

2nd Place **The Oakland Press**

Matthew Mowery
Clever use of Google to kick off struggling pitcher column. Also enjoyed the look at how a winning pitcher responded to success with direct quotes from a series of post-game interviews. Good use of descriptive words with the catcher's mask.

3rd Place **The Oakland Press**

Marvin Goodwin
Samuel L. Jackson column was the highlight.

Hon. Mention **Flint Journal**

Eric Woodyard
Enjoyed the column that focused on the family tradition of basketball success.

Daily C - Sports Columnist

10 Entries **Saginaw News**

1st Place
 Hugh Bernreuter
Nicely done weaving story elements so that even if you don't know the sport you feel like you know the person you had me at "There's a reason Alex Grace wears a No. 9 on his chest. It's to cover the hole in his heart." and never let me go. Well written and exceptional pieces.

2nd Place **Bay City Times**

Lee Thompson
Great imagery in a story about a football conference realignment squabble

3rd Place **Jackson Citizen Patriot**

Rich McGowan
Great imagery in a story about a football conference realignment squabble

Hon. Mention **Jackson Citizen Patriot**

Jeff Bleiler
Good job making bowling interesting to non-bowlers. Good story about the older bowler.

Daily D - Sports Columnist

24 Entries **Battle Creek Enquirer**

1st Place
 Bill Broderick
Well done pieces that told real stories rather than just rehashing what the talking heads on ESPN said the night before.

2nd Place **Ludington Daily News**

David Bossick
Great storytelling. Loved the description of the little girl getting the autographs.

3rd Place **Livingston County Daily Press & Argus**

Tim Robinson
Liked how it recognized and addressed issues of racism in sports without pulling any punches.

Hon. Mention **Huron Daily Tribune**

Seth Stapleton
Clever and well written. Especially the March madness entry which expressed the frustration of any pool participant.

Weekly/Specialty A - Sports Columnist

3 Entries **Lapeer Area View**

1st Place
 Robert Jones
Strong writing, detailed reminiscences. The Derby column was fantastic.

2nd Place **The News-Herald**

Samantha Elliott
Story of logging miles to follow the Final Fours was fun to read. The two online columns read more like straight sports stories than columns.

Weekly/Specialty B - Sports Columnist

2 Entries **Tri-County Times**

1st Place
 David Troppens
Solid opinions. Relatable stories on sports as a bond between brothers. Well-written conversational style.

2nd Place **Bay Voice**

Brian Marshall
The fans list made me want to meet some of these fantastical, fanatical sports characters.

Weekly/Specialty C - Sports Columnist

10 Entries **Gaylord Herald Times**

1st Place
 Chris Engle
Well-researched columns. The flight story painted a vivid picture.

2nd Place **The Exponent**

Jeff Steers
Witty and informative columns. The 5K story was entertaining, inspiring and heartfelt.

3rd Place **Leelanau Enterprise**

Mike Spencer
Judge did not comment.

Weekly/Specialty D - Sports Columnist

4 Entries **State Line Observer**

1st Place
 Rich Foley
Great driver profiles. Solid writing on a sport about which I know very little...kept me interested throughout.

2nd Place **The Advance**

Chad Hutchinson
Deep knowledge of the teams he covers. Passion for sports at all levels shows through.

3rd Place **Allegan County News**

Jason Wesseldyk
Good personal profile story about photographer who passed away. Poor quality of electronic page scans made the text very difficult to read. Distracting.

Sports Feature

Daily A - Sports Feature

15 Entries **Detroit Free Press**

1st Place
"It was just head games, constant head games"
 Mick McCabe, Mark Snyder
Wonderfully detailed article about a tough subject. Surely was controversial, but all sides were able to be represented fairly and equally.

2nd Place **Grand Rapids Press**

Bricks won't be only weight Jim Dreyer has with him in Lake St. Clair swim

Cory Olsen
Vividly well written. Great article about triumphs with adversity in many different forms.

3rd Place **Detroit Free Press**

William Clay Ford: The Lion King
 Dave Birkett
Well done piece with historical and modern flare. Unfortunate the Lions organization did not respond to comment. Would have added another dimension to the article.

Daily B - Sports Feature

13 Entries

1st Place**Lansing State Journal***'When he died, I died'*

Graham Couch

*Gut wrenching story that is very well written and flows easily.***2nd Place****Flint Journal***Flint's 'Champ' Anthony Dirrell gets shot at making the title official with WBC bout against champion Sakio Bika*

Eric Woodyard

*Great feel good story about overcoming adversity to find success. Headline is a bit lengthy.***3rd Place****Flint Journal***From walk-on to Rose Bowl hero: The story of Goodrich's Kyler Elsworth*

Blake Thorne

*Wonderful article about an athlete taking the harder road and finding success. Perhaps a bit too many sentence fragments.***Daily C - Sports Feature**

28 Entries

*There were about 4-5 other articles that I considered an "8" or "9" in this category on a scale of 10. So many others could have been acknowledged.**What a great collection of compelling stories, and a breadth of topics.***1st Place****Bay City Times***Toughman returns to its roots*

Lee Thompson

*In an absolutely loaded category, loved everything about this piece. Newsy tie-in, local story with national implications, marvelous portrait of rise-and-fall (something I wouldn't normally be interested in, but I was hooked the whole way through), great lede and great visuals. Everything I read from this writer was fascinating.***2nd Place****Kalamazoo Gazette***The narrowing field*

Julie Mack

*Told this stories several different ways, with supplemental opinion piece, great visuals, and compelling storytelling in the primary piece. This project took a great deal of planning and was executed to a T.***3rd Place****Saginaw News***Despite heart condition, St. Charles teen finds his rhythm*

Hugh Bernreuter

*There were many compelling stories in this category about athletes overcoming health problems, and this one rose above with its writing style and usage of quotes that went beyond the run-of-the-mill. The mother's quote broke my heart: "It's not just for me. Everybody is watching him. If he gets knocked down, he knows he has to give a thumb's up."***Hon. Mention****Times Herald***Collateral damage*

Anthony Odoardi

*Major bonus points for using a compelling visual that required planning and perfect execution for the subject matter. The story itself is excellent, using one local story as a case study to examine the broader policy in play. Tough questions were asked, great quotes were obtained for the record that highlighted the controversy, and even though I think I know where the writer stands, I'm not certain (and that's a good thing).***Daily D - Sports Feature**

52 Entries

*What a strong field. Glad to see so many sportswriters are telling great stories brought out by the challenge of athletics, rather than telling me yesterday's score.**The difference between such great sportswriters was the ability to keep digging, finding one more thing the reader needs to be wowed.*

Circulation Class Breakdown: Daily Class A – 60,000 or more; Daily Class B – 30,000-59,999; Daily Class C – 15,000-29,999; Daily Class D – under 15,000; Weekly/Specialty Class A – 25,000 or more; Weekly/Specialty Class B – 10,000- 24,999; Weekly/Specialty Class C – 4,000- 9,999; Weekly/Specialty Class D – under 4,000.

1st Place**Grand Haven Tribune***Driving for the dream*

Matt DeYoung

*A great, multi-source story told from a different angle. Any newspaper or sportswriter could tell this story, but DeYoung did. His second entry on Marathon Moms shows his depth and ability to bring non-traditional stories alive.***2nd Place****Midland Daily News***Midland High champion swimmer Abbi Schieber proves she's ... an overcomer*

Fred Kelly

*It's tough to get a high school athlete to share so much, but Kelly gave a deep and well-rounded story. He did a sportswriter's first job, give us the incredible story of extra-ordinary people.***3rd Place****Daily Mining Gazette***Alley Dogs, a key part of Tech's defense*

Michael Bleach

*Jargon, jargon, jargon.**A sportswriter who went the next step to cut through it and show the complexity and unique nature of an important team in his coverage area.***Hon. Mention****The Pioneer***No game at all*

Greg Buckner

*One of the most important stories told in this group. The science is complex and I hope this is the first of many stories on player safety and welfare.***Weekly/Specialty A - Sports Feature**

14 Entries

1st Place**The News-Herald***Dunn right*

Frank Wladyslawski

*Like the lede and am impressed with the overall coverage of the hockey event, with three stories on the front by three different writers. Engaging photo to accompany package, and felt this was the centerpiece story with appropriate focus on standout player.***2nd Place****The News-Herald***Former Card standout back on track*

Dave Herndon

*Really liked the visual of the Iowa cornfields giving this player a low-key environment in which he thrived. Good underdog story.***3rd Place****The News-Herald***Quick learners: Twins Sierra and Shainna Yacoub take only months to become state-level divers*

Samantha Elliott

*Great quotes from the subjects.***Weekly/Specialty B - Sports Feature**

6 Entries

1st Place**Bay Voice***Young guide takes seasoned reporter on the ice*

Brian Marshall

*Definitely respect the legwork required to tell this story, and the writer paints an excellent picture showcasing a different side of a local athlete.***2nd Place****Township View***Youngblade reflects on early career at Central State*

Jon McQuinn

*Nice portrait of a coach with a unique background.***3rd Place****Tri-County Times***Morrison loving life as pro on motocross circuit*

David Troppens

Good use of imagery to tell story (picture on the wall), gives reader a sense that you were actually in the living room.

Weekly/Specialty C - Sports Feature**45 Entries**

Hard to narrow down my top eight choices.

All were compelling and stories that put a new twist on sport feature stories.

I had to put the top 4 in order a number of times before I felt I got it right.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity.

1st Place**Gaylord Herald Times**

Courageous Courtright family celebrates achievement through challenging time

Matt Wenzel

The was so much more than a letter of intent story. The emotion and love of mother and daughter shines through. Great job with a very personal story on this young athlete.

2nd Place**Sanilac County News**

Cross-country journey

Dale Ball

This story took me on a bike journey I would never have the guts to do. The story and journal entries made for a great adventure. Good layout and graphics too.

3rd Place Houghton Lake Resorter & Roscommon Co. Herald-News

Longtime Tiger fan still in the game

Thomas Reznich

Great pictures draw you into the story. Nice little piece of baseball history.

Hon. Mention**Tuscola County Advertiser**

Hawkeyes give hope to Hoppe

Chad Wingert, Dave Wohl

This was a great story following a tragic death. The headline says it all.

Weekly/Specialty D - Sports Feature**13 Entries****1st Place****State Line Observer**

Seth Borton lands bass fishing coach job

David Green

Very interesting and well written article bringing awareness to a lesser known sport. Including the history and the popularity of it at other schools was a nice touch.

2nd Place**Allegan County News**

Coming up Roses: Plainwell's Conklin basks in MSU's Rose Bowl victory

Walter Kaechele

Well written piece on an athlete that serves as a good role model for younger kids in the community, how success can be achieved.

3rd Place**The Advance**

Through 100 seasons, Thompson there for kids

Chad Hutchinson

People who devote their entire lives to helping their community through athletics are truly special people that are appreciated by so many. Well written piece.

Sports Coverage**Daily A - Sports Coverage****1 Entries****1st Place****Grand Rapids Press**

On the front of the Local Sports/Sports pages, I feel the blue colored text is too large at the top and distracts from the main story farther down the page, which should be the focus. The Dennis story has good flow and the bold headlines help break up the important parts well. I'm a big fan of keeping things clean cut and symmetrical, which your paper does that quite nicely. Some of the pages have a bit too much white space for my liking, but they are easy to read. Whenever possible, I would like to see you continue to use your own staff's photographs. On the Byline respecting the veterans story, I feel the four photos on the bottom are almost too small. I'd rather see one

photo and have it be larger. A very neat and clean layout though that is aesthetically pleasing.

Daily B - Sports Coverage**3 Entries****1st Place****Lansing State Journal**

Some really wonderful action shots, especially of the high school sports. They are large enough that the great composition of the photograph is clear to the reader and compelling. A bit of a traditional layout, which isn't all bad, but perhaps experiment more with some new fonts to make the layout more visually appealing. Good variety of sports covered.

2nd Place**Flint Journal**

The layout is clean, however I feel it is sometimes a bit busy and not easy to look at. I would like to see larger, more captivating photos. Quality vs. quantity here, especially if it is a high quality action shot. Good balance of variety of different sports covered. On the stories with larger headlines, there is a bit too much white space next to the red flags. The Michigan/Michigan State bobblehead graphics for the Big 10 basketball title were innovative.

3rd Place**The Oakland Press**

I'd like to see a better use of photographs with some of the articles. Make them more engaging. Sometimes the copy to photograph ratio was really high, example, the soccer preview issue. Nice clean layout, and good variety of sports covered, such as the boxing.

Daily C - Sports Coverage**4 Entries****1st Place****Muskegon Chronicle**

I'm conflicted -- on the one hand, this is by far the best of the lot, with exceptional layout and graphics, quality writing and superior photography. But not being from Michigan, I'm not well acquainted with the MLive brand and am unsure how many resources from beyond the "local" sphere contributed to this product. Ultimately, there is enough local content in my mind, and the presentation is off the charts.

2nd Place**Kalamazoo Gazette**

Great lede on a state-championship golf story, love the overall layout and use of breakout quotes. Great photo on "We'll be Back" story really hammers home sentiment of article. Looks professional in all aspects.

3rd Place**Times Herald**

Excellent lead stories by Paul Costanzo (NHL Draft prospect) and Anthony Odoardi (basketball gamer), with the latter rising above standard just-the-facts game coverage. Headlines could be catchier, notably on state-championship football story.

Daily D - Sports Coverage**15 Entries****1st Place****Battle Creek Enquirer**

Clear-cut winner in this category. Beautiful layout, excellent lead feature about a town's discontinued football team with supplemental opinion piece of equal quality. Love the prep gameday package and golf piece (which I presume to be part of an ongoing feature). Excellent integration of photography into the coverage.

2nd Place**Grand Haven Tribune**

Took some risks in presentation that paid off (using a scripty font in a headline, creative use of photo for main piece). Solid lede writing and overall story construction. Like the varsity page a lot.

3rd Place**Livingston County Daily Press & Argus**

Really like the writing of Tim Robinson, particularly enjoying his Uncle Zub feature. Great emphasis on emotional photography in volleyball issue.

Hon. Mention**The Mining Journal**

I like the engaging layout -- it's just a little too busy in a couple places. Headlines pop but work too literally with story ledes, and the leading is a little too pronounced. With just a couple tweaks, I think the overall layout would be really, really sharp, because the concepts are already there. Solid writing. Definitely worthy of mention here.

Circulation Class Breakdown: Daily Class A – 60,000 or more; Daily Class B – 30,000-59,999; Daily Class C – 15,000-29,999; Daily Class D – under 15,000; Weekly/Specialty Class A – 25,000 or more; Weekly/Specialty Class B – 10,000-24,999; Weekly/Specialty Class C – 4,000-9,999; Weekly/Specialty Class D – under 4,000.

Weekly/Specialty A - Sports Coverage**1 Entry****1st Place****The News-Herald**

Really enjoyed the coverage of the football team snapping its losing streak (great story; best of the bunch in what was submitted) and I'm impressed the paper could send three writers to cover a state hockey championship. Great breadth of coverage for that event, with two sidebars and a superior lead photo. I encourage the writers to continue experimenting with their ledes and find different ways to grab the reader's attention, but the substance was plentiful.

Weekly/Specialty B - Sports Coverage**1 Entry****1st Place****Tri-County Times**

The highlight of the coverage is the use of graphic elements, particularly a visually-enhanced softball box score that really finds a great way to tell the story in a unique way. Supplemental elements are clean and appealing. I like that the writer produces a rail of content from his own point of view. Buried his best wrestling photo (for the sake of a cutout on the front, which I understand) and seemed to struggle more with the wrestling content than the other sports, but quality storytelling overall.

Weekly/Specialty C - Sports Coverage**8 Entries**

This was my hardest category to judge. The entries are all so strong. Great job, Michigan newspapers!

1st Place**The County Press, Lapeer**

You cover prep sports from head to toe. And stories on the finals games (fb, bb, hockey, etc.) in the East-West rivalry are sure to be scrapbook material for many of your readers. Great job!

2nd Place**Gaylord Herald Times**

This is a very comprehensive sports section, starting with great high school coverage. The outdoors and snowmobiling pages make it even better.

3rd Place**Plymouth Observer**

This is another great local sports section. I commend you on the handling of the soccer coach's firing. The column on that subject was spot-on.

Hon. Mention**Leelanau Enterprise**

Strong photography and thorough local sports coverage put this entry right up there with the others.

Weekly/Specialty D - Sports Coverage**6 Entries**

Overall, a nice job done by the papers in this circulation group. The winner got the nod with its breadth of coverage

1st Place**State Line Observer**

Strong writing and photography; good breadth of coverage, from high school sports to racing to recreational sports. I like the nice clean layout of the pages

2nd Place**Allegan County News**

Strong photography and a nice writing style. This paper gives its readers a very thorough coverage of high school sports.

3rd Place**The Advance**

This paper is serious about covering high school sports. I can appreciate all the work put in on the extra pages that previewed the football playoffs

Hon. Mention**Frankenmuth News**

Strong photography, good coverage of local sports and a nice, crisp layout.

Most Innovative Story Telling**Daily A - Most Innovative Story Telling****4 Entries**

Winner's entry provided in-depth analysis, covering all angles, which made package fun to read and watch all at the same time. That's how it separated itself from the field.

1st Place**Grand Rapids Press***Fifth Third Ballpark fire*

Great collection of stories and supporting methods, covering all angles of the story.

2nd Place**Grand Rapids Press***Historic 2013 flood: Then and now*

Winner's entry provided in-depth analysis, covering all angles, which made package fun to read and watch all at the same time. That's how it separated itself from the field.

3rd Place**Detroit Free Press***Nathan Bomey's bankruptcy trial blog*

Nathan Bomey, Brent Snavelly, Alisa Pridle

Judge did not comment.

Daily B - Most Innovative Story Telling**6 Entries**

This is a highly competitive category. The depth and variety of storytelling are major components in the ranking of several excellent entries. Even those stories that did not receive honorable mention demonstrated polished writing skills.

1st Place**Flint Journal***Genesee Towers Implosion*

Blake Thorne, Jeremy Allen, Flint Journal

The story of Genesee Towers is told vividly in words and images. Detailed descriptive writing tying the towers with Flint's past, changes in the city and how the implosion was done are the cornerstone of the series. The series is greatly enhanced with video, particularly the multiple views of the implosion. The photos are taken from so many vantage points throughout the series. None the high-quality work feels duplicative. It was a joy to read and watch. Great teamwork.

2nd Place**Lansing State Journal***Silence of the Wolves*

Louise Knott Ahern, Rod Sanford, Dave Wasinger

Thorough research of the subject is complemented by storytelling techniques, including a storybook approach. A key part of the tale is the environmental impact as well as the larger story of wolves. The graphics and presentation of them are exceptionally well done. Each aspect adds to the story.

3rd Place**Lansing State Journal***Connecting the Corridor*

Lindsay VanHulle, Greg DeRuiter, Dave Wasinger

A variety of sources and data highlight the impact of the change. The players in the development and its impact are keys in a well-rounded story. Visual features play a huge role in explaining the corridor and they shine in well laid-out pages.

Hon. Mention**Flint Journal***Flint needs federal aid for firefighting force*

Kristin Longley, Dominic Adams

While the advocacy approach of the need for federal aid for firefighting is effective, the category is extremely competitive.

Daily C - Most Innovative Story Telling**5 Entries****1st Place****Saginaw News***Living Dangerously*

Brad Devereaux, Bob Johnson, Andy Hoag

Focusing on people and telling the story of Saginaw's dangers through their eyes while deftly supplying the facts through exhaustive research make this a clear winner. Importantly, the series addresses what police have attempted to combat the violence. Interactive features, informational graphics and quality photos enhance a gripping series. Fine staff work overall. Readers' responses showed staff engaged them in the telling of the story.

2nd Place Muskegon Chronicle

Eric Krnysz murder trial in the killing of state police trooper

John Hausman, Ken Stevens, Natalie Kolb

Clearly, a murder trial that gripped the community is told in great detail that captures the drama. The variety in the online photo gallery as well as the live feeds contributed to the overall value of the coverage.

3rd Place Muskegon Chronicle

Demolition of the Sappi paper mill

Dave Alexander, Lisha Arino, Ken Stevens, Natalie Kolb, Theophil Syslo, Megan Wenzl

Informative story about the paper mill and its demolition is enhanced by comprehensive multi-media approach including photos. It was a tough choice between this and the eventual second-place winner.

Daily D - Most Innovative Story Telling

5 Entries

1st Place

Battle Creek Enquirer

Granting Wishes

Justin Hinkley, Dave Wassinger, John Grap

A deep look at the hard news, with the much-needed personal side – video and photo top off well-done presentation.

2nd Place Livingston County Daily Press & Argus

Bikers urge kids to read

Gillis Benedict, Jim Totten

Great subject, nice story and angles in video (can't help but smile and leaves viewer wanting more). Photo on front really draws you in.

3rd Place Livingston County Daily Press & Argus

'Worth every minute of it'

Alan Ward, Amanda Whitesell

Really attractive front page layout and graphic. Typo below the video is among first thing a viewer sees – distracting. Nice photo gallery but some photos a bit repetitive. Pick only the very best to post.

Weekly/Specialty A - Most Innovative Story Telling

6 Entries

1st Place

The News-Herald

Foot Clan spoils TMNT world record attempt at Gibraltar Trade Center

Dave Herndon

Video of turtles creator added a lot to the story. The slide show gave life and flavor. Sprinkling in captions added interest that kept the viewer going.

2nd Place The News-Herald

HFCC wrestling team wraps up inaugural season with six national qualifiers

Dave Herndon, Jeremy Stankewitz, Hass Doueik

The main video related the real flavor and excitement of the championships. The second video created good drama by starting in black and white and bursting into full color.

3rd Place The News-Herald

Taylor Veterans Program Surprises Former Marine, Family with New House

David Komer

Good video interview. Great slide show that captured the emotion in stills better than a video could. Also, the reader got to see the nice touches in the house.

Hon. Mention The News-Herald

Time Doesn't Diminish Memory of Soldier Who Paid Ultimate Price in Vietnam

Jim Kasuba, Dave Herndon, Erica McClain, Rick Kessler

The recent video effectively shows the pain of family and friends at the balloon launch. The narrated slide shows the vet created himself made his experience of Vietnam very real for readers/viewers.

Weekly/Specialty B - Most Innovative Story Telling

1 Entry

1st Place

Tri-County Times

Lobdell Lake Chili Cook-off

Tim Jagielo

A very fun video that really hit the highlights. Lots of good action.

Weekly/Specialty C - Most Innovative Story Telling

2 Entries

1st Place

Ypsilanti Courier

Color Run draws crowd of 15,000, dusts town in color

Krystal Elliott, Joe Pas

The print layout and photos were tremendous. The slide show and video effectively told the story of what it was like to run in the event.

2nd Place

Gaylord Herald Times

WILD Northern Michigan

Chris Engle, Morgan Sherburne

Story supplemented with photos and slide show relate the peace and beauty of the river in winter. Grouse slide show adds humor.

Weekly/Specialty D - Most Innovative Story Telling

1 Entry

1st Place

Chelsea Standard

Chelsea's Jiffy expansion means a lot more muffins

Nichole Seguin

Good angles in the stories. The video of the factory added a lot. The slide show that tells the story of the product from factory to store gives a painless and fun education. It even tells where the wheat, shortening and sugar come from. Well done.

Special Section

Daily A - Special Section

6 Entries

1st Place

Grand Rapids Press

President Gerald R. Ford's Centennial

Terrific photos, design, layout with great stories. Great way to celebrate the great President's life. All around, terrific job.

2nd Place

Detroit Free Press

The Mitt, 2014 Detroit Tigers season preview

Loved the layout, especially the cover.

3rd Place

Detroit Free Press

2014 North American International Auto Show

Great cover design, lots of insightful information

Hon. Mention

Grand Rapids Press

Dream Team

Judge did not comment.

Daily B - Special Section

6 Entries

1st Place

The Oakland Press

Michigan Travels 2014

From the vibrant colors, to fun fonts and eye-catching stories and photos, the section screams "pick me up and read me."

2nd Place

Flint Journal

Back to Bricks preview

Nice mix of art and stories. Good story ideas, including portable toilets – one of those things readers may not think about.

3rd Place

The Oakland Press

Sport Section

Eye-catching front. Nice mix of stories but layout gets a little too predictable.

Daily C - Special Section**10 Entries****1st Place****Times Herald**

Bucket of Blue: Living the life that defines the Blue Water Area Remained vibrant throughout with great art and themes. Love it.

2nd Place**Times Herald**

The Great Storm of 1913

What an interesting concept. You really did this justice and historic photos you dug up, amazing addition.

3rd Place**Traverse City Record-Eagle**

Vasa

Nice photos. Stories mainly about winners. would be nice to have Average Joe/Jane stories.

Daily D - Special Section**25 Entries**

I really enjoyed looking over this collection. A lot of great ideas. I felt the ones that separated themselves were the ones with great images. The images of the cover and inside use really stood out to me.

1st Place**Midland Daily News**

Midland Area Community Foundation - 40 and Forward 1973-2013

The cover design really made this one stand out from the rest. I enjoyed the inside design and use of photos.

2nd Place**The Mining Journal**

Superiorland Magazine 2013: Going to extremes: Wild Weather in the Upper Peninsula

Great cover. I liked the concept of review.

3rd Place**Daily Telegram**

2013 high school football preview section

I enjoyed the design. Something a little different to pull you in.

Hon. Mention**The Pioneer**

Pioneer Special Sections

The photography really pushed this one up.

Weekly/Specialty B - Special Section**7 Entries****1st Place****Tri-County Times**

Fall Sports Preview

Absolutely beautiful product! LOVE THIS! The only change I would recommend would be to run all the ads in color so it doesn't detract from the beautiful design.

2nd Place**Detroit Jewish News**

Celebrate!

Incredible! Neat niche product with beautiful layout and great editorial content! Long, too!

3rd Place**Tri-County Times**

Shop Our Towns

Decent publication. Not much for editorial content, but certainly a product the advertisers will be on board with. Very neat layout.

Hon. Mention**Detroit Jewish News**

Best of Michigan

Clean, interesting, beautiful design.

Weekly/Specialty C - Special Section**18 Entries****1st Place****Grosse Pointe News**

Bridal Guide

Gorgeous section. Lots of interesting editorial, beautiful ads with a clean layout.

2nd Place**Leelanau Enterprise**

Leelanau Visitors Guide

Truly beautiful book. Love the content and layout. I wish the pages were either all color or all b/w. I hate seeing spots of color on b/w pages. It's hard

to know what kind of stock this was printed on, but I would have preferred to use all color and if necessary, a lesser quality stock on the inside pages.

3rd Place**Grosse Pointe News**

Back to school/Sports preview

The cover is pretty cool. Left aligned headlines get too chunky and hard to read. Headline touching border should be moved higher. Cutlines have no consistency--some large, headline sized and some small--need to be templated. Separate sports headers "Football, Volleyball, etc." could be done larger and more artfully. Headlines really are quite horrible, but the content is what makes this a beautiful piece.

Hon. Mention**Gratiot County Herald**

Ithaca Football State Champs

Important editorial section for any community. Very nice commemorative piece. Photos can be a bit higher quality, but the content is so important that can be overlooked.

Weekly/Specialty D - Special Section**12 Entries****1st Place****Tecumseh Herald**

Homefront Magazine - Summer 2013

Incredibly clean with neat editorial and photos. Very well done.

2nd Place**Saline Reporter**

Ann Arbor Art Fair

Very interesting. Clean with good content.

3rd Place**Saline Reporter**

Saline Celtic Festival

Good variety. Nice photos, not too many ads, interesting editorial content.

Hon. Mention**Tecumseh Herald**

The Tecumseh Herald's Michigan International Speedway 2013 Fan Guide Decent editorial, clean layout.

Herbert Spencer-Best Headline**26 Entries****1st Place****Kalamazoo Gazette**

Beer expert says yes, we can

Alison Morin

Excellent pun makes for a concise description of the subject matter.

2nd Place**Michigan Capitol Confidential**

Reuben Sandwich With A Side Of 500K Lost Jobs

Manny Lopez

This headline did an excellent job of characterizing the media's reaction to the subject matter. Well played.

3rd Place**Swartz Creek View**

Something wicket this way comes

Lania Rocha

Clever use of terms and popular phrasing bring readers' attention to this story and add to a subject matter that might otherwise be overlooked.

Hon. Mention**Michigan Capitol Confidential**

Barber Bill Barely Takes Anything Off The Top

Manny Lopez

Great use of pun to describe the situation at hand.

Herbert Spencer-Best Website**12 Entries**

It's clear that a strong digital presence is necessary for newspapers today, and all of these websites made a strong showing. The winner showcases what it takes to make a great site: great local content that is well-organized and updated often. Great websites are on display in Michigan!

1st Place**Detroit Free Press**

Freep.com, the online home of the Detroit Free Press

Clean and easy to navigate site. Content is broken out into categories which makes it easier to find what you are interested in. Ads are well organized and not cluttered. An excellent website.

2nd Place

monroenews.com

Top stories are front and center and I like the top three in the photos that highlight when you mouse over them. Content is well organized and placed into categories. Ads are evenly placed throughout the site. I like how they highlight their social media presence on the home page.

Monroe Evening News

3rd Place

Kalamazoo Gazette

The best of the 3 MLive sites submitted. The photo slider at the top showcased the art well. The story filter worked well and helped me search the news content quickly. The Most Read feature had thumbnails of photos, which is great, instead of just a list of headlines.

Kalamazoo Gazette

Hon. Mention

Lansing State Journal

This is a clean, well-organized site. It seemed to be missing an ad or content at the top when I visited it – odd use of white space.

Lansing State Journal

Herbert Spencer-Best Multimedia Presentation

25 Entries

How a newspaper combines all form of media into a web presentation can be the difference between a riveting visual experience or a click through. I experienced solid photojournalism, videojournalism and wordsmithing throughout the 22 entries, and I commend all entrants for their hard work and effort. My challenge to all is to push and tweak your web Content Management System (CMS) for simple things, like proper breaks in a headline, to how to change and enhance placement of different media elements onto a web page. I hope, I wish, the MPA would create a separate category for Videojournalism as I saw extremely good video loose out in a Multimedia category.

1st Place

Silence of the Wolves

Dave Wasinger, Rod Sanford

Silence of the Wolves

Lansing State Journal

Excellent photography combined with compelling text in a unique web presentation made this entry the runaway winner.

Lansing State Journal

2nd Place

Traverse City Food Culture

Brian Kaufman, Sylvia Rector

Traverse City Food Culture

Detroit Free Press

A complete Multimedia dining experience – a finely crafted video, extensive photo gallery, short and sweet topical text, and links to supporting information left me thinking of a road trip to Traverse City.

Detroit Free Press

3rd Place

Discoverer of the Keystone State

Eric Seals, Ann Zaniewski

Discoverer of the Keystone State

Detroit Free Press

Pardon the pun, but here's a reporting team going to whatever depth for a story.

The tale of the Keystone State is compelling by its combination of history, technology, discovery and extreme sport.

Solid video, a good photo gallery including artwork of the ship, a well-crafted story, and a graphic showing the ships' final resting spot kept me on the page.

Detroit Free Press

Hon. Mention

Time Doesn't Diminish Memory of Soldier Who Paid Ultimate Price in Vietnam

Dave Herndon, Jim Kasuba, Erica McClain, Rick Kessler

Time Doesn't Diminish Memory of Soldier Who Paid Ultimate Price in Vietnam

This is an honorable project in its use of historic material ? the audio and photos from Spec. Thomas Collins - and deserves mention. The entry could have ranked higher had the visual lede not been buried on the page. The memorial service video is secondary to the audio slide shows of Spec. Collin and his comrades. More effort to properly edit, sequence and transition the historic images to the audio would have significantly improved the visual story.

The News-Herald

Herbert Spencer-Best Writing

All Groups - Herbert Spencer-Best Writing

12 Entries

Wow -- this was a tough category to judge. Such a variety of stories: commentary, profiles, news, series... it made it tough to choose. You could tell that the newspapers that submitted in this category are committed to great news and storytelling, and its importance in how they cover their respective communities. All in all, a great showcase of journalism that is happening in Michigan.

1st Place

Silence of the Wolves

Louise Knott Ahern

Really riveting read -- well done and well crafted. I thought it gave an excellent overview and also good depth on the tale of the wolves on the island. It made me feel like I was on the island myself.

Lansing State Journal

2nd Place

John Carlisle

This reporter is an outstanding storyteller. Each article drew me in to the story of each profile and provided good depth. Well done!

Detroit Free Press

3rd Place

Escaped sheep

Scott Atkinson

I loved the author's use of humor to tell the tale of a sheep roaming the streets after escaping from a Nativity scene. Fun read.

Flint Journal

Hon. Mention

13 Miles to Marshall: Tough times lead very different high schools to merge

Ron French

Great series on two high schools combining. Loved the pacing, following the process through and showing the end result.

Bridge Magazine

Herbert Spencer-Best Photo

29 Entries

1st Place

A Mother's Woe

Jake May

2nd Place

Basketball block

Neil Barris

3rd Place

Biohazard hoarding

Mike Mulholland

Hon. Mention

Pushing through heavy snow

Jeff Schrier

Flint Journal

Saginaw News

Jackson Citizen Patriot

Saginaw News