BNC
Frequently Asked Questions

Entry Deadline:

11:59 p.m., Nov. 6, 2017

Entries must be uploaded by 11:59 p.m.

Contest Period:

August 1, 2016 through July 31, 2017

Frequently Asked Questions

What file formats may be used to enter the contest?

If you are not using a URL to link to your entry, the best file format to use is a low-resolution PDF. Please combine multiple PDFs and compress to the recommended size of 5mb or lower. Acceptable file types are PDF, JPG, GIF, and PNG — NO Word files!

What if my information is wrong or my paper is not listed?

Contact bnc@michiganpress.org and your information will be reviewed.

What combination of online and print publications can I use?

With this year's contest, website work can be included with writing entries. Online-only news sources would provide URLs to their entries, but any print newspaper may submit online-only work as well as supplemental digital work that support a printed story. Submit the URL along with the PDF of a story. Unsure what you can submit from your newspaper's website? For example, if you published a feature story that had one large photograph in the print edition, but an entire gallery of photographs online, can you submit a URL to

the story online along with a PDF of what was printed? The answer is YES….
within reason. If the gallery was a large component of your story and readers
were directed there (because staff spent significant time editing said gallery),
then it is relevant to your story. If it is just a little "something extra," then do
not submit the URL to the online gallery. Judges have a LOT to judge and their
focus should be on material relevant to the story.

Do I need to send anything to Michigan Press Association World Headquarters?

The entire contest is online only this year. You can even pay online with credit
card or PayPal. Please follow payment instructions at
BetterNewspaperContest.com.

How can I make my PDF files smaller?

Most newspaper PDFs include high-resolution grayscale or CMYK images for
printing. However, PDF contest entries will be viewed and judged on a computer
monitor, which displays at low resolution (72-96dpi) in RGB color. Changes in
the resolution and color mode of images are the most effective ways to reduce
file size without sacrificing quality.
1. Resolution. In PDFs, text is always clear regardless of resolution: resolution
relates only to photos and rasterized graphics. Reducing resolution by half
reduces image file size by 75%. The recommended maximum resolution of
96dpi can be enforced by Distiller settings.
2. Color mode. Converting from CMYK to RGB color will reduce image file size
by another 25%. This color conversion can again be enforced by Distiller
settings.
If you reduce image resolution and/or convert color mode in your entry PDFs
with a PDF editor (e.g., Enfocus Pitstop or Quite a Box of Tricks) or use the
native profiling/editing tools in Acrobat 6 or later, YOU WILL NOT GAIN THE
EXPECTED REDUCTION IN FILE SIZE unless you redistill the PDF afterward.

When will we see the results of the contest?

Contest results will be announced in May 2018 at the Annual Convention. Certificates will be mailed shortly after. If your newspaper is part of a group, your certificates will be mailed with other certificates awarded for that group to the publisher.

Who can enter the Open Class Contests?

If you are a member Newspaper or Specialty Publication and your dues are paid in full you can enter.

How do I know what to write in my entry descriptions?

First of all, know that whatever you write in your entry fields is what the judges will see. We WILL NOT edit what you put there, so if you credit "PeeWee Herman" with writing a story that is who the judges will see. Also, PeeWee will be awarded a certificate, because we will use entry titles and credits to print on awards. Being simple and direct with your descriptions is best. If an entire staff is responsible for an entry, simply write "staff" in the credits.

What if there are several run dates for my one entry?

You must enter a run date. Please enter the earliest date of the entry and the remaining dates in the comment section.

If our best pages are shared across multiple papers, how do we enter them in the Best Page or Pages Design category?

If you share a page designer throughout all your newspapers, how you enter depends on the design. If the design is the same in all the papers you are only allowed to enter it in the highest circulation class, but if it is a separate design for each paper you can enter it for each of the papers. Same thing applies for the special section category if the same special section shows up in all your papers you can only add it to the highest circulation class paper but if each newspaper has a different special section then you can enter the special section for each other the papers.

Where can I get more help for anything I can't find here?
Email: bnc@michiganpress.org

FYI: You now have access to save your work throughout the year. By creating your own Open Call account, you can utilize the site's new "Contestant Scrapbook" feature and be more prepared when contest time rolls around. Contestants can upload content from their Scrapbooks directly into an entry. Setting up and using Scrapbooks is easy and intuitive, but if you should have any questions on the uses and features of Scrapbooks, contact the website for more information. Just follow on-screen instructions to set it up.