



**Osman C. Hooper Awards
2022 Winners and Judges Comments**

The annual Hooper competition, presented by the Ohio News Media Association’s non-daily newspaper committee, recognizes the talents of the state’s top non-daily newspaper editors, writers, photographers, designers and their colleagues.

The weekly newspaper committee members are Mary Huber, Archbold Buckeye, Chair; John Karlovec, Geauga County Maple Leaf; Beverly Keller, The Budget, Sugarcreek; and David Keller, Morgan County Herald. And we also want to thank Hillary Kleinerman, who worked on the committee for many years and retired from Douthit Communications at the end of last year.

A total of 23 non-daily newspapers from across Ohio submitted over 460 entries for the 2022 Hooper awards. Competing newspapers were divided into three divisions based on circulation information on file with ONMA. Division A – circulation of 4300 and above, Division B – circulation 2501-4299; Division C – circulation of 2500 and below. Entries were independently judged by a blue ribbon panel of experts in the fields of design, photography, advertising and journalism.

Here are the winners and the comments from judges.

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Hooper Category 1: News Coverage

DIVISION A

2nd Place is The Budget. “The Budget respects its readers, covering even smaller stories in respectful and responsible ways. Features about local citizens facing life challenges or

enjoying life victories lack patronizing or ‘booster’-istic tones. Even religious news is straightforward, great to see from a news outlet that serves the Amish and Mennonite communities.”

1st Place is the Barberton Herald. “Barberton residents are lucky to have Bob Morehead and Jake Allen covering news and sports, respectively, for the Barberton Herald. Morehead is all over local crime, school and governance stories, and Allen's pages recount the action from the fields and courts of high school teams. In between, the Herald offers a robust commentary page and plenty of other local news.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Morgan County Herald. “The Herald offers a comprehensive weekly paper for its readers -- bomb threats, homicide, COVID, candidates, politics and more. The inside pages are crammed with need-to-know community briefs, obits and guest opinions. Well constructed news report.”

2nd Place is The Clermont Sun. “With just two reporters and a sportswriter, the Clermont Sun serves up breaking news that Clermont County readers are not getting elsewhere. In these samples, the staff reported on a wide range of topics: a fatal crash, a drowning, rape charges against a community college instructor, the resignation of a county election official and a bridge project. Clear, compelling coverage throughout.”

1st Place is The Telegram (Jackson). “From first page to last, the Telegram provides a serious, sober overview of Pike County news with a skeleton staff. Especially strong COVID coverage, update on a nuclear waste issues and voting matters. Attractive layouts, too.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is the Ripley Bee. “Ripley, Ohio, is a newsy town -- or at least the Bee is on top of the news in town! The Bee's front pages reported on a fatal boat crash; a viral traffic stop; an arrest for a local murder; and the identification of a man killed at a worksite collapse -- all with sound reporting and clear writing. Inside, the Bee provided helpful briefs, calendar listings, features and court/crime news.

2nd Place is Archbold Buckeye. “The Archbold Buckeye is clearly an asset to its community. Its front pages highlight local crime and local citizens, with a strong mix of

crime, court, government and historical news inside. Features are particularly strong, too, as evidenced by enticing writing and reporting on an athlete fighting a thyroid disease, a family recovering from a home disaster and an artist defending his mural design.”

1st Place is the Yellow Springs News. “Everything about the Yellow Springs News is impressive. In these three samples, the News shows high-level journalistic judgment, with front pages that highlight school, COVID and crime stories with top-notch reporting, clear writing and clean layouts. The quality continues on inside pages, with copious coverage of news that matters to the community -- from calendar listings, to police reports, to letters and news of births, marriages and deaths. An enjoyable read from start to finish.”

Hooper Category 2: Best News Story

DIVISION A

3rd Place is the Barberton Herald and " Lake Dorothy drained in maintenance mishap" by Bob Morehead. “The Herald provides a meaty report about how and why Lake Dorothy Dam was drained. With clear, fact-packed writing, reporter Bob Morehead explains the malfunction that left the flood gates open.”

2nd Place is The Budget and “Sheriff Weighs In on TikTok Video” by Jason Keller and Beverly Keller. “In this report about an offensive TikTok video, the Budget does a solid job of balancing the community's desire for information and a teen/athlete's apparent misdeeds. Smart decision to put more focus on a local sheriff's intervention in the case than the offensive material in the video.”

1st Place is The Budget and “Soldiers Sacrifice” by Jason Keller. “The Budget provides salient detail in explaining why a stretch of State Route 39 in Berlin, Ohio, is now named Cpl. Fredrick Wayne Miller Memorial Highway. Writer Jason Keller gifts his readers with the story behind the story of how this Marine came to be Holmes County's first casualty of the Vietnam War.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is the Pike County News Watchman and “Local nine-year-old raises \$1,652 for library” by Patrick Keck. “The Pike County News Watchman celebrates youthful industriousness in this feel-good feature about a 9-year-old lemonade salesman who raises \$1,652 to support a new library. Thanks to writer Patrick Keck for introducing

readers to Ethan Holbert, a future "celebrity or philanthropist" who asks "What should I do next?"

2nd Place is the Morgan County Herald and "Recent bomb threats at several local schools spark multiagency investigation, suspect in custody" by Josh Stevens. "The McConnellsville Herald does a great job following this story to its end, with a lead that tells readers a suspect in a series of school bomb threats is now in custody. The industrious Josh Stevens provides a well-crafted "tick-tock" style report that takes readers through multiple threats to Morgan and Washington county schools, and the eventual arrest of a teen suspect residing in Georgia."

1st Place is Geauga County Maple Leaf and "Cardinal Coach Under Investigation for Reportedly Changing Student Grades" by Ann Wishart. "The Geauga County Maple Leaf provides a comprehensive, dispassionate account of the kind of news that upsets a community: allegations against a well-liked high school football coach that he changed student grades. Ann Wishart and her colleagues serve their readers well here, by incorporating interviews with law enforcement to expand on a reporting from a heated school board meeting."

DIVISION C

3rd Place is Archbold Buckeye and "Archbold School Bus Struck On St. Rt. 66" by David Pugh. "A solid article about the type of community news readers care about."

2nd Place is Yellow Springs News and "Chamber faces backlash over director's posts" by Jessica Thomas. "The Yellow Spring News produced a balanced, nuanced report about how the local Chamber of Commerce hired and then quickly unhired an executive director with problematic posts on Facebook. Reporter Jessica Thomas did a great job laying out but not overblowing ED postings considered racist and homophobic -- and then exploring problems in the process to hire her."

1st Place is The Perry County Tribune and "Heroic effort avoids tragedy in Shawnee" by Doug Clifford. "With deep, lively reporting, Perry County Tribune turns what could have been a "man rescued" brief into a moving tale of heroism at Tecumseh Lake. How improbable for a 150-pound deputy-in-training (the aptly named Storm Rushing) to save a 350-pound ice fisherman 43 minutes after he fell through the ice! How lucky for Tribune readers that reporter Doug Clifford asked all the right questions and collected all the right quotes to tell the story of a rescue made successful by quick-thinking friends, a fearless deputy and a calm-and-collected man in trouble."

Hooper Category 3: In-Depth Reporting

DIVISION A

3rd Place is The Budget and “\$801,555.13 in errors found: Sugarcreek’s new fiscal officer cleans up books” by Beverly Keller.

2nd Place is The Budget and “Miller Brothers headstones to be dedicated Sunday at Baltic” by Jason Keller. “Nice historical piece that brought history back to life.”

1st Place is Barberton Herald and the stories on the Caine's robbery and attempted rape by Bob Morehead. “Excellent, detailed and continued coverage of a brutal crime that gripped the community.”

DIVISION B

Third Place is The Clermont Sun and ““What if they’re innocent?”” by Brett Milam. “This was a comprehensively researched piece on the death penalty with an appropriate local news hook. The reporter laced the piece with effective quotes from a variety of sources within the Republican Party, but rightly focused on the local state representative whose views may have taken readers by surprise.”

Second Place is The Gazette and “Meat-processing plants facing ‘unique set of challenges’” by Stefanie Wessell. “You can tell when a newspaper is embedded and invested in its community - when it has the right sources and background knowledge to flag what's important to its future and what's holding it back. Meat processing stories probably don't win many awards, but this story by Stefanie Wessell serves its audience well. She does a fine job in communicating the challenges a major industry in her community faces and is explaining the response strategy.”

First Place is The Geauga County Maple Leaf and “Following the Money: Householder’s Funds May Reach into Geauga County” by Amy Patterson. “This a great example of a newspaper localizing one of the biggest political scandals in Ohio history. The Maple Leaf followed the money and it led to their local state rep. This was a well-written story about a complicated case, presented fearlessly and clear-eyed to its readers.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is Morrow County Sentinel and coverage of Emerald Bioenergy case by Anthony Conchel.

2nd Place is The Lake County Tribune and “Authorities ask residents to be on the lookout for a potentially devastating pest” by Gabriel McVey. “In-depth reporting often calls on the reporter to deal with a story that hasn't yet made the Page 1 cut. This is one such story and readers, here, are provided with an advance warning of a threat to their livelihoods (and to wine drinkers everywhere). Gabriel McVey provides readers with a well-written story about a threat to the local economy that should inspire conversation and, perhaps, inspire defensive preparation.”

1st Place is The Yellow Springs News and a look inside Yellow Springs schools, by Carol Simmons. “Carol Simmons's story on remote learning is one for Yellow Springs' historical archives. The story effectively captured both the educator's and the child's perspective of a school world no one would have imagined. Wonderful descriptions of classrooms, homes on the other side of the laptop screen, and good quotes that put you right back in the fog of COVID (are we out yet?) Parents must have come away from this piece feeling confident their kids were being taken care of and also marveling at the work of Yellow Springs teachers. Great job.”

Hooper Category 4: Best Local Feature

DIVISION A

3rd Place is The Circleville Herald and “iCan ride” by Steven Collins. “A well written uplifting story.”

2nd Place is The Press (Millbury) and “After the tornado: Madison Walters’ amazing journey” by Kelly J. Kaczala. “A strong portrait of a resourceful young woman.”

1st Place is The Budget for “Do you know your Lettuce Man?” by Bev Keller. “An informative and easy read.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Gazette and “Library adapts to COVID-19” by Eric Hrin. “Thinking back to the start of the pandemic, there were many stories like this. But this one is thorough in showing how a library changed into a new normal.”

2nd Place is The Gazette and “Grandfather of Ashtabula County vintners’ Arnie Esterer dies at age 88” by Martha Soroahn. “Great lead. Tells the story effortlessly. Informative.”

1st Place is The Telegram (Jackson) and “The Milkman: Americana at its best” by Pete Wilson. “Solid lead. You get a sense of the history and who Gilliland is.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The People's Defender and “One year, three men, three funerals” by Ashley McCarty. “Great quotes. The portraits of the men make them real.”

2nd Place is Morrow County Sentinel and “Memories, history of HPM” by Anthony Conchel. “The story flows easily. You can get a sense of the history of the time.”

1st Place is The Courier and “Safety Town helps kids stay safe and secure” by Eric Hrin. “Love the lead. I can hear the kids. I can see their activity.”

Hooper Category 5: Best Local Profile

DIVISION A

3rd Place is The Budget and “Sugarcreek’s unsung hero passes” by Bev Keller.

2nd Place is The Circleville Herald and “Dedicated detective is remembered like family” by Steven Collins. "Some great quotes about a dedicated public servant. A solid tribute."

1st Place is Barberton Herald and “Saying goodbye to Democratic force” by Bob Morehead. "An informative story about an extraordinary man. Well written."

DIVISION B

3rd Place is Clermont Sun and “From one pandemic to the next, Hazel Honaker just keeps going” by Brett Milam. “Provides an interesting portrait of a strong lady.”

2nd Place is The Gazette and “World War II vet marks 100 years” by Eric Hrin. "Compelling article. Good quotes. I had to keep reading."

1st Place is The Geauga County Maple Leaf and “Sheriff Dan’ Remembered” by Cassandra Shofar. “Great lead. And the story kept me reading.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The Logan Daily News and “Local man recalls 60 years of hauling the region’s mail” by Jim Phillips. “Mr. Wagner is an amazing man, and the reporter let us see how amazing without interfering with the story.”

2nd Place is Morrow County Sentinel and “Old-fashioned love story” by Alberta Stojkovic. “Solid writing on a heart-warming subject.”

1st Place is Galion Inquirer and “Century of experience” by Andrew Carter. “Wonderful lead. The reporter let them talk, and that was the best way to do this story.”

Hooper Category 6: Original Columns

DIVISION A

First Place is The Barberton Herald and the “Ramblings by Robert” columns by Bob Morehead. “Appreciate the writer's use of actual reporting and fact-finding to support his assertions. The writer should also be commended for writing about current controversial issues without sounding sanctimonious or watering down the facts.”

DIVISION B

Third Place is Morgan County Herald and the columns by Rev. Ben Johnson. “Appreciate the inclusion of facts and reporting in development of columns.”

Second Place is The Clermont Sun and columns by Garth Shanklin. “Great work in covering sports as a part of the broader community life”

First Place is The Telegram (Jackson) and columns by Red Thompson, Jr. “Captures people and events important in community life without being patronizing, narrow-minded or romantic.”

DIVISION C

Second Place is The News Democrat and columns by Wade Linville. “Good variety in perspectives. Appreciate the attention to detail that provides evidence of reporting.”

First Place is The Yellow Springs News and columns by Dawn Knickerbocker, Bomani Moyenda, and Cheryl Durgans. "Appreciate the solid reporting and clear presentation in telling stories about the community that have often been untold."

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Hooper Category 7: Best Editorial

COMBINED DIVISIONS

4th Place is The Budget and "The Editor's Corner" by Beverly Keller.

3rd Place is The Telegram (Jackson) for "Vinton County: Garrett Ridge Water Project worth sticking up for" by Red Thompson, Jr. "Opinion pieces need to take a stand and show an ability to defend the position. The best opinions also demonstrate how the option they propose benefits a community. This op-ed did just that in pushing for CARE funds to be used to bring a neighborhood on high ground something we all take for granted - fresh water. "

2nd Place is The Archbold Buckeye for "Steve Kauffman Is Within His Rights" by the newspaper staff. "Straight-forward, in-your-face but respectful editorial about a guy's rights to do what he wants with his property, even if it means replacing pine trees with corrugated metal. Also, importantly, this editorial suggests it might be a good idea to channel the community's aggravation towards considering an updated zoning plan. Nice balance."

1st Place is The Telegram (Jackson) for "The totality of the circumstances..." by Phillip Buffington. "It isn't easy to take an unpopular stand and taxes, since at least the Stamp Act, have always been unpopular. This editorial bravely confronts a local tax issue and the consequences the police department faces unless taxpayers agree to lighten their wallets. I'm guessing it inspired a lot of conversation around Jackson and that's the essence of a good editorial - to get people talking...and thinking."

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Hooper Category 8: Sports Coverage

DIVISION A

2nd Place is The Budget sports coverage by Jason Keller and Beverly Keller. "Lots of helpful statistics and standings in the scoreboard feature."

1st Place is The Barberton Herald sports coverage by Jake Allen. " Very solid and detailed game coverage."

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Gazette for sports coverage by Byron C. Wessell. " Solid coverage across a variety of sports from softball to track to basketball and football. The sections went beyond routine game stories from the high schools, including stories about a local YMCA league and a piece about a college signing by a local athlete. A very readable and informative section. "

2nd Place is Pike County News Watchman for sports coverage by Julie Billings and Baden Fuller. " The three days worth of sports pages showed solid coverage across multiple sports and multiple seasons of the year. The stories showed the writers had a clear understanding of sports from golf to football and understood the significance of each event covered. I was especially impressed with the May 30 coverage of the track meet events. "

1st Place is The Clermont Sun for sports coverage by Garth Shanklin. " This is an exceptionally complete and detailed sports section that is written for the fans. You would expect thorough coverage of high school football, basketball and baseball, but this sports operation is just as diligent when it comes to coverage of tennis, lacrosse and bowling. Thorough game stories, lots of stats and smaller side features on athletes of the week. "

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The Lake County Tribune for sports coverage by Byron C. Wessell. " A solid mix of game stories and features. A nice spread with action photos on wrestling in one edition -- an often undercovered sport. "

2nd Place is Ripley Bee sports coverage by Wade Linville. "A highlight of this entry was a strong, well-written feature on a 5K memorial run named for an alum killed in a car accident. Other editions had strong basketball coverage with very good action photography. "

1st Place is The People's Defender sports coverage by Mark Carpenter. "A strong, diverse and complete section. Great, active photography and a section that isn't afraid to give lead coverage to a great junior high team. The sections are salted with a good variety of scoreboards and smaller features."

Hooper Category 9: Best Sports Feature

DIVISION A

2nd Place is The Budget and “Golden Eagles featuring local talent on hardwood” by Jason Keller. “The writer did a good job capturing the details of this game.”

1st Place is The Barberton Herald and “Magics upset Titans in second round” by Jake Allen. “This was a complete story that did a good job capturing the excitement of a big upset. The writer captured both the facts and the spirit of the game.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Pike County News Watchman and “Heart of the matter: Flanders excels on the golf course after scary diagnosis” by Julie Billings. “Ben Flanders has an accelerated heart beat that forced off the soccer field -- so he became a kicker on the football team. Then there were heart surgeries, so now he limits his sports to golf -- at a high level. This is a story of perseverance of a young man who won't quit.”

2nd Place is The Gazette for “Football with the boys Rock Creek second-grader” by Byron C. Wessell. “Ashlyne Ballard is a second grader just getting ready to play youth football with the little boys. But to hear her talk in this well done feature – ‘I can hit people and not get in trouble and it’s super fun’ --she may someday end up playing against the big boys.”

1st Place is The Gazette and “One On One Luke Farrell” by Angelo Velotta. “This is a great story about the local kid who made it big but didn't forget his roots. Luke Farrell, tight end for the Jacksonville Jaguars, started playing football while in third grade back in Ohio. He played at Perry High and then Ohio State before getting drafted to the pros this year, and he recounted it all in this engaging profile.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The News Democrat and “There will always be basketball in my life” by Wade Linville. “Toby Sheets coached the girls basketball team at Fayetteville-Perry High School for more than 30 years, before retiring this year. This thoughtful feature, along with a second story recounting his last bus ride with the team, lets the local readers know what an impact this coach has had on their community. The writer let the coach tell most of the story in his own words.”

2nd Place is The People's Defender for "MHS great Mickey Wells passes away at the age of 79" by Mark Carpenter. "A moving tribute to a local sports legend who died in February. The feature told the story of Mickey Wells from his days as a high school athlete at Manchester High School to his days as a college player and coach to his days as a booster of local teams and mentor to young athletes."

1st Place is The Yellow Springs News and "School sports amid pandemic" by Carol Simmons. "This was a fine story of how the COVID pandemic disrupted 'normal.' Something that is as routine in our lives as high school sports suddenly became a potential danger and a personal loss to many people. Well told from the perspective of administrators looking out for the safety of athletes and athletes seeing their dreams being affected by something out of their control."

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Hooper Category 10: Newspaper Design

DIVISION A

2nd Place is The Barberton Herald and Jake Allen and Stephanie Crouse. "Photos and ads are placed in such a way that makes the pages balanced and symmetrical."

1st Place is The Budget and Beverly Keller, Jason Keller, and Milo Miller. "Lines and boxes are used to show contrast that is helpful for the eye. The special design elements like the ones on 'The Last Word' page make the pages unique."

DIVISION B

3rd Place is Putnam County Sentinel. "Great balance between the photos and ads. The front page elements give the reader's eye many places to go."

2nd Place is Pike County News Watchman. "Symmetrical design. Great use of photos especially on the sports pages. Clear bold headlines."

1st Place is The Geauga County Maple Leaf and Pam Molnar. "The front pages are not cluttered. The design of the inside pages has little design elements like the headers and the pencils that make the paper unique."

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The Lake County Tribune. “While there aren't many photos, the use of fonts and lines helps to break up the elements.”

2nd Place is The Yellow Springs News. “Very slick design. The simplicity of the pages is what makes them great. The headline font helps to tie all the pages together.”

1st Place is The News Democrat and Wade Linville. “Great use of big, colorful photos. Headlines were also large and stacked in an appealing way.”

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Hooper Category 11: Best Page Design

DIVISION A

1st Place is The Budget and Beverly Keller, Jason Keller.

DIVISION B

3rd Place is Putnam County Sentinel and Ryan Stechschulte.

2nd Place is The Telegram (Jackson) and Andrew Hudnall and Christina Graves.

1st Place is The Morgan County Herald and Janis Keller.

DIVISION C

2nd Place is The News Democrat and Wade Linville.

1st Place is Yellow Springs News.

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Hooper Category 12: Advertising

DIVISION A

2nd Place is The Barberton Herald and Jim Colombo and Stephanie Crouse. “Nice use of fonts and creativity in Dark in the Park ad.”

1st Place is The Budget and Milo Miller, Kim Petry, and Diane Weller. “Clear, uncluttered and focus on a dominant visual element.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is Pike County News Watchman and Hilary Miller. “Good variety of styles and subjects demonstrate skill among graphics staff.”

2nd Place is The Morgan County Herald and Janis Keller, David Keller, and Owen Morrow. “Appropriate and controlled use of graphic elements to support overall message.”

1st Place is The Putnam County Sentinel and Ryan Stechschulte. “Clean, restrained use of color and font.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The Lake County Tribune and Lisa Zavada. “Professional approach to array of clients.”

2nd Place is The News and Lisa Zavada. “Nice job breaking monotony of the grid with use of art and type placement.”

1st Place is The Yellow Springs News. “Excellent control of type, good humor, achieved engagement without sacrificing good design.”

Hooper Category 13: Best News Photo

DIVISION A

3rd Place is The Budget and photo of Horse Progress Days by Jason Keller. “The most compelling aspect of the image is the angle that the photographer selected to take the photo. The fence line adds to the sense of movement in the image.”

2nd Place is The Barberton Herald and Relay for Life photo by Bob Morehead. “The strength of the Relay image was the pathos of the hug amidst the rest of the still scene shown in the photograph. Morehead does a great job of highlighting the core visual aspects of Relay for Life (the luminaria) within the scene that would be recognized by the audience (West Tuscarawas Avenue storefronts).”

1st Place is The Budget and the Special Delivery photo by Beverly Keller. “This category was especially difficult to judge this year. The Special Delivery due to the unusual subject matter, the framing of the helicopter in context to the background, and the capturing of a moment that would attract the attention of the reader. The morning mist rising from the ground added to the starkness of the event that is happening.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Morgan County Herald and a photo of Vice President Pence by Janis Keller. “A classic representation of a staged shot. The photographer is able to balance the reason that the photo is newsworthy and the sense of the occasion. The local supporters adds ethos to the overall image.”

2nd Place is The Telegram (Jackson) and the “who pulled the trigger?” photo by Phillip Buffington. “Any image taken during a trial should reflect the pivotal moment of the case. The photographer understood the power of the prosecutor holding the key question that the jurors needed to focus on.”

1st Place is The Clermont Sun and Megan Alley’s photo of receiving the COVID vaccine. “One of the central tenets of good journalism is that the reporter is not suppose to be part of the story. However, the nature of the story benefited by Megan Alley's placement within the image. It adds ethos and credibility to the story that is being reported.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The Yellow Springs News and the rally regular photo by Kathleen Galarza. “Kathleen Galarza's Rally Regular image highlights a snapshot of time that reflects the spirit of the community. It is a simple statement holding a sign, but the photographer places that sign within the context of a child's hands during a rally.”

2nd Place is The Archbold Buckeye photo of a fire by David Pugh. “The powerful nature of the fire was in contrast with the firefighter attempting to battle the blaze. Capturing the smoke and the flames as the fire is unfolding makes for a strong piece of photojournalism.”

1st Place is The Galion Inquirer the photo by Don Tudor of the Crawford County Fair Queen Hannah Feldman after winning the 2021 pageant. “Great use of pathos within the image. The crowning of a fair queen is a classic newsworthy event and the photographer does a great job capture the pure emotion of the scene.”

Hooper Category 14: Best Feature Photo

DIVISION A

3rd Place is The Budget and the Homecoming Hug photo by Jason Keller. “The photographer did a great job capturing the balance between the private expression of care between family members and the public environment of the football game.”

2nd Place is The Budget and the kids team photo by Beverly Keller. “This playful image works well as a tease for the main story. This photograph is a good example of a candid image. There is a natural sense to the action within the image. In addition, the photographer does a great job placing the main subjects of the image within the context of the rest of the football field.”

1st Place is The Circleville Herald and the photo of a baby reading the newspaper. “A good feature image, like a good feature article, must highlight what defines a community so that the audience can better appreciate the daily life of those who are covered in the paper. The image of Ms. Daniels does a masterful job of representing future newspaper readers in a playful manner.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Pike County News Watchman and the photo of a blue jay by Julie Billings. “The elements of the image are unique enough to attract the attention of the reader. Bilings took a creative angle on the use of this image by making the connection between the bird's wingspan and social distancing.”

2nd Place is The Putnam County Sentinel and the out in the cold photo by Steven Coburn-Griffis. “This photo is a wonderful example of how action within the context of the image make for a more satisfying visual representation of the heart of the story. The photographer picked the right moment to snap the image so that gentleman in the neon yellow jacket was just slightly off-center and in the sweet spot of the frame, ”

1st Place is The Gazette and the photo by Gabriel McVey of Tony Barski, who has the nation’s largest private collection of Coca-Cola collectibles for sale. “The photographer selects a framing for this image that both highlights the core element of this story (the number of Coke collectables) and provides a sense of depth by placing Tony within the context of his collection. Also, the use of light and shadow acts as a visual hook to the image.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The Yellow Springs News and the Snowbird photo by Kathleen Galarza. “The photographer effectively uses black and white to both highlight an action within a nature shot and the stillness of the winter scene. While the elements themselves are not particularly newsworthy, it is a reasonable reflection of the local community's environment and natural beauty.”

2nd Place is the Archbold Buckeye and the “Horst Hangs On” photo by David Pugh. “The element that makes the photograph award-worthy is the sense of timing of the photographer. The image is a great encapsulation of one of the more popular events at Ohio county fairs that was taken with the knowledge of when to snap the button. It is the perfect balance between a point of tension (literally) and capturing the body language of the rider.”

1st Place is The News and the Andover Memorial Day photo by Lauren Locke. “The composition of this image is relatively simple. However, the context of the photo adds to the weight and what the audience takes away for this moment of time. It is presented with a clear sense of what the moment is for both parties being shown.”

Hooper Category 15: Best Sports Photo

DIVISION A

3rd Place is The Budget and a football photo by Jason Keller. “Best Sports Photo shows good depth and does an excellent job of using an effective shallow depth of field to create a select focus. The photo also uses a proper aperture setting in low light and captures a unique moment.”

2nd Place is The Barberton Herald and the defense dominates photo by Jake Allen. “Defense Dominates is an excellent photo. Good depth and angle. Proper shutter speed and aperture for night photo. The shot creates a perspective by putting the viewer/reader in the middle (and in the environment) of the play/action.”

1st Place is The Budget and a basketball photo by Jason Keller. “Best Sports Photos captures a key moment of action with depth to create a feel for the environment. Excellent timing to capture the action. Good shutter speed to show the movement of the

players while in mid-air. The photo also has strong composition based on the Rule of Thirds.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Pike County News Watchman and the Beekman grounder under hop photo by Julie Billings. “What a very unique photo! The Grounder Under Hop is a photo of a truly unexpected play. The excellent timing of the shot captures a rare moment during the game that could be missed by many fans. Good symmetrical framing and shutter setting.”

2nd Place is The Morgan County Herald and the photo of the Raider’s bench celebrating by Janis Keller. “The Best Sports Photos capture the key moment that tells the story of the game. They also capture the emotion of that moment. Good depth to the shot from an angle showing the point-of-view of a fan in the stands. The shot also has good composition following the Rule of Thirds.”

1st Place is The Pike County News Watchman and the Zeke Brown Football Plunge photo by Julie Billings. “Zeke Brown Football Plunge captures a key moment in the game thanks to excellent timing. The effort of the player is clearly demonstrated. Good shutter speed setting. Good composition to the shot, good clear focus and good exposure during a night game.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The Ripley Bee and the Azyiah Williams photo by Wade Linville. “Azyiah Williams is a uniquely captured photograph. It shows Williams leading her team on the fast break. But, the moment captured by the opposing player watching from the floor reinforces the story being told. The shot also includes good depth, perception and some reaction.”

2nd Place is The Archbold Buckeye and the Quinn Wyse Scores photo by Mario Gomez. “Quinn Wyse Scores displays perfect timing to capture the moment that tells the story. The shutter speed and aperture setting are appropriate and the angle creates excellent depth. The ball is the central focus of the shot and it is well framed.”

1st Place is The Yellow Springs News is the Malaya's Poise photo by Kathleen Galarza. “Malaya's Poise shows great emotion and intensity. The shot has good depth and the shutter speed ideally captures the movement of the runner's feet off the ground. The aperture setting is appropriate and the symmetrical framing is effective.”

Hooper Category 16: Best Headline

DIVISION A

2nd Place is The Budget and "CANNED: Local MCC meat event" by Bev Keller. " The double entendre works extremely well here. The headline does an excellent job in setting up the story. Very creative. Congrats!"

1st Place is The Barberton Herald and "Barberton explores big dam project" by Bob Morehead. " Very clever, attention-grabbing headline. Excellent double entendre. Headline supports body of the story. Congrats!"

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Clermont Sun and " That's a wrap: Former Amelia softball coach Mike Rapp retires" by Garth Shanklin. "The play on the word 'wrap' is very creative and nicely sets up the story. Congrats!"

2nd Place is The Geauga County Maple Leaf and "Real Flames Broil Burger King." "The play on Burger King's flame broiled branding is very clever. This would not have worked, of course, if there had been injuries. Headline engages readers. Congrats!"

1st Place is The Gazette and "Ashtabula's COVID test was positive" by Martha Sorohan. "The double meaning of this headline make it both intriguing and engaging. At first glance, readers may interpret that area numbers are high, so the twist of the story's content make this a very creative headline. Congrats!"

DIVISION C

2nd Place is The People's Defender and "A long time ago, in a Science class not so far way" by Mark Carpenter. "Headline does a great job in summarizing story in a creative, engaging style."

1st Place is Archbold Buckeye and "It Was Almost Like God Took A Sprinkle Of Glitter And Shook It In The Air" "Very attention-grabbing headline. Until you read the story, you could be led to believe it was a happy, positive piece. I like the twist of this headline how something that could be perceived as beautiful was a nightmare."

Hooper Category 17: Best Special Edition or Section

DIVISION A

3rd Place is The Barberton Herald for “Women Mean Business.” “A good idea of how to introduce important contributors to the community who many readers might not know.”

2nd Place is The Circleville Herald for “Honoring Black History Month.” “A nice way to honor Black History Month from different angles. Enjoyed the stories about obscure people from the past.”

1st Place is The Budget for “Willkommen: A Visitor’s Guide to Amish Country.” “Full of helpful and interesting content for visitors and locals. The shorts on the small towns throughout the area and the explanation of Amish heritage and culture were my favorite parts.”

DIVISION B

3rd Place is The Gazette for “Women in Business.” “Profiles offer an interesting and varied look at women who help make the local economy go.”

3rd Place is The Gazette for “Covered Bridge Magazine.” “A great historical look at the bridges and how they tie in with the surrounding communities.”

1st Place is The Pike County News Watchman for the “The Future of Pike County.” “A unique idea to highlight the good things going on in a community from small businesses to the schools.”

DIVISION C

3rd Place is The Lake County Tribune for “The Lake County Fair.”

2nd Place is The Yellow Springs News for the “The Yellow Springs Snooze April Fools Edition.” “The downtown shines, great to tell stories of people working and living in a small town. Everybody in town now knows a lot about people they never knew before.”

1st Place is The Archbold Buckeye for the “Ridgeville Legion 100th anniversary special edition.” “Great job of taking the opportunity to go in-depth on an anniversary. Loved the personal stories of veterans.”

Hooper Category 18: Community Awareness

COMBINED DIVISIONS

4th Place is The Putnam County Sentinel for coverage of COVID across multiple editions. “An effective mix of news and enterprise/feature reporting to keep the community informed.”

3rd Place is The Gazette and coverage about why Ashtabula County still has a need for foster parents. “Good enterprise reporting to point out an issue that many in the community can help with. This makes people aware of a problem for which they can be part of the solution.”

2nd Place is Yellow Springs News and multiple-story coverage of racial issues in the community, including countering racism in schools. “An important issue in every community that the News did a good job explaining, especially the story about the local schools. Lots of voices in the stories helped readers gain understanding.”

1st Place is The Geauga County Maple Leaf and coverage of bringing broadband to rural communities in Geauga County. “After reading this series, anyone in the county would be well-informed of the issues created for people by a lack of reliable internet service. The personal anecdotes and the problems township trustees face told the story in an interesting and relevant way.”

Hooper Category 19: Best Website

COMBINED DIVISIONS

4th Place is The Morrow County Sentinel. “Easy to find the news you want to read.”

3rd Place is The Archbold Buckeye. “Excellent organization of content, nice use of branded colors.”

2nd Place is The Pike County News Watchman. “Looks great, clean design, easy to read on computer and mobile.”

1st Place is The Geauga County Maple Leaf. “Visually eye-catching with large photo at the top of articles.”

Newspaper of the Year winners

DIVISION A

- **The Budget**

DIVISION B

- **The Gazette**

DIVISION C

- **The Yellow Springs News**