

Osman C. Hooper Newspaper Awards

A Competition for Weekly Newspapers presented by
The Ohio Newspaper Association, Weekly Newspaper Committee



Awards & Judges' Reports 2013

As presented at The Ohio Newspaper Association Annual Convention
February 14, 2013

Ohio Newspaper Association Weekly Newspaper Committee

Mary Huber, Archbold Buckeye, Chair

Diane Chiddister, Yellow Springs News

David Keller, Morgan County Herald, McConnelsville

Jerry Mossbarger, The Telegram, Jackson

Erica Peterson, Record Publishing Company, Kent

Kim Ross-Polito, Crestline Advocate

Foreward



Osman C. Hooper

When the Ohio Newspaper Association was established in 1933, Osman Hooper was already a significant contributor to the organization. For many years he conducted the annual “Ohio Newspaper Show” which was held as part of the Buckeye Press Association convention in Columbus. At the turn of the 20th century, the Buckeye Press Association, which represented weekly newspaper publishers, and the Associated Ohio Dailies were conducting separate events. ONA’s founding was the result of their merger into a single state trade association.

It was also in 1933 that Hooper published one of several books, “The History of Ohio Journalism,” which traces the beginnings of Ohio newspapers. At the 1937 ONA Convention, Hooper was presented a resolution citing “his part in the development of increasingly high standards for Ohio community papers” and his name was added to the annual weekly newspaper contest.

Hooper spent 58 years at *The Columbus Dispatch*, beginning as a telegraph editor in 1880. He was an editorial writer for nearly 20 years and was made literary editor in 1917. Hooper became a journalism professor at Ohio State University in 1918 and was named professor emeritus in 1932. Throughout his teaching career he continued to edit *The Dispatch* book page.

In 1925, Hooper established the Ohio Journalism Hall of Fame which is housed at Ohio State University and in 1939 he was inducted into the Journalism Hall of Fame. He died in 1941 at the age of 83.

Circulation Divisions 2013

Competing newspapers were divided into four divisions according to circulation information already on file with the Ohio Newspaper Association. With a total of 59 newspapers, the divisions are as follows:

Division A: Total circulation of 9,550 and over

Chagrin Valley Times	ThisWeek Grove City Record
Cuyahoga Falls News-Press	ThisWeek Dublin Villager
Hudson Hub-Times	ThisWeek Hilliard Northwest News
News Democrat, Sunday	ThisWeek Marysville News
The Budget, Sugarcreek	ThisWeek Upper Arlington News
The Press, Millbury	ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion
	ThisWeek Worthington News

Division B: Total circulation from 5,250 to 8,155

Free Press Standard, Carrollton	The Press, Avon Lake
Geauga County Maple Leaf	The Register-Herald
Huber Heights Courier	The Telegram, Jackson
Jackson County Times-Journal	ThisWeek Bexley
Kettering-Oakwood Times	ThisWeek Johnstown Independent
Putnam County Sentinel	ThisWeek New Albany News
The Herald, Barberton	West Life, Westlake

Division C: Total circulation from 3,500 to 4,600

Centerville-Washington Twp. Times	Solon Times
Englewood Independent	Tallmadge Express
Morgan County Herald	The Journal Leader, Caldwell
News Democrat, Georgetown	The Photojournal, Vemilion
Paulding Progress	ThisWeek Canal Winchester
Perry County Tribune	ThisWeek German Village Gazette
Pike County News Watchman	ThisWeek Tri-Village News (Grandview)

Division D: Total circulation from 882 to 3,200

Ada Herald	The Gazette, Jefferson
Archbold Buckeye	The News Leader, Minerva
Beavercreek News Current	The News, Pymatuning
Bluffton News	The Press, North Ridgeville
Fulton County Expositor	The Ripley Bee
Springboro Sun	The Times Junction
Sugarcreek Bellbrook Times	Vandalia Drummer News
The Courier, Conneaut	Yellow Springs News
The Enterprise, Swanton	

Table of Contents

2013 Osman C. Hooper Newspaper Awards & Judges' Comments

<u>Page</u>	
1 - 2	Class 1: News Coverage
3 - 5	Class 2: In-Depth Reporting
6 - 8	Class 3: Best Local Feature
9 - 12	Class 4: Original Columns
13 - 14	Class 5: Best Editorial
15 - 18	Class 6: Sports Coverage
19 - 20	Class 7: Design
21 - 22	Class 8: Advertising
23 - 26	Class 9: Best News Photo
27 - 30	Class 10: Best Feature Photo
31 - 34	Class 11: Best Sports Photo
35 - 36	Class 12: Best Headline
37 - 40	Class 13: Special Edition or Section
41 - 42	Class 14: Community Awareness
43 - 44	Best Website
46	General Excellence Awards

Class 1: News Coverage

Judged by Assoc. Clay Carey, graduate teaching associate
E.W. Scripps School of Journalism
Ohio University

Division A

First Place: Hudson Hub Times, Bill Hammerstrom
Second Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion
Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek

Division B

First Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf. John Karlovec
Second Place: The Press, Avon Lake
Third Place: Free Press Standard, Carol McIntire

Division C

First Place: The Paulding Progress
Second Place: Pike County News Watchman
Third Place: Solon Times

Division D

First Place: The Press, North Ridgeville, Connie Thomas
Second Place: Ada Herald, Jen Brooks, Ginny Bandy
Third Place: Yellow Springs News, Diane Chiddister,
Lauren Heaton, Megan Bachman,
Lauren Shows, Kathryn Hitchcock,
Robert Hasek, Suzanne Ehalt,
Matt Minde, Suzanne Patterson, Kitty Jenson

Judges' Comments

Class 1: News Coverage

Division A

First Place: Hudson Hub-Times - Nice variety of content - there is something for everyone in this paper. Content is interesting and accessible - I especially liked the chart treatment of city council action.

Second Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion - Great content throughout - your emphasis on arts and culture provides a nice balance to more "hard" news coverage.

Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek - The communities you cover clearly come through in your content. Wonderful to see so many faces in the newspaper.

Division B

First Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf - Lots of important information in the days and weeks following the school shootings. When your community needed you, it is clear that you were there.

Second Place: The Press, Avon Lake - Nice recognition of your community's past, present, and future. I think your newspaper is very reflective of your community.

Third Place: Free Press Standard - Great variety of content - good school coverage, lots of information about local people and their achievements.

Division C

First Place: The Paulding Progress - Excellent coverage of some major local events in your community.

Second Place: Pike County News Watchman - Wonderful variety of stories, and you do a good job of showing your readers why these stories really matter.

Third Place: Solon Times - Very thorough coverage of local news, especially local government.

Division D

First Place: The Press, North Ridgeville - Excellent variety of content, including stories on some very important social issues with clear local connections.

Second Place: Ada Herald - Very comprehensive coverage of the church fire shows me how important this institution is locally. Other content gives me a nice feel for your community.

Third Place: Yellow Springs News - I like the enterprise work you are doing - it has clear local impact.

Class 2: In-Depth Reporting

Judged by Associate Professor Catherine Cassara; Danae King, editor, *BG News*; Christine Talbert, editor, *Key* magazine
Department of Journalism and Public Relations
Bowling Green State University

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion,
Jennifer Noblit, Bonnie Butcher, Jennifer Nesbitt,
Sarah Sole, David Owen, Lin Rice
Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times, Joan Demirjian
Third Place: Chagrin Valley Times, Tony Lange

Division B

First Place: The Press, Avon Lake, Bryan Wroten
Second Place: Kettering-Oakwood Times, Bill Duffield
Third Place: The Telegram, Jackson, Pete Wilson

Division C

First Place: News Democrat, Bryan Peck
Second Place: Solon Times, Sue Reid
Third Place: None Selected

Division D

First Place: The Courier, Conneaut, Martha Sorohan
Second Place: Yellow Springs News, Diane Chiddister, Lauren Heaton,
Megan Bachman
Third Place: The Courier, Conneaut, Martha Sorohan

Judges' Comments

Class 2: In-Depth Reporting

Division A

The winners are distinguished by the amount of research they did, the good reporting and source balance. In some cases, the good reporting was enhanced by the good writing. All of the reporters would be served by finding more of the people who will be affected by their stories to interview, whether shoppers, residents or water drinkers.

Division B

It was very competitive. Where the stories stood out it was because the reporters were not afraid to talk to several sources and to go after many sides to the story and ask the challenging questions.

First Place: The Press, Avon Lake - Very well-written with good sourcing. The reporter went above and beyond to include all sides of the story and expert opinions.

Second Place: Kettering-Oakwood Times - Clean, clear writing on an important topic. Well-balanced.

Third Place: The Telegram, Jackson - Clearly show the issue at hand, well-sourced.

Division C

There were few entries that qualified as in-depth reporting. A good story requires good sourcing, good writing and should go in-depth with details. The stories should also be hard news.

First Place: News Democrat - Good sourcing, good imagery.

Second Place: Solon Times - Good sourcing as a series, individual stories were well-written but needed more sources.

Third Place: None selected

Judges' Comments

Class 2: In-Depth Reporting (continued)

Division D

The in-depth reporting was good where the reporters found more than one source per story and where they understood that it was necessary to provide background and context for the stories they were reporting.

First Place: The Courier, Conneaut - It was good meeting coverage, really good sourcing for the story. It was a very touchy community story but they did a really good job covering all the sides and following through on the story.

Second Place: Yellow Springs News - It's a very well-thought out series, well-written with good balance.

Third Place: The Courier, Conneaut - It was a very meaty story, good reporting. Mostly good sourcing.

Class 3: Best Local Feature

Judged by Associate Professors Janet Leach, Barb Hipsman; Assistant Professors Mitch McKenney and Cheryl Kushner
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Kent State University

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion,
Jennifer Nesbitt
Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times, Joe Koziol
Third Place: The Press, Millbury, J. Patrick Eaken

Division B

First Place: The Press, Avon Lake, Bryan Wroten
Second Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf, Cassandra Shofar
Third Place: The Press, Avon Lake, Jon Wysochanski

Division C

First Place: Pike County News Watchman, Stephanie Stanley
Second Place: Tallmadge Express, Jeremy Nobile
Third Place: Morgan County Herald, Leona Jewell

Division D

First Place: Yellow Springs News, Megan Bachman
Second Place: The Press, North Ridgeville, Michael Fitzpatrick
Third Place: Beaver Creek News Current, Asia Aikins

Judges' Comments

Class 3: Best Local Feature

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion - The reporter does a great job of pure storytelling from the student's disability to the teacher's compassion to the donated bicycle. This piece weaves a nice thread and uses good quotes.

Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times - Lead is catchy and the story keeps readers interested and moving along. It's a surprising chemistry lesson in a personality profile. Good job.

Third Place: The Press, Millbury - What sets this story apart from so many kids-achieving-scholarship stories is the attention to detail, family and community perspective and the clarity of writing.

Division B

Features continue to impress from this group. The better ones use more than just one or two sources with extensive background. Day-of features are solid, but don't impress comparatively.

First Place: The Press, Avon Lake - Very approachable feature that shows a strong subject choice with a well-rounded look at a local family with supporting information that lends authority to the piece.

Second Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf - This article reflects the trauma of a tragedy that hits a small town harder than most could imagine. Well-written piece.

Third Place: The Press, Avon Lake - Detailed look at how small farms add to the economy of area. Pieces look at the history and involvement of local families as well as trends in farming.

Division C

Congratulations to all who entered. These stories represent a lot of hard work on behalf of readers.

First Place: Pike County News Watchman - This well-written profile of an acclaimed local author included a strong lede and interesting quotes.

Second Place: Tallmadge Express - What a treat to see Pearl Harbor through the eyewitness account of a local resident.

Third Place: Morgan County Herald - The author does a nice job introducing readers to people they should know.

Judges' Comments

Class 3: Best Local Feature (continued)

Division D

First Place: Yellow Springs News - The writer pulls me into the "tiny" world of Ellen Dawson-Witt with an engaging lead that sets the tone of this nicely written piece.

Second Place: The Press, North Ridgeville - This story is packed with good description. the writing is crisp and clean.

Third Place: Beaver Creek News Current - This story has a strong lead, and an end quote that circles back to that lead.

Class 4: Original Columns

Judged by Assistant Professor Nicole Kraft
School of Communication
The Ohio State University

Division A

First Place: Hudson Hub-Times, Tim Troglen
Second Place: News Democrat Sunday, Steve Triplett
Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek, Jessica Hartzler Stock

Division B

First Place: Putnam County Sentinel, Jared Denman
Second Place: West Life, Westlake, Peter Comings
Third Place: The Telegram, Jackson, Red Thompson, Jr.

Division C

First Place: Morgan County Herald, Betsy Kunstel
Second Place: Morgan County Herald, Jim Konkoly
Third Place: The Photojournal, Vermilion, Felton Finch

Division D

First Place: Yellow Springs News, Megan Bachman
Second Place: Fulton County Expositor, David Coehrs
Third Place: The Press, North Ridgeville, Peter Comings

Judges' Comments

Class 4: Original Columns

Division A

Good sampling of local viewpoints that clearly know their audiences.

First Place: Hudson Hub-Times - Strong local tie, clear topics that are well presented. Reader is informed, educated and entertained. Well done.

Second Place: News Democrat, Sunday - Folksy, informative, introspective. Great to see a publisher involved enough to write on these topics with authority and sensitivity. Nice reads.

Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek - Good storytelling. Can appeal to anyone who was or has a mom. I like the style and ability to relate with readers.

Division B

Some terrific columns in here, but others that seem to miss the goal of writing opinion for the reader.

First Place: Putnam County Sentinel - Well done! Takes compelling, important topics and breaks down for better understanding. True service with insights.

Second Place: West Life, Westlake - Strong writing-good topics. Well reported and insightful. I like the variety and the depth.

Third Place: The Telegram, Jackson - Good information, insights and even advocacy. Well written and comprehensive. Good columns!

Division C

Strong winners who all have different style, but still contribute much to readability of their publications!

First Place: Morgan County Herald - Folksy and charming-likely a perfect fit for her publication. She has good storytelling abilities and a gift for pulling style into what could be mundane.

Second Place: Morgan County Herald - Entertaining reads with good style and substance. I'd look forward to his column each issue!

Third Place: The Photojournal, Vermilion - Finch lives up to his name-he is fun! Creative bent with good insights and timely topics. Good reads!

Judges' Comments

Class 4: Original Columns (continued)

Division D

A lot of strong writing. Those who were successful mix facts and a compelling writing style. Columns are not supposed to be all about one person's experience. Some columnists could benefit from reading style of these three.

First Place: Yellow Springs News - Strong writing that mixes personal with professional, letting readers be entertained and informed. Well done.

Second Place: Fulton County Expositor - Timely, personal—humanizes bigger issues. Well written and compelling. Connectable to reader. Folksy, colloquial. Easy to relate to.

Third Place: The Press, North Ridgeville - Good connectivity to audience, presents broader ideas in easy-to-understand format. Not a fan of questions in first one, but overall informative and useful.

Class 5: Best Editorial

Judged by Associate Professor Bill Reader
E.W. Scripps School of Journalism
Ohio University

In this class there are no divisions by circulation

First Place: Yellow Springs News, Diane Chiddister

Second Place: Archbold Buckeye, David Pugh

Third Place: Vandalia Drummer News, Darrell Wacker

Fourth Place: Pike County News Watchman, Dustin Magill

Fifth Place: Yellow Springs News, Diane Chiddister

Judges' Comments

Class 5: Best Editorial

Overview: Overall, the competition was only close among the top five or six submissions. Most submissions were not noteworthy ~ a lot of "eat your spinach" editorials that seemed more like space-fillers than bold statements of opinion in the community's interest. Very few entries demonstrated leadership, sophisticated and deep thinking, and powerful writing – the three criteria used to assess all entries in this category, and the three categories that the winners each demonstrated clearly.

First Place: Yellow Springs News - It's easy to lambaste public officials who err on the side of secrecy when transparency is possible. But The Yellow Springs News chose a tone of mild disappointment in criticizing the local village council's departure from its previously open-to-the-public approach to hiring a village manager. The editorial is balanced in laying out the facts of the situation, and also does not equate a questionable decision with ill intent. The argument is hard to refute, but hopefully the council members viewed the editorial as constructive criticism, which is most clearly was written to be.

Second Place: Archbold Buckeye - The editorial is a strong argument against two big problems in Ohio statewide politics ~ a "with us or against us" attitude among the state's GOP leaders, which stifles dissent and compromise, and the hideously crass use of gerrymandering by those leaders to punish incumbents who disagree with them. Kudos to the Archbold Buckeye for standing against corruption in Columbus with its simple, to-the-point editorial against both of those bullying attitudes in Columbus.

Third Place: Vandalia Drummer News The editorial from editor Darrell Wacker is the embodiment of true "compassionate conservatism" on the issue of same-sex marriage. He surely was the target of considerable hate mail from the intolerant fringe of Americans who want to deny equal rights to same-sex couples because they are offended by homosexuality. The "live and let live" approach to the issue is explained quite well in this opinion piece, and bravely so in a right-leaning suburb.

Fourth Place: Pike County News Watchman - Dustin Magill's editorial about infighting and petty politics on the Waverly Village Council must certainly capture the frustration of the community as a whole. Talk about a case of the politics being so nasty because the stakes are so small! If Waverly's financial problems are as bad as reported, it won't matter which faction on the council gets the upper hand in filling a vacancy ~ a politically divided council will almost certainly make the financial problems worse for the village.

Fifth Place: Yellow Springs News - For "The wisdom of being green" - Laudatory editorial of the village council there to not rush into "green energy" programs that do not have proven track records. As the "green energy bubble" appears to burst, the editorial is forward thinking without being ignorantly dismissive of the promise of true "green energy" initiatives (versus the get-rich-quick schemes, many of them the work of major utility companies).

Class 6: Sports Coverage

Judged by Assistant Professor Mike Horning; Brandi Barhite; Max Filby, editor-in-chief, *BG News*; Alex Alushelff, city editor, *BG News*
Department of Journalism and Public Relations
Bowling Green State University

Division A

First Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek
Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times
Third Place: Hudson Hub Times, Frank Aceto

Division B

First Place: The Telegram, Jackson, Todd Compston,
Red Thompson, Jr., Pete Wilson, Buzz Fisher
Second Place: The Register-Herald, Eaton, Eddie Mowen Jr,
Ryan Peverly, Michael Zimmerman
Third Place: The Herald, Barberton, Randy Broadwater, Rich Muller,
Brian Powell

Division C

First Place: Tallmadge Express, Frank Aceto
Second Place: Englewood Independent, Ron Nunnari
Third Place: Pike County News Watchman, Julie Billings

Division D

First Place: Fulton County Expositor, Randy Roberts, Drew Stambaugh,
Patty Stambaugh, Bill Bray
Second Place: Sugarcreek-Bellbrook Times, Jodi Milburn, Jon Rudy,
Wayne Baker
Third Place: The Enterprise, Swanton, Randy Roberts, Drew Stambaugh,
Patty Stambaugh, Ross Stambaugh

Judges' Comments

Class 6: Sports Coverage

Division A

Stronger entries made better attempts at sports analysis rather than just recapping the games or matches. Overall pretty good photo support.

First Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek - Good writing and reporting overall. Interesting stories. Nice analysis of the games. More in depth using extra elements. Wide variety of content.

Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times - Nice, clean and contemporary design. Good photos support throughout. Good photo of Chantel Richardson in long jump. Solid reporting but leads were not as strong as first place paper.

Third Place: Hudson Hub-Times - Nice, engaging photography throughout. Captions should contain more detail in terms of what an athlete is specifically doing in each photo. Leads lack specificity and clear angles for stories.

Division B

Good variety of sports coverage. Pretty good photography all around. Overall layout design could be improved within each section.

First Place: The Telegram, Jackson - Overall good coverage, variety of stories. Good, dominant action photos.

Second Place: The Register-Herald, Eaton - Nice, clean looking layout. Good detail in captions. Good storytelling across coverage of sports.

Third Place: The Herald, Barberton - Wide variety of coverage and coverage of community sports. Photos and layout were OK. Try using a larger, more dominant photo on each page.

Division C

Overall good writing with a good variety of sports coverage. Strong photography. Well-designed layouts; easy to follow and read.

First Place: Tallmadge Express - Stories captured more than just scores. Human element added to most stories, especially the one about the junior quarterback.

Second Place: Englewood Independent - Strong, dominant main photos. Nice mix of coverage.

Third Place: Pike County News Watchman - Great package on state champ. Sports section addressed more than just games; bleacher story was a good idea.

Judges' Comments

Class 6: Sports Coverage (continued)

Division D

Overall, this division was devoted to community sports journalism. First and second place were easy to select. It became harder to decide third place.

First Place: Fulton County Expositor - Good use of photos throughout section. Solid headlines with good action words. Comprehensive community sports coverage overall.

Second Place: Sugarcreek Bellbrook Times - Nice use of extended captions. Good variety of stories. Leads had a specific angle.

Third Place: The Enterprise, Swanton - Easy to read; layout was simple to follow. Attempted to find human angles in basic game stories.

Class 7: Design

Judged by Jamie McGann, McGann Media, Columbus, Ohio

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion
Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times
Third Place: Hudson Hub-Times

Division B

First Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf
Second Place: ThisWeek Bexley News
Third Place: Jackson County Times-Journal

Division C

First Place: ThisWeek German Village Gazette
Second Place: ThisWeek Tri-Village News
Third Place: Morgan County Herald

Division D

First Place: Sugarcreek -Bellbrook Times
Second Place: Ada Herald
Third Place: Archbold Buckeye

Judges' Comments

Class 7: Design

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion - Attention-catching headline placement, visually very easy on the eyes and is something people would gravitate towards.

Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times

Third Place: Hudson Hub-Times

Division B

First Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf - Great design balance between space used for text and space used for photos. Headlines stand out and are easy to read.

Second Place: ThisWeek Bexley News

Third Place: Jackson County Times-Journal

Division C

First Place: ThisWeek German Village Gazette - Very clean and eye-catching layout. Photo placement on front page draws attention.

Second Place: ThisWeek Tri-Village News

Third Place: Morgan County Herald

Division D

First Place: Sugarcreek-Bellbrook Times - Great use of photos and color to create reader attention.

Second Place: Ada Herald

Third Place: Archbold Buckeye

Class 8: Advertising

Judged by Jamie McGann, McGann Media, Columbus, Ohio

Division A

First Place: Chagrin Valley Times
Second Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion
Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek

Division B

First Place: Jackson County Times-Journal
Second Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf
Third Place: West Life, Westlake

Division C

First Place: Solon Times
Second Place: The Photojournal, Vermilion
Third Place: Morgan County Herald

Division D

First Place: The Press, North Ridgeville
Second Place: Beavercreek News Current
Third Place: Bluffton News

Judges' Comments

Class 8: Advertising

Division A

First Place: Chagrin Valley Times - These ads complement each other by being different from one another visually. One is brighter and more whimsical which might interest some readers more than the other, and vice versa.

Second Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion

Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek

Division B

First Place: Jackson County Times-Journal - The advertising graphics are colorful and very appealing to the eye. Blends in well with the surrounding content.

Second Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf

Third Place: West Life, Westlake

Division C

First Place: Solon Times - The design of these ads did their jobs by engaging me more than others in this category.

Second Place: The Photojournal, Vermilion

Third Place: Morgan County Herald

Division D

First Place: The Press, North Ridgeville - This ad is visually stunning, and draws the reader attention with the mix of photo quality and text incorporation.

Second Place: Beavercreek News Current

Third Place: Bluffton News

Class 9: Best News Photo

Judged by Lecturers Sue Zake, David Labelle; Gary Harwood, instructor and David Foster
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Kent State University

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion, Lorrie Cecil
Second Place: Cuyahoga Falls News-Press, Laura Freeman
Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek, Jason Keller

Division B

First Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf, John Karlovec
Second Place: Free Press Standard, Bob Evans
Third Place: Jackson County Times-Journal, Jeremiah Shaver

Division C

First Place: The Paulding Progress, Melinda Krick
Second Place: ThisWeek Canal Winchester Times, Lorrie Cecil
Third Place: The Paulding Progress, Melinda Krick

Division D

First Place: The Times Junction, Jane Ernsberger
Second Place: Beaver creek News Current, Jane Ernsberger
Third Place: The Times Junction, Jean Murray

Judges' Comments

Class 9: Best News Photo

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion - Nice moment - the hands behind the woman in blue really add to the picture, but it's the faces that make this a great picture.

Second Place: Cuyahoga Falls News-Press - Nice overall from a huge fire.

Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek - Interesting composition from an unusual event. I like all the different positions the workers are occupying.

Division B

First Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf - A powerful and revealing moment. Good job of framing the grieving subject with the other concerned faces. I applaud the photographer for choosing the right angle and having the courage to make the picture during such an emotional time.

Second Place: Free Press Standard - Thorough coverage and wonderful tribute to fallen Marine Lance Corporal Terry Wright. Glad to see the photographer worked so many angles, and equally pleased the newspaper gave the event such great play. Some tighter, candid faces of people reacting would have strengthened the coverage.

Third Place: Jackson County Times-Journal - Loaded with tension, the body of language of the officers gives this picture a real sense of urgency that matches the unpredictability of the event. Took some guts to make this picture not knowing the outcome.

Division C

Overall, images lacked attempts at capturing interesting light, compositions, or moments. Most entries had a snapshot feel to them. The winning images showed emphasis on strong news reporting and capturing moments. Some entries were more feature photos than news photos.

First Place: The Paulding Progress - Great layout. Strong, clean images that have impact. Captions are well written and descriptive.

Second Place: ThisWeek Canal Winchester - I'm interested in seeing the image of the subject once he found his friend's grave. Good caption info and page design.

Third Place: The Paulding Progress - The usage of "bus/van" crash seems odd to me as does plugging your slideshow of an accident in the caption. Photos seem distant and snapshot-ish. However, images show the scene well.

Judges' Comments

Class 9: Best News Photo (continued)

Division D

The winners not only do a very good job of capturing community news events as they are unfolding, but the images are compassionate and emotional.

First Place: The Times Junction, Willard - With the heat and the size of the fire, you feel for the firefighters and that is captured very well in the lead photo. The additional photos offer more information about the fire. Very good spot news coverage.

Second Place: Beaver Creek News Current - These photos are emotional and tell the story very well. Not only is the mother being rescued, but you see the emotion in the boy's face. The combination is compelling,

Third Place: The Times Junction, Willard - On the spot for the arrest and captured an individual as he is taken away (Good spot news).

Class 10: Best Feature Photo

Judged by Associate Professor Tom Schwartz
School of Communication
The Ohio State University

Division A

First Place: Chagrin Valley Times, Itamar Gat
Second Place: ThisWeek Hilliard Northwest News, Chris Parker
Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek, Dana Ely Kieffer

Division B

First Place: West Life, Westlake, Kevin Kelley
Second Place: Kettering-Oakwood Times, Bill Duffield
Third Place: West Life , Westlake, Larry Bennet

Division C

First Place: Solon Times, Itamar Gat
Second Place: The Photojournal, Vermilion, Scott Dommin
Third Place: Morgan County Herald, Leona Jewell

Division D

First Place: Yellow Springs News, Megan Bachman
Second Place: Yellow Springs News, Lauren Heaton
Third Place: Ada Herald, Jen Brooks

Judges' Comments

Class 10: Best Feature Photo

Division A

First Place: Chagrin Valley Times - A fun feature picture - bright colors, nice patterns, kids having fun. Readers wouldn't be able to resist this photo.

Second Place: ThisWeek Hilliard Northwest News - Apparently with luck and anticipation, the photographer got almost a perfect angle on a smile-inducing shot of a rope pull involving cute kids.

Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek - A viewer can't help but wonder what was going on in the cheering section of a school sports event shot by a photographer who recognizes a feature picture when it presents itself.

Division B

First Place: West Life, Westlake - A nice job in every respect - professional composition, cropping, color, direction, action, mood. A wonderful portrait and artistic moment at a music event.

Second Place: Kettering-Oakwood Times - This picture came very close to be the first-place winner. The image reveals wonderful excitement in a child; that can't help but involve the viewer.

Third Place: West Life, Westlake - The photo has nice depth-of-field on action, focusing on the face of a determined young runner.

Division C

First Place: Solon Times - This is an astute composition representing a nice sunny day for a little girl who is discovering the joy of blowing bubbles.

Second Place: The Photojournal, Vermilion - An unusual view of the city from the top of a tower. The man in the foreground provides nice perspective. Extra points for the intrepid photographer.

Third Place: Morgan County Herald - This photograph has a nice eye - noticing the human interest in the grouping of boots. Good patterns draw the eye to the face.

Judges' Comments

Class 10: Best Feature Photo (continued)

Division D

First Place: Yellow Springs News - If there was a "sweepstakes" winner, this would be it-the best picture in all of the Hooper divisions. A truly wonderful photo, showing great imagination and communicative value. A great image.

Second Place: Yellow Springs News - Again the Yellow Springs News wins a prize with a thoughtful composition, reflecting much personality in the subject in her environment.

Third Place: Ada Herald - The photographer made this shot at just when the sun beamed through the windows and as smoke continues to rise following a church fire. Impressive work and presentation.

Class 11: Best Sports Photo

Judged by Dr. Nancy Brendlinger; Nathan Lowe, Journalism & PR major
Department of Communication
Bowling Green State University

Division A

First Place: Chagrin Valley Times, Itamar Gat
Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times, Chris Meier
Third Place: Chagrin Valley Times, Tony Lange

Division B

First Place: Huber Heights Courier, Adam Lacy
Second Place: The Register-Herald, Eaton, Michael Zimmerman
Third Place: The Telegram, Jackson, Todd Compston

Division C

First Place: Centerville Washington Twp. Times, Shawn Bauman
Second Place: News Democrat, Wade Linville
Third Place: Pike County News Watchman, Julie Billings

Division D

First Place: Ada Herald, Cort Reynolds
Second Place: Yellow Springs News, Megan Bachman
Third Place: Springboro Sun, Doug Skinner

Judges' Comments

Class 11: Best Sports Photo

Division A

Quality of all entries was high. Judges were able to narrow the selection to five based on quality of photos and storytelling, and had a difficult time narrowing it to three.

First Place: Chagrin Valley Times - Beautiful, artistic photo that through the elements of composition, color and depth of field working together conveys incredible level of energy at that moment.

Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times - The aggressive athleticism needed for competitive sports is well portrayed in this strong composition, making good use of lines and focus.

Third Place: Chagrin Valley Times - This photo captures the story with all the elements ~ backward helmet and the referee throwing the flag ~ in a well done photo.

Division B

Difficult category to judge because the quality of all the entries was high. We were able to narrow it to 11 exceptional photos (while all the others were good). Wide range of choices (kind of sport; illustration and action photos; artistic moments) added both to the joy, but also the difficulty of making the decision.

First Place: Huber Heights Courier - Splashing sand enhanced the drama of this photograph. The composition, focus and depth of field choices all worked together.

Second Place: The Register-Herald, Eaton - Artistically beautiful. Geometric design, colors and simplicity of background made the pole vaulter appear to be suspended rather than moving.

Third Place: The Telegram, Jackson - Composition, focus and color worked harmoniously to capture a tense moment gracefully.

Judges' Comments

Class 11: Best Sports Photo (continued)

Division C

The quality of the entries has a wide range. The three winners are excellent. Most of the others are good, but don't stand out.

First Place: Centerville Washington Twp. Times - Black and white version is crisp. Captures the moment before the decision in a dramatic way-the viewer wants to know the umpire's call. Good story telling.

Second Place: News Democrat - Dramatic. Captures facial expression. Close cropping and use of depth of field enhances emotion.

Third Place: Pike County News Watchman - The composition, focus and good use of depth of field captures the exultant emotion of the player, which is mirrored in the audience.

Division D

This category's submissions were of good quality. The winners stood out by their strong compositions, use of depth of field, capturing key moments in the sport and going beyond the obvious or cliché shot.

First Place: Ada Herald - Beautiful composition. Short depth of field works well. Composition and faces give it a spiritual feel.

Second Place: Yellow Springs News - Photographer chose good vantage point. Crisp use of black and white.

Third Place: Springboro Sun - Captured motion really well, had a dancing feel. Also caught moment of difficult maneuver. Expressions were good, but the photo would have been a tad stronger if the focus was on the face.

Class 12: Best Headline

Judged by Professor Michael Sweeney, associate director for graduate studies
E.W. Scripps School of Journalism
Ohio University

In this class there are no divisions by circulation

First Place: Yellow Springs News, Megan Bachman,
Diane Chiddister, Matt Minde

Second Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf, John Karlovec

Third Place: The Telegram, Jackson, Pete Wilson

Fourth Place: The Register-Herald, Eaton, Michael Zimmerman

Fifth Place: Chagrin Valley Times, Dave Lange

Judges' Comments

Class 12: Best Headline

Overview: Some excellent entries, with Yellow Springs the cream of the crop. Some very good editors and headline writers there worth emulating. This judge also noted some headlines that do as much as they can with limited character counts, although simple "label" heads needed more than just cleverness or a pun to be worthy of an award. Still, this judge would have awarded several honorable mentions, if such were an available option, for deftness in headlines with words that simultaneously hooked the reader and hinted (or stated) the news content of their stories.

First Place: Yellow Springs News – “The village is breaking out in hives” - Wow. Overall, Yellow Springs had the best entries of any paper ~ a batch of headlines that fit the stories' tone, clever or tight and newsy as appropriate. This is the judge's favorite. It matches excellent word play with straightforward storytelling, especially when paired with the photograph of the beekeeper. (Headline writers should be aware of context of the surrounding page.) The headline is inviting and spot-on: YS is one of the rare places in America where beekeeping is thriving and expanding. Great job.

Second Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf – “Chardon Fire Department Hooks Its Ladder to Bicentennial” - An excellent headline. The story is a bit complicated, taking time to explain that fire department isn't having a significant anniversary, but is celebrating because it can attach itself to the city's big birthday and maybe snatch some of the spotlight. So, the headline is not only clever, but it actually sums up a long narrative well in a few words. Fine work!

Third Place: The Telegram, Jackson – “Sheward gets charge out of electric savings” - This judge really likes this headline, especially as the headline writer knows that in a small town, the name of public official in charge of utilities probably is known by most citizens. What got the judge's eye is that the pun is strong, and it's pegged to real ~ and surprising ~ news. How often is a small town surprised by good news, such as unexpected savings of a half-million dollars? And clearly, the subject of the headline truly was elated to be the one to deliver the news. Nicely done.

Fourth Place: The Register-Herald, Eaton – “Camden's Reed named mayor, accused of fraud” - Sometimes the most effective storytelling format, and the most shocking headline, is the one that is bold enough to plainly and sparsely state the truth. In the words of Jack Webb on the old Dragnet TV series, "Just the facts, ma'am." Here the headline writer is brave enough to realize that merely summing the story's highlights will shock: A man becomes mayor and simultaneously is accused of serious fraud. A big day in a small town. What makes this an even better headline, however, is that it fits IN ONE COLUMN! Nicely done.

Fifth Place: Chagrin Valley Times - “Estate-tax ax puts Chagrin on levy stump” - This deserves to be one of the winners because it is both clever and informative, striking a nice balance ~ and fitting in a rigid two-column count. And the alliterative "tax ax" works particularly well.

Class 13: Special Edition or Section

Judged by Assistant Professor Dan Catterinicchia, Director of Student Media, *The Lantern*
The Ohio State University

Division A

First Place: The Press, Millbury
Second Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion
Third Place: Chagrin Valley Times

Division B

First Place: The Telegram, Jackson
Second Place: Jackson County Times-Journal, Felicia Tackett,
Jennifer Hughes
Third Place: Kettering-Oakwood Times

Division C

First Place: Solon Times
Second Place: The Paulding Progress, Melinda Krick, Erica Habern,
Kelly Pracht
Third Place: Pike County News Watchman, Julie Billings, Dustin Magill

Division D

First Place: The Gazette, Jefferson, Stefanie Wessell, Sadie Portman,
Byron Wessell, Martha Sorohan, Doris Cook,
Meg Adams, Shar Howe, Lisa Hollman
Second Place: Yellow Springs News, Diane Chiddister, Lauren Heaton,
Megan Bachman, Lauren Shows, Kathryn Hitchcock,
Matt Minde, Suzanne Ehalt, Robert Hasek, Staff
Third Place: The Courier, Conneaut, Stefanie Wessell, Martha Sorohan,
Doris Cook, Sadie Portman

Judges' Comments

Class 13: Special Edition or Section

Division A

Fantastic mix of subjects. Obvious, that all entries took much effort and thought. Very tough decision between first and second place.

First Place: The Press, Millbury - Great mix of editorial and advertising. Nice photos and color to keep reader engaged throughout the whole special edition. Well organized from top to bottom. Also, smart to include everything from a how-to guide, to more advanced topics.

Second Place: ThisWeek Westerville News & Public Opinion - Love the use of photos and the depth of the reporting. Some of the layouts on pages, especially blends of editorial and ads appears cramped. Overall, impressive effort.

Third Place: Chagrin Valley Times - The magazine is very nice to look at and includes a ton of valuable information. It suffers a bit from the organization. The editor's note is too deep, the index of advertisers appears thrown in at the end. Would have liked the ads and editorial to be more evenly distributed as much as possible.

Division B

Strong entries across the board, though these were the cream of the crop.

First Place: The Telegram, Jackson - Solid mix of editorial and advertising. Colorful and engaging to the eye, but some layouts/pages are inconsistent with others in terms of style. Photos were mostly posed, a bit boring. Overall, a really great idea.

Second Place: Jackson County Times:Journal - Love the idea and the use of real-life cancer survivors. Also love the use of stats/data/FAQs at top of pages. Some editing issues, including "Note for the writer" should be "from." Not all the photos are great.

Third Place: Kettering-Oakwood Times - Tons of great information and nice mix of content, including explaining basics of football to those who might not know. The photos were cute, but boring and inconsistent as not every player was posed with an animal. Would have preferred some action shots from games.

Judges' Comments

Class 13: Special Edition or Section (continued)

Division C

Strong entries across the board with a diverse mix of subjects serving as the focus of the special editions.

First Place: Solon Times - Love the content mix and use of big, bold photos. Appreciate the attempts at variety in laying out pages, but some just don't work like pages 12, 17. Overall, very engaging special edition.

Second Place: The Paulding Progress - Love this idea. Great mix of mixing old and new. But would have liked at least a couple longer editorial pieces to fully explain some of then and now photos and issues.

Third Place: Pike County News Watchman - Comprehensive and obvious readers would love this. Would have liked some more variety in the page layouts and more action photos to pair with the posed shots.

Division D

Incredibly strong group. The incredibly comprehensive first place selection earned the win in this group among a number of other very well done special editions.

First Place: The Gazette, Jefferson - Overflowing with information about the county fair. Clean layout and nice mix of photos. More than 90 pages is a lot, but if that is what the audience wants, you made it happen.

Second Place: Yellow Springs News - Strong mix of content. Like the vintage feel of many of the photos. But some of the layout/design elements have too much white space and others parts of this are very, very text heavy.

Third Place: The Courier, Conneaut - Strong offering. Great look back at Ashtabula. Layout/design suffers from lack of compelling photos and other visuals.

Class 14: Community Awareness

Judged by David Martens, Owner/Manager, David B. Martens & Associates LLC
Anacortes, WA

In this class there are no divisions by circulation

- First Place:** Yellow Springs News, Diane Chiddister,
Lauren Heaton, Megan Bachman
- Second Place:** Beaver Creek News Current, Asia Aikins
- Third Place:** Geauga County Maple Leaf, John Karlovec,
Jamie Ward, Cassandra Shofar, Glen Miller
- Fourth Place:** Hudson Hub Times, Bill Hammerstrom,
Tim Troglen, Laura Freeman,
Dorothy Markulis
- Fifth Place:** The Telegram, Jackson, Steven Keller, Pete Wilson,
Red Thompson, Jr.

Judges' Comments

Class 14: Community Awareness

Each of the winners provided individualized coverage of issues in their respective communities in their own way.

First Place: Yellow Springs News - A sustained reporting effort to raise community awareness about the local water supply.

Second Place: Beaver Creek News Current - Analysis of community emergency responders communications system.

Third Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf - In-depth reporting of tragic school shooting.

Fourth Place: Hudson Hub Times - A variety of community stories including bullying, running, school classes.

Fifth Place: The Telegram, Jackson - Good reporting to heighten community awareness about the damage caused by bullying.

Best Website

Judged by John Mura, Multimedia Manager, The Courier-Journal
Louisville, KY

Independent Newspaper Websites

First Place: The Telegram
www.thetelegramnews.com

Second Place: Geauga Maple Leaf
www.geaugamapleleaf.com

Third Place: The Herald, Barberton
www.barbertonherald.com

Group Newspaper Websites

First Place: ThisWeek Newspapers
www.thisweeknews.com

Second Place: The Register-Herald
www.registerherald.com

Third Place: The News Democrat
www.newsdemocrat.com

Judges' Comments

Best Website

Independent Newspaper Websites

First Place: The Telegram, Jackson - The Telegram has a great local feel: crime news, letters to the editor. And it is to be applauded by having a Ustream local news video channel. Now, how about more photo galleries?

Second Place: Geauga County Maple Leaf - This is a good, all-purpose community news site but it mirrors what the print edition does. A good next step would be to put news on the site between print editions.

Third Place: The Herald, Barberton - This site had many nice touches: video, local traffic cams, reader-submitted photos.

Group Newspaper Websites

First Place: ThisWeek Newspapers - This was a very good local news site. Well organized, updated. Wonderful photography. But why is a 2011 "best of" gallery still up when 2012 is almost over?

Second Place: The Register-Herald, Eaton - This site gets major points for covering the news aggressively in its community. I would have liked to see a video player on the site.

Third Place: News Democrat - This site does a lot of things well. Content is easy to find.

General Excellence Awards

Division A

Chagrin Valley Times

Division B

Geauga County Maple Leaf

Division C

Solon Times

Division D

Yellow Springs News

