

Osman C. Hooper Newspaper Awards

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



Awards & Judges' Reports

2012

As presented at The Ohio Newspaper Association Annual Convention
February 9, 2012

Ohio Newspaper Association Weekly Newspaper Committee

Mary Huber, Archbold Buckeye, Chair

Adam Cairns, ThisWeek Newspapers, Columbus

Diane Chiddister, Yellow Springs News

David Keller, Morgan County Herald, McConnelsville

Jerry Mossbarger, The Telegram, Jackson

Erica Peterson, Record Publishing Company, Stow

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 2012

Competing newspapers were divided evenly into four divisions according to circulation information already on file with the Ohio Newspaper Association. With a total of 70 newspapers, the divisions are as follows:

Division A: Total circulation of 10,500 and over

Barberton Herald
Cuyahoga Falls News-Press
Chagrin Valley Times
The News Democrat Sunday
News Leader, Nardon Hills/Northfield/Macedonia
The Press Newspapers, Millbury
Stow Sentry
ThisWeek Clintonville
ThisWeek Delaware/Big Walnut
ThisWeek Dublin Villager
ThisWeek Grove City Record
ThisWeek Hilliard
ThisWeek Olentangy
ThisWeek Pickerington
ThisWeek Reynoldsburg
ThisWeek Rocky Fork Enterprise
ThisWeek Upper Arlington
ThisWeek Westerville
ThisWeek Worthington

Division B: Total circulation from 5,500 to 10,499

The Budget Newspaper, Sugarcreek
Centerville-Washington Twp Times
The Free Press Standard
Geauga Maple Leaf
Huber Heights Courier
Hudson Hub Times
The Jackson County Times-Journal
Kettering-Oakwood Times
The People's Defender
The PRESS
Tallmadge Express
ThisWeek Bexley
The Telegram, Jackson
ThisWeek Johnstown Independent
ThisWeek Marysville
ThisWeek New Albany
WestLife

Division C: Total circulation from 3,200 to 5,499

Fulton County Expositor
The Gazette, Jefferson
Morgan County Herald
The News Democrat
The News Leader, Minerva
Paulding County Progress
Perry County Tribune
The Pike County News Watchman
Putnam County Sentinel
The Solon Times
ThisWeek Canal Winchester
ThisWeek Grandview
ThisWeek German Village
Twinsburg Bulletin
Vandalia Drummer News
The Vermilion Photojournal
Willard Times-Junction

Division D: Total circulation from 950 to 3,199

Amherst News-Times
Archbold Buckeye
The Beaver Creek News Current
The Courier, Conneaut
The Granville Sentinel
The News, Pymatuning - Andover/Orwell
North Ridgeville Press
Oberlin News-Tribune
The Pataskala Standard
The Press-News, Waynesburg
The Ripley Bee
Springboro Sun
Sugarcreek Bellbrook Times
Swanton Enterprise
Weekly Record Herald
Wellington Enterprise
Yellow Springs News

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Class 1: News Coverage

Judged by Assoc. Professor Catherine Cassara; Assistant Professor Mike Horning; Bob Kline, Academic Adviser; Danae King, Assistant Editor, *BG News*; Asia Rapai, Editor-in-Chief, *BG News*; Kelly Taylor, Lecturer; David Sennerud, Instructor; Max Filby, News Editor, *BG News*; Emily Tucker, Editor-in-Chief, *Key Magazine*; Alissa Widman, Managing Editor, *BG News*; Alex Aspacher, Senior in Print Journalism; Allison Dunn, Junior in Print Journalism
Journalism and Public Relations
Bowling Green State University

Division A

First Place:	Chagrin Valley Times
Second Place:	ThisWeek Hilliard
Third Place:	ThisWeek Dublin Villager

Division B

First Place:	WestLife
Second Place:	ThisWeek New Albany
Third Place:	Geauga Maple Leaf

Division C

First Place:	The Gazette
Second Place:	Fulton County Expositor
Third Place:	ThisWeek German Village

Division D

First Place:	The Pataskala Standard
Second Place:	Amherst News-Times
Third Place:	Beavercreek News-Current

Judge's Comments

Class 1: News Coverage

Division A

First Place: Chagrin Valley Times - Deep community coverage, consistently good writing and a lot of content included. Strong commitment to diversity of stories.

Second Place: ThisWeek Hilliard - Consistent variety of stories on front page. It stood out compared to the other ThisWeek newspapers as having better editing that clearly made a difference in the quality of the stories.

Third Place: ThisWeek DublinVillager - Good variety and writing involved with hard news and feature stories. Comprehensive coverage. Clear idea of who paper's audience is.

Division B

First Place: WestLife, Westlake - Good all-around coverage and balance of communities covered. Good primary source quotes in stories, which covered the gamut from strong localizing of Senate Bill 5 to the controversy of tattoo business moving into the community to local gardener's selection as part of a city beautification project.

Second Place: ThisWeek New Albany - Good mix of local news and feature. Articles and solid stand-alone photos provide a nice sense of community. Strong writing on government, school and community deliver a paper worth reading.

Third Place: Geauga Maple Leaf - There is a lot to this paper, which does a good job of covering the entire county. While the design does not enhance the reading, most front page articles covered hard news of the area while inside pages were local government issues blended with shorter school and community news and features.

Division C

First Place: The Gazette, Jefferson - This paper had a nice variety of coverage and is a comprehensive paper. Hard news stories are well-written; design is a work-in-progress.

Second Place: Fulton County Expositor - Feature writing was very good. We'd like to see more content, but enjoyed the bus driver stories. Some quotes do not draw upon primary sources as much as other papers.

Third Place: ThisWeek German Village - Stories are very solid and well-written, but news coverage needs more depth. Not a lot of community coverage beyond the first page.

Judge's Comments

Class 1: News Coverage (continued)

Division D

First Place: The Pataskala Standard - Large amount of content with variety of topics. Consistently great writing set it apart from the rest of the papers in the division. Charles Peterson seems to be a great editor, reporter and mentor. Chad Klimack has strong leads and a good nose for news.

Second Place: Amherst News-Times - Good news and great leads with in-depth coverage of topics. The stories were intriguing and there is a nice mix of hard news and feature stories. Jason Hawk has strong writing and reporting skills.

Third Place: Beaver Creek News-Current - Angles on hard news stories fit a weekly paper well. Good mix of content throughout. The front page is intriguing. Writing throughout makes you want to keep reading. Stories have good depth to them.

Class 2: In-Depth Reporting

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

Division A

First Place: Carl Boon - Barberton Herald
Second Place: Kelly Kaczala, Melissa Burden - The Press Newspapers
Third Place: Lisa Aurand w/Paul Comstock, Tom Sheehan, Sarah Sole -
ThisWeek Grove City Record

Division B

First Place: Pete Wilson, Barbara Summers, Steven Keller - The Telegram
Second Place: Carleta Weyrich - The People's Defender
Third Place: Felicia Tackett - Jackson County Times-Journal

Division C

First Place: Phillip Collins - Vandalia Drummer News
Second Place: Karen Cornelius, Candace Barczyk - Vermilion Photojournal
Third Place: Sue Reid - Solon Times

Division D

First Place: Lauren Heaton, Megan Bachman, Diane Chiddister -
Yellow Springs News
Second Place: Jessica Alaimo, Seth Roy - The Pataskala Standard
Third Place: David Pugh - Archbold Buckeye

Judges' Comments

Class 2: In-Depth Reporting

Division A

First Place: Barberton Herald - "Downtown Cinema, At What Cost?" by Carl Boon. This ambitious four-part series turns over every rock to relay the troubled history and perilous future of Barberton's Lake Theatre, complete with detailed accounting of the project's huge financial shortfalls and questionable business deals, culminating in a question: Was the decades-long effort to restore and maintain the downtown theater worth the \$4 million in taxpayers funds?

Second Place: The Press Newspapers, Millbury - "Waiting for the Rescue Squad" by Kelly Kaczala and Melissa Burden. The reporters turned to a standard news story about a local man who may have died due to slow response from local emergency services, casting a spotlight on serious problems faced by the cash-strapped local fire department to maintain adequate staffing levels. The depth of the initial reporting, and coverage of numerous public meetings in which the issue was debated, provide a compelling example of solid, hard-hitting community journalism.

Third Place: ThisWeek Grove City Record - Coverage of Grove City's unpaid taxes by Lisa Aurand, lead reporter and contributions by Paul Comstock, Tom Sheehan and Sarah Sole. Typical of ThisWeek newspapers, the *Record* provided dogged reporting of a serious public issue - Grove City's \$1 million in unpaid payroll taxes owed to the IRS and state government - from the initial release of the information through various stages of the issue. The coverage sticks pretty much to covering public meetings, but works in bits of enterprise reporting along the way. Good example of how to thoroughly cover a serious local issue.

Division B

First Place: The Telegram, Jackson - Coverage of flash flooding - various articles by Pete Wilson, Barbara Summers, and Steven Keller. Rural communities rely on their local newspapers for actionable information during major disasters, and *The Telegram* exemplifies that role in its multi-page coverage of flash flooding that struck its region in May. Articles run the gamut from heart-wrenching personal accounts and basic overviews of the hardest-hit neighborhoods to basic, unbylined PSAs about shelters and recovery services for flood victims. A great example of team coverage of a natural disaster that is of service to the community.

Second Place: The People's Defender - "Why Did They Die?" by Carleta Weyrich. The depth of reporting is impressive in this same-week story about a horrific multiple-murder that ended in a police shootout. The reporter attempted to figure out the motive for the killer, who murdered members of his estranged-wife's family in Adams County before driving to his family's home in Columbus, where he charged police in a hail of gunfire. The story relates an all-too-familiar tragedy of drug addiction and related crime, and the failure of authorities to capture a fugitive. The package include raw unedited transcripts of the 911 call, made by a neighbor on behalf of the 8-year-old girl who survived the murder spree. A truly chilling tale, and one that should raise serious questions about how a fugitive of justice with a known drug addiction problem can be at large for so long.

Third Place: Jackson County TimesJournal - Jackson County's War on Drugs, by Felicia Tackett. The reporter's obvious rapport with local law enforcement resulted in a series of articles about various crackdowns, initiatives, and police raids aimed at stemming widespread drug crimes in the rural county. The reporting provides a cohesive series that, taken together, describes the insidious nature of drug addiction and trafficking in a financially addled, rural county.

Judges' Comments

Class 2: In-Depth Reporting (continued)

Division C

First Place: Vandalia Drummer News - "The Lauterbach Case: A Retrospect" by Phillip Collins. The article provides an intriguing view of how the murder of a local woman, killed by a fellow Marine months after she filed sexual-assault charges against him, revealed a pattern of indifference toward sexual assault and harassment in the military, and prompted congressional hearings and an internal investigation. Told from official documents and the perspective of the victim's mother, the story reveals a depth of reporting not typically seen in such follow-up articles.

Second Place: Vermilion Photojournal - Coverage of "sweepstakes internet cafes" by Karen Cornelius and Candace Barczyk. This series of articles does more than simply recount a city council's apparent overreaching of its authority to block, then regulate "sweepstakes internet cafes," primarily based on negative assumptions about the business. The reporters not only covered the developing local policy and responses from local business owners, but also provided an in-depth explanation of how the businesses operated, dispelling some myths about the businesses. The series concludes with how the city's imposition of a hefty licensing fee had forced the owners of a long-established bowling alley to shut down its internet cafe, such as recounting the dubious nature of a possibly illegal executive session and the likelihood that the council's actions were discriminatory against a particular type of business, enhance the reporting. The series is an excellent example of community-level watchdogging.

Third Place: Solon Times - Coverage of "deer culling" controversy by Sue Reid. In this series of 18 articles (and counting, for sure), the reporter captures how polarizing some small-town issues can become. The series begins with a routine article about discussions of resuming a city deer-culling program that was curtailed the previous year due to budget cuts. The series then lays out the city's concerns about a relatively large deer population that has caused public safety concerns. Then citizens and regional animal-rights supporters began a concerted effort to block the program, resulting in months of controversy. The reporting is balanced and informative throughout; honorable mention to the headline writer for some clever wordplay.

Judges' Comments

Class 2: In-Depth Reporting (continued)

Division D

First Place: Yellow Springs News - "Examining Affordability" by Lauren Heaton, Megan Bachman and Diane Chidister. If there could be a "best in show" for the Hooper in-depth reporting contest, this entry would be it. In an ambitious and exhaustively researched eight-part series, this team of reporters took turns telling the story of the challenging housing market in Yellow Springs, from parsing the census data and applying localized variables, to looking at the role of land-use and community-planning regulations, to providing compelling stories of many different types of community members in seeking and keeping affordable housing. Each installment is rich in information, and each uses effective writing to prevent the material from becoming too dry or esoteric.

Second Place: The Pataskala Standard - "You're Paying for it: Public Employee Retirement" by Jessica Alaimo and Seth Roy. This localized version of Central Ohio Newspapers collaborative effort provides some eye-opening detail about the public-employee retirement system in Ohio, particularly the "pickup" practice by which some administrative-level employees do not contribute to their retirement funds (the public employer pays the full freight) but also do not report the savings as personal income. *The Standard's* review of the effect in its own local school districts is particularly enlightening.

Third Place: Archbold Buckeye - Coverage of financial crisis at Archbold Elevator by David Pugh. For a farming community, a disruption in service at a major grain elevator can have dire consequences for farmers and farm-related business, and David Pugh's exhaustive coverage of the license-suspension of Archbold Elevator illustrates that complex relationship. always with an emphasis on how farmers affected by the closure could apply for and recoup losses via a multi-million dollar state fund created just for that purpose. The issue is highly technical, but Pugh explains the process in clear language, and also provides statewide data and historical information about the effects of grain-elevator bankruptcy on farmers and their communities.

Class 3: Best Local Feature

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

Division A

First Place: Gary Budzak - ThisWeek Hilliard
Second Place: Nate Ellis - ThisWeek Pickerington
Third Place: Sarah Sole - ThisWeek Grove City Record

Division B

First Place: Jeff Donahue - ThisWeek Bexley
Second Place: Bryan Wroten - The Press
Third Place: Carleta Weyrich - The People's Defender

Division C

First Place: Sue Reid - Solon Times
Second Place: Jim Konkoly - Morgan County Herald
Third Place: David J. Coehrs - Fulton County Expositor

Division D

First Place: Beth Mlady - North Ridgeville Press
Second Place: Amherst News-Times
Third Place: Lauren Heaton - Yellow Springs News

Judges' Comments

Class 3: Best Local Feature

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Hilliard - "Second-Grader Gets Surprise Visit from His 'Hero'" by Gary Budzak. A heart-warming story told in the classic "show, don't tell" style. The reporter's presence at the reunion of a 7-year old with his mother in the armed services, recording details that suggest the power of the movement, place the reader there with the family. The quotes and straight narrative, without overwriting or oversentimentalism, make this tell-it-like-it-is story very engaging. Readers will feel they must read to the last stop. Well done.

Second Place: ThisWeek Pickerington - "Girl Rescues Pit Bull, Gains Unlikely Friend" by Nate Ellis. This is a small subject, but a big story. The author has reconstructed a love story of dog and human that has transformed both. Pet lovers no doubt were intrigued and charmed. Even better, in the best traditions of journalism, the story tackles myths - in this case, myths that have unfairly mischaracterized a particular breed of dog.

Third Place: ThisWeek Grove City Record - "Veteran Participates in Honor Flight" by Sarah Sole. A beautiful mixture of the past and present, linking the central acts of a veteran's life in service to his country with the country's belated recognition.

Division B

First Place: ThisWeek Bexley - "Brennan's Cancer Battle Inspires Staff" by Jeff Donahue. The story has a powerful lead that invites readership. What makes it so strong, however, is the range of interviews and the level of detail. A community pulls for its mayor to beat cancer, and the author chronicles it all with a keen eye for detail and a warmth that doesn't lap over into melodrama. Good work!

Second Place: The Press, Avon Lake - "Close Quarters: Rubbing Elbows at Avon Lake Bar" by Bryan Wroten. The author uses a tiny listing in an MSNBC story as a springboard for a first-person feature exploring one of America's tiniest bars. As with all good bar stories, there are plenty of laughs, much-told stories, and bits of nostalgia. This judge, and no doubt many readers, put visiting this bar on their bucket list after reading this clever funny story.

Third Place: The People's Defender - "Megan's Wish List Complete!" by Carleta Weyrich. OK, here's a story about a young girl riding a horse. It's much more than that, of course, and what elevates it above other wish-fulfillment stories are the interviews with those around the girl, especially her teacher and the workers at the horse stable, whose lives obviously were touched by helping a girl who needs all the help she can get.

Judges' Comments

Class 3: Best Local Feature (continued)

Division C

First Place: Solon Times - "A Legacy Forged: Master Blacksmith Celebrates 50 Years in Business in 2011" by Sue Reid. A very well reported and written feature, combining good color and quotes. It could have been a straight business feature, but the reporter has turned it into a story about bigger things: family, commitment, perseverance. A compelling read.

Second Place: Morgan County Herald - "Haines Brothers Restoring Old Tractors - and Memories" by Jim Konkoly. A catchy lead, a strong narrative thread, and a sharp eye for detail make this a fun and nostalgic feature. The author dug into the interviews and the history of people who love tractors and made this a story that anyone, even if they have never ridden a tractor or done farm work, could enjoy.

Third Place: Fulton County Expositor - "Protests in His Native Egypt Surprised Wauseon Resident" by David J. Coehrs. More media outlets should copy what the reporter has done here: It's so easy and compelling. The writer has localized a story of global importance by finding just the right tour guide to the chaos in Egypt. The story succeeds not only because the subject is knowledgeable, but also because he is passionate. Well-written and well-reported, requiring the reporter to master much of the background of recent Egyptian history.

Division D

First Place: North Ridgeville Press - "The Love of a Lifetime" by Beth Mlady. The story about a nonagenarian who visits his recently deceased wife's grave twice a day is expertly told, and interwoven with the reporter's apprehensions and appreciation for having the story told to her. A front-page article that should soften even the hardest heart. This curmudgeonly judge teared up a bit, to be honest.

Second Place: Amherst News-Times - "The Whole World on a String" - The feature presents a short but thoroughly engaging tale of a local man who is a "yo-yo Zen master" who has started a local yo-yo club with its own local competition. A good story, well told.

Third Place: Yellow Springs News - "Hello, dahlias! Looking swell, dahlias!" by Lauren Heaton. The in-depth tale of various dahlia enthusiasts in and around Yellow Springs provides an interesting history of the region's long-standing role as a sort of Mecca for serious fans of the persnickety perennials. The depth of the reporting is impressive, and the storytelling is very good.

Class 4: Original Columns

Judged by Profs. Fred Endres, Timothy Smith, Carl Schierhorn and Ann Schierhorn.
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Kent State University

Division A

First Place: David Lange, Chagrin Valley Times
Second Place: Barbara Christian, Chagrin Valley Times
Third Place: Marsha Mundy, The News Democrat Sunday

Division B

First Place: Sue Botos, WestLife
Second Place: Tim Troglen, Hudson Hub-Times
Third Place: Jessica Hartzler Stock, The Budget

Division C

First Place: Jim Konkoly, Morgan County Herald
Second Place: Larry Larson, ThisWeek Grandview
Third Place: Dar Nevergall, Putnam County Sentinel

Division D

First Place: Don Haven, The Granville Sentinel
Second Place: Beth Mlady, North Ridgeville Press
Third Place: Jeff Gill, The Granville Sentinel

Judges' Comments

Class 4: Original Columns

Overview: The formula for a good column is easy to describe but hard to execute; clear writing with a personal touch, a mix of topics including some meaty subjects, a dash of humor and some significance or contribution. Too many “local” columns are all about the author - they should be about the audience, the readers. The best did that well.

Division A

First Place: David Lange, Chagrin Valley Times - The top two columnists are both from Chagrin Valley and should be co-winners. Both show a willingness to take on difficult topics but often in a whimsical, almost sarcastic way. Lange attacks what he sees as hypocrisy in an educational lawsuit, an Easter egg hunt and drug searches at high schools.

Second Place: Barbara Christian, Chagrin Valley Times - She pokes fun at the overuse of the word “awesome”, a Republican congressman who dared to sound almost like a moderate and a hillside condominium development.

Third Place: Marsha Mundy, The News Democrat Sunday - A nice variety of columns on a deceased Afghanistan soldier's last journey home, an enjoyable essay on the physical book vs. electronic one, and the recycling of not-so-old days - returning glass bottles, using cloth diapers, having a jar of cold water in the refrigerator instead of buying a plastic one.

Division B

First Place: Sue Botos, WestLife, Westlake - Sue Boto's columns have a light touch but make a point. She writes about a foodie's anxiety attending a cooking class, the value of sex vs. hard work in bringing attention to a women's sports team, and deceptive uses of green marketing. These are topics that would engage a wide audience in her community, and they are enjoyable to read.

Second Place: Tim Troglen, Hudson Hub-Times - Tim Troglen's topics range from seven friends who run to raise money for fighting cancer to the role of cupcakes in countering terrorism to a search for trees planted as memorials for school children. His columns are based on his reporting, which gives them additional depth and strong local interest.

Third Place: Jessica Hartzler Stock, The Budget, Sugarcreek - Jessica Hartzler Stock's columns on giving true gifts, eating out with children and finding joy impart solid parenting advice - and much more. By writing simply and eloquently she engages grandparents as well as parents of young children.

Judges' Comments

Class 4: Original Columns (continued)

Division C

First Place: Jim Konkoly, Morgan County Herald - Konkoly writes about bumper stickers, taking his young daughter fishing, growing old, and our changing schools. But, he writes with clarity and passion, and takes us along on his journeys into the past. We relate to his stories and his ideas. We may not agree, but that's OK. He makes you think about his weekly topic, and that is a major contribution. If I lived in Morgan County, I'd be one of his most avid readers.

Second Place: Larry Larson, ThisWeek Grandview - Larson does a nice job reporting, reviewing, analyzing and giving his opinion. He's a facile writer who knows his (local) subjects well. And, he writes about a variety of topics, not getting mired down in the seasonal mainstays of football, basketball and baseball.

Third Place: Dar Nevergall, Putnam County Sentinel - Nevergall's columns provide proof that you can write about purely personal topics, yet still tell good stories and grab the attention of the readers. He writes about the anniversary of the death of his daughter, but places that horrible event in a larger context of grieving and growth that many people can relate to. He tells a story about someone reporting that he carried a weapon into the local courthouse (it was his fold-up umbrella), being subjected to a police interview, and then talking to the person who reported him and telling him that he did the right thing. He also has fun with a trip to the zoo that reminds him of when a large "rodent" visited him and his family while camping years ago. There's a degree of whimsy and gentle humor that takes us back to similar events we experienced. He's able to take us along and that's not an easy thing to accomplish.

Division D

First Place: Don Haven, The Granville Sentinel - Anyone who favors snow days can't be all bad, even if he did endorse Kasich. (And I'm sure, as a teacher, he has had ample time to regret that decision.) Columns show that he doesn't take himself too seriously (always a risk for columnists) and he writes about what he knows. He also writes well, as an example for his students.

Second Place: Beth Mlady, North Ridgeville Press - No nonsense here. This lady gets to the point and makes it clear where she stands right away. I don't agree with her take on unions, but her position is well-reasoned and well-written. The column about the hockey team is just plain fun.

Third Place: Jeff Gill, The Granville Sentinel - An eclectic selection of topics that share a sense of place of his community. I have a feeling for where he lives, which is all too rare for newspapers.

Class 5: Best Editorial

Judged by Nicole Kraft, Lecturer
The Ohio State University

In this class there are no divisions by circulation

First Place:	WestLife
Second Place:	ThisWeek Marysville
Third Place:	Chagrin Valley Times
Fourth Place:	The Pataskala Standard
Fifth Place:	The Granville Sentinel

Judge's Comments

Class 5: Best Editorial

First Place: WestLife, Westlake - Dec. 15, 2010 - Editorials are supposed to take a stand that advances the community good, or at least makes readers aware of issues that might impact their lives. Both are served well in "A Shameful Start," about the Cuyahoga County Council's secret meeting. Forcefully written with a clear focus, this editorial represents a paper that is not afraid to speak out in the face of community challenges - a trait needed in more coverage areas.

Second Place: ThisWeek Marysville - June 12, 2011 - A strong story, a solid chronology and a well-stated position make this a winner. It's not long, but it doesn't have to be to outline how one Midwestern community successfully fought an egg farm in a community that simply did not want it. Sometimes it's a positive story that deserves editorial page inches!

Third Place: Chagrin Valley Times - June 23, 2011 - The first paragraph of "Neighborhood get sold out," proclaims of the West Orange Street gateway project to be "shameful," and this editorial paints a clear picture of that assessment. It is well supported with facts, and crafts an articulate opinion to help citizens understand just how and why they may have been "left holding the bag."

Fourth Place: The Pataskala Standard - December 2, 2010 - Levy stories can get bogged down in numbers, but "Study needed in wake of parks levy defeat" does a clear job of explaining how concerns about the Licking Parks District may have validated a vote against parks and recreation levy. By shining light on issues that may not be otherwise exposed in a tax-focused story, this editorial serves the public well.

Fifth Place: The Granville Sentinel - September 2, 2010 - College campuses are often communities unto themselves, and how crime is reported in the Denison community is well explored in this editorial "Denison must maintain full communication with police." The need to do what's right is often overshadowed by the need to do what is popular, but these editorial writers clearly focus an argument to aim the sunshine of Ohio's open records law on this university.

Class 6: Sports Coverage

Judged by Profs. Fred Endres, Timothy Smith and Carl Schierhorn
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication
Kent State University

Division A

First Place:	ThisWeek Dublin Villager
Second Place:	Chagrin Valley Times
Third Place:	Barberton Herald

Division B

First Place:	ThisWeek Bexley
Second Place:	Hudson Hub-Times
Third Place:	The Budget

Division C

First Place:	Pike County News Watchman
Second Place:	ThisWeek Grandview
Third Place:	The Gazette

Division D

First Place:	Oberlin News-Tribune
Second Place:	The Press-News
Third Place:	Amherst News-Times

Judge's Comments

Class 6: Sports Coverage

Overview: Papers in this category covered game stories in a workmanlike fashion. Almost all desperately needed second-day angles - emphasizing why and how a team won or lost. Remember these stories are appearing days after the events. Get a good quote in the top four paragraphs to support your angle. Quotes from players as well as coaches enhance a story greatly. Good sports coverage involves excellent coverage, writing, page/section design and photo usage. Coverage needs to be heavily local and should take in a variety of sports, not just the seasonal staples. Writing should be accurate, colorful and dynamic, without morphing into purple prose. Layout needs to be attractive, clean and inviting. Photographs, and there should be lots of them, need to be framed properly, in focus and attractively arranged on the page.

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Dublin Villager - Nice use of quotes from both players and coaches. Outstanding photography, played large and well and great coordination between photos and stories. Fascinating use of moving all football coverage to the Web on Friday night - giving the reader the news they want on time and opening up space in the paper for other sports. Crowning this section was a heartbreaking story - and even more heartbreaking picture - of a girl who had switched her jersey numbers to that of her late brother, who had died in an auto accident.

Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times - Blanket coverage of sectional wrestling and state swimming championships made this section one of the best. Besides results, there were solid quotes from both the champion swimmers and their coach. Emotional photos away from the action told the story better than the routine, though good, action photos.

Third Place: Barberton Herald - Good coverage, especially, of Barberton girls basketball teams' upset victory over Ravenna, which was ranked second in the state at the time. Other coverage was solid but could have used more quotes higher in the story.

Judge's Comments

Class 6: Sports Coverage (continued)

Division B

First Place: ThisWeek Bexley - A nice package of news, crisp photos and a variety of commentary put *ThisWeek Bexley* in first. Stories are tight, full of information and avoid excessive play-by-play. Year In Review package is a good read. Frequent use of Roundups, At a Glance, and Briefs sections extend coverage. Larry Larson column is solid and it is good to see a mix of contributors in commentary. Also good to see promotion of online exclusives at ThisWeekSports.com. Don't know why all publications aren't taking this approach now, given unlimited space potential for broader reach and increased online engagement by readers in all demographics.

Second Place: Hudson Hub-Times - Wide variety of coverage, from lacrosse to swimming to gymnastics. Good focus on athletes and their stories. Some good photography contributed by K.M. Lemencic. Lots of briefs added on inside pages.

Third Place: The Budget, Sugarcreek - The Budget makes good use of a tight broadsheet newshole. Good to see focus on the athletes such as Athlete of the Week. Some nice leads by correspondent Jeffery Williams. Effective mix of sports and teams.

Division C

First Place: Pike County News Watchman - The sports sections include broad coverage, good writing and a modern design with large (but not too large) photos. Writing is quite good.

Second Place: ThisWeek Grandview - Attractive section with nice use of large, high quality action shots. Writing is above average, and Larry Larson provides nice weekly column. Wasn't a great diversity in number of kinds of sports covered.

Third Place: The Gazette, Jefferson - Only average writing, but broad coverage and lots of nice photos placed in a clear design.

Division D

First Place: Oberlin News-Tribune - Excellent use of photography in an unusual layout coupled with fine, cliché-free writing.

Second Place: The Press-News, Waynesburg - Good writing and a variety of sports coverage highlight this paper's sports section.

Third Place: Amherst News-Times - While football dominates the coverage, the *News-Times* makes room for coverage of several other sports. Game coverage includes not only the key points, but several relevant quotes.

Class 7: Design

Judged by Fahlgren Mortine, Columbus, Ohio

Division A

First Place: The News Democrat Sunday
Second Place: ThisWeek Worthington
Third Place: ThisWeek Hilliard

Division B

First Place: Jackson County Times-Journal
Second Place: WestLife
Third Place: ThisWeek Bexley

Division C

First Place: Morgan County Herald
Second Place: Putnam County Sentinel
Third Place: Solon Times

Division D

First Place: Yellow Springs News
Second Place: The Granville Sentinel
Third Place: Archbold Buckeye

Judges' Comments

Class 7: Design

Division A

First Place: The News Democrat Sunday - For readability, simpleness and fewer ads.

Second Place: ThisWeek Worthington - For clarity and elements above the fold.

Third Place: ThisWeek Hilliard - For general structure.

Division B

First Place: Jackson County TimesJournal - For nice structure and organization. Masthead, side callout and headline.

Second Place: WestLife, Westlake - For structure, playful and useful type choices.

Third Place: ThisWeek Bexley - For quick reads and callouts above the fold. Clean grid system and balance of ads and design.

Division C

First Place: Morgan County Herald - For nice masthead. Well organized and easy to read.

Second Place: Putnam County Sentinel - Quick callouts at the top. Good choice of photography. Organized and clean.

Third Place: Solon Times - For nice headline above the fold, nice weight between ads and content. Consistent 4 column grid.

Division D

First Place: Yellow Springs News - For easy to read. Almost overly simplistic. Focused on content. Comfortably traditional.

Second Place: The Granville Sentinel - For good use of grid and ease of read.

Third Place: Archbold Buckeye - Easy to read, nice masthead.

Class 8: Advertising

Judged by Fahlgren Mortine, Columbus, Ohio

Division A

First Place:	Chagrin Valley Times
Second Place:	ThisWeek Dublin Villager
Third Place:	ThisWeek Hilliard

Division B

First Place:	Jackson County Times-Journal
Second Place:	The Telegram
Third Place:	ThisWeek Bexley

Division C

First Place:	ThisWeek Grandview
Second Place:	Morgan County Herald
Third Place:	Vandalia Drummer News

Division D

First Place:	Archbold Buckeye
Second Place:	Yellow Springs News
Third Place:	The Pataskala Standard

Judges' Comments

Class 8: Advertising

Division A

First Place: Chagrin Valley Times - Strem Ortho - Overall design quality; use of white space is a relief to the eye.

Second Place: ThisWeek Dublin Villager - Bow-Wow - Compelling visual and simple read.

Third Place: ThisWeek Hilliard - School for Girls - Nice design but lacking hierarchy/structure.

Division B

First Place: Jackson County Times-Journal - Bob's - Simple, compelling visual. Easy to read and very bold.

Second Place: The Telegram, Jackson - Dodge - Hierarchy and organization.

Third Place: ThisWeek Bexley - K.A. Mendendian - Compelling contrast and creative headline.

Division C

First Place: ThisWeek Grandview - Harvest Festival - Overall quality, visually and hierarchy.

Second Place: Morgan County Herald - Free Movie Night - Organization, hierarchy, quick read and theme.

Third Place: Vandalia Drummer News - Taco Bell - Clean, simple and to the point.

Division D

First Place: Archbold Buckeye - Archbold Equipment - Simple structure.

Second Place: Yellow Springs News - Hardy - Hierarchy, clarity, brevity.

Third Place: The Pataskala Standard - Jersey Baptist Church - Fun fonts and colors.

Class 9: Best Photo

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

Division A

First Place: Lorrie Cecil - ThisWeek Pickerington
Second Place: Adam Cairns - ThisWeek Grove City Record
Third Place: Lorrie Cecil - ThisWeek Clintonville

Division B

First Place: Eric George - ThisWeek Johnstown Independent
Second Place: Paul Vernon - ThisWeek Marysville
Third Place: Chris Parker - ThisWeek New Albany

Division C

First Place: Itamar Gat - Solon Times
Second Place: Adam Cairns - ThisWeek Canal Winchester
Third Place: Julie Billings - Pike County News Watchman

Division D

First Place: Megan Bachman - Yellow Springs News
Second Place: Lauren Heaton - Yellow Springs News
Third Place: John McLaughlin - The Press-News

Judges' Comments

Class 9: Best Photo

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Pickerington - "Traveling Wall Reflections," Nov. 18, 2010, by Lorrie Cecil. This is a wonderful shot of the reflection of the emotional face of a veteran looking at and his hand touching the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall at the local American Legion post. Excellent composition – good color, cropping, sizing. Cecil recognized and captured a terrific moment.

Second Place: ThisWeek Grove City Record - "Laughter in the Rain," June 2, 2011, by Adam Cairn. This humorous shot of a teen somersaulting to entertain a group of baseball players can't help but spark a smile for any viewer. The faces and body language of the players in colorful uniforms in a sunny park setting are delightful.

Third Place: ThisWeek Clintonville - "State Champions," Dec. 9, 2010, by Lorrie Cecil. In this picture, the pure joy of two players celebrating a state football championship victory beautifully represents the feelings of exhilaration the whole team and their fans must have experienced. The paper didn't spare the deserved large space devoted to this instant and several other scenes Cecil photographed during and after the game.

Division B

First Place: ThisWeek Johnstown Independent - "Johnston Feed Mill is Sold," April 17, 2011, by Eric George. The photographer produced an excellent portrait of the man and a feed mill under what appear to be difficult lighting conditions. An artistic side light brightens the subject's face and baseball hat in front of black structures and a bright light against a dark blue sky.

Second Place: ThisWeek Marysville - "Track Team," April 10, 2011, by Paul Vernon. Vernon snapped a high jumper at the peak of action leaping backwards over the rail. The body and facial expressions of concentration contribute to a fascinating image.

Third Place: ThisWeek New Albany - "Girls Soccer Team," Sept. 30, 2010, by Chris Parker. This shot of soccer players colliding suggests the excitement of the players and game. This is a fine example of able action photography.

Judges' Comments

Class 9: Best Photo (continued)

Division C

First Place: **Solon Times** - "Orchestra Open Season," Nov. 18, 2010, by Itamar Gat. *The Times* has a great talent in Gat who produced a brilliant black-and-white shot using glaring stage lights of an orchestra conductor with his arms in streaking motion. The photo deserves much larger display, as do each of the other two pictures by Gat of the orchestra on the same page.

Second Place: **ThisWeek Canal Winchester** - "Boys Basketball," Dec. 2, 2010, by Adam Cairns. This is a nifty basketball action shot showing a player dribbling through two defenders. A good instant of determined arms, legs and faces.

Third Place: **Pike County News Watchman** - "Finding a Winter Treat," Jan. 19, 2011, by Julie Billings. Here is a nice example of some wildlife photography, showing a nice feature close-up of a woodpecker on a tree limb. Nice detail and cropping.

Division D

First Place: **Yellow Springs News** - "A Radical," May 19, 2011, by Megan Bachman. This is a truly outstanding portrait of a woman with a wide range of interests. The subject's smile and clothes and the hen atop the motorcycle she sits on are delightful elements in brilliant black-and-white composition. Great angle choice and cropping.

Second Place: **Yellow Springs News** - "Shell Game," April 21, 2011, by Lauren Heaton. The photographer wisely chose a low angle to represent a turtle as the kind of "tiny thing" that will be a feature of a workshop by the smiling naturalist sitting beside her microscope. Good control of the depth of field. I like the conceptualizing that went into the shot.

Third Place: **The Press-News, Waynesburg** - "Sand Flying," May 5, 2011, by John McLaughlin. It's not easy to determine whether this shot of a jumper landing in flying sand was planned or lucky (perhaps a combination), but either way it is an eye-catching image freezing athletic action.

Class 10: Best Headline

Judged by Kelly Taylor, Lecturer; David Sennerud, Instructor; Max Filby, News Editor, *BG News*; Emily Tucker, Editor-in-Chief, *Key Magazine*; Alissa Widman, Managing Editor, *BG News*
Bowling Green State University

In this class there are no divisions by circulation

First Place: Willard Times-Junction

Second Place: Williard Times-Junction

Third Place: Twinsburg Bulletin

Fourth Place: Huber Heights Courier

Fifth Place: North Ridgeville Press

Judge's Comments

Class 10: Best Headline

First Place: Willard Times-Junction - (November 11, 2010) - "Signalling a change: US 224/Ohio 99 now has light." Interesting play on words providing readers with an accurate description of what the story is about. The secondary headline supports the primary headline by clarifying the specific change.

Second Place: Willard Times-Junction - (June 27, 2011) - "Willard streets taxing concern for city council." This is a solid news headline that encompasses the whole story. The use of the word "taxing" applies to both the difficulties of getting the issue on the ballot and the fact that it is a tax levy.

Third Place: Twinsburg Bulletin - (March 3, 2011) - "Officials sound off on silent crossings." The headline provided good contrast between the verb "sound off" and the object of the preposition "silent crossings." The kicker adds necessary information to make the primary headline more effective.

Fourth Place: Huber Heights Courier - (October 28, 2010) - "School district's five year forecast 'mostly cloudy'." This headline takes what could be a stale budget story and makes it fresh. While some headline writers steal from leads, this headline compliments the reporter's lead well and draws the reader into the story

Fifth Place: North Ridgeville Press - (November 3, 2010) - "Butterfly garden gives local Boy Scout eagle's wings." This is a good feature headline that matches the Eagle Scout project described within the story.

Class 11: Special Edition or Section

Judged by Associate Profs. Jan Leach and Barb Hipsman; Profs. Jacqueline Marino and Mark Goodman
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Kent State University

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Dublin Villager
Second Place: ThisWeek Hilliard
Third Place: The Press Newspapers

Division B

First Place: The Telegram
Second Place: The Press
Third Place: (Tie) ThisWeek Marysville and
The People's Defender

Division C

First Place: The Paulding Progress
Second Place: The News Democrat
Third Place: The Gazette

Division D

First Place: The Pataskala Standard
Second Place: The News
Third Place: Yellow Springs News

Judges' Comments

Class 11: Special Edition or Section

Division A

First Place: ThisWeek Dublin Villager - "The Memorial" - The 2011 Memorial Tournament special section published in June to preview the golf event is a superior example of news and information packaged in a reader-friendly format that would appeal to golf devotees as well as newcomers to the tournament. This special section is well-organized and delivers a nice combination of history, preview, predictions and detail. The high school golfers' insight were clever and interesting ways to evaluate the 18 different holes at the course. This special section is easy to read, easy to use and interesting to boot!

Second Place: ThisWeek Hilliard - "Friday Night Live" - High school sports previews are staples for most newspapers but this effort is so comprehensive it deserves accolades. At more than 90 pages, this tab section features the requisite previews and highlights for all central Ohio football teams, complete schedules, division outlooks and interesting features about prospective standouts and new coaches. The section is hefty but easy to navigate.

Third Place: The Press Newspapers, Millbury - "Biggest Week in American Birding" - This Visitor's Guide provides appealing feature stories in addition to the usual "if-you-go" info for bird-watching enthusiasts and festival guests. The glossy cover and full-color inside pages are sure to appeal to birders and the schedules, sites of interest and recommendations are useful.

Division B

First Place: The Telegram, Jackson - "Get Out There!" - What a great idea! This section was filled with advertising and just the best stories around in this year's competition. Especially noteworthy were that most of the ideas on how to keep fit were inexpensive or free, featuring walks in area parks, healthful eating at home and away and generally - just how to keep fit without much thought. Kudos on presenting a keeper for your readers.

Second Place: The Press, Avon Lake - "Hope for a Cure" - While the pink paper was eye-catching, the content taught every reader some important facts.

Third Place: Tie: ThisWeek Marysville - "High Q Egg Farm Decision" - Summarized the fight between local residents and a firm that wanted to have 6 million hens in Union County. A great compilation issue.

AND

The People's Defender - "Adams County 2010 Reflections" - An historical look at sports and sporting stars in the area - a sure keeper.

Judges' Comments

Class 11: Special Edition or Section (continued)

Division C

First Place: Paulding County Progress - "Visions" - According to the editor's note, Paulding County provided more soldiers per capita than any other Ohio county. This publication introduces them to their descendants. Readers can learn about the "Drummer Boy of Shiloh," be moved by battlefield photographs and read excerpts of soldiers' letters home. This magazine-style publication includes fascinating, absorbing, well-curated content.

Second Place: The News Democrat - "A Salute to the Hand That Feeds Us" - This publication is an excellent tribute to local farmers in Brown County. Through short, detail-rich profiles, readers get to learn about the people who work seven-day weeks to put food on their tables.

Third Place: The Gazette, Jefferson - "Ashtabula County Fair" - This three-part publication offers the most exhaustive county fair coverage I've ever seen. It includes helpful reader-service information (maps, schedules, street closures, etc.) and feature articles about everything from Jeff Bibik the hypnotist to the kiddie tractor pull. There is something for everyone - much like the fair itself.

Division D

First Place: The Pataskala Standard - "Football Weekly" - Excellent, dynamic photography, appealing design and sharp writing make for an exceptional high school football season preview special section. The sidebars and easy-to-read data boxes make for one of the most reader-friendly sections I've seen.

Second Place: The News, Pymatuning - "Hauntings of Ashtabula County" - *The News'* choice of an unexpected subject, local ghost stories, is an excellent combination of history and entertainment. You don't have to be a believer in the paranormal to find this a fascinating and fun read. Good photos and an especially strong cover image reinforce this impressive effort.

Third Place: Yellow Springs News - "Getting to Green" - A special section with a focus as fresh as it is "green": environmental sustainability. Strong local features that frequently included a "how to" component combined with listings for community organizations, businesses and spiritual organizations as well as a sustainable events calendar resulted in an inventive, news-you-can-use special section.

Class 12: Community Service

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

In this class there are no divisions by circulation

First Place: Putnam County Sentinel

Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times

Third Place: Archbold Buckeye

Fourth Place: Pike County News Watchman

Judge's Comments

Class 12: Community Service

First Place: Putnam County Sentinel - Managing Editor Marlena Ballinger doggedly covered local efforts to deal with regular flooding of the Blanchard river in Ottawa. Her reporting over many months followed the lead-up to the Blanchard Watershed Conservancy District trial and beyond. A classic example of the vital role newspapers play when they stay on a story for as long as it takes.

Second Place: Chagrin Valley Times - Reporter Sue Hoffman's conscientious reporting on Kenston Schools Superintendent Robert A. Lee's visionary leadership with renewable energy did justice to his good work. Hoffman followed the trials of getting approvals and financing to install a wind turbine on the high school campus. A study in perseverance - for both Lee and the newspaper.

Third Place: Archbold Buckeye - Reporter David Pugh's enterprise reporting on victims of violent crime and the need for a victim's advocate helped secure funding to continue this vital support service. The Fulton County Family Justice Center was in danger of closing, but the newspaper reports brought forth local donors to keep the doors open.

Fourth Place: Pike County News Watchman - Brad Sherman's reporting on a company's controversial plan to open a new business in the community helped readers understand why this might not be a good idea. Sherman followed local officials as they considered whether or not to allow a pharmacy with a history of serving pain clinics elsewhere in Southern Ohio. Mayor Billy Spencer credited the newspaper as instrumental in helping the Village of Piketon make the right decision to not allow the questionable new business.

Best Web Site

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

Independent Newspaper Web Sites

First Place: Geauga Maple Leaf
www.geaugamapleleaf.com

Second Place: The Telegram
www.thetelegramnews.com

Third Place: Yellow Springs News
www.ysnews.com

Group Newspaper Web Sites

____ **First Place:** ThisWeek Newspapers
www.thisweeknews.com

Second Place: The News Leader
www.tnl-news.com

Third Place: The Gazette
www.gazettenews.com

Judges' Comments

Best Web Site

Independent Newspaper Web Sites

First Place: Geauga Maple Leaf - This site was easily the best in its category. It did all the basics well. It covered local news and sports, provided listings and went the extra mile to provide video, photo galleries and social media - a nice touch for a site its size. Most importantly it was obvious that it connected with its communities through the Web site. The Christmas video of the singing elves with staff faces showed it wasn't afraid to reach out - it was a wonderful touch.

Second Place: The Telegram, Jackson - This Web site does a nice job with its small staff. It's newsy and current. The "most recent stories" scroll on the home page calls attention to its aggressive community coverage.

Third Place: Yellow Springs News - This site had a lot going for it. It uses video, blogs and story chat effectively. The site avoided clutter and put useful information on the home page.

Group Newspaper Web Sites

First Place: ThisWeek Newspapers - This was a very newsy site that did a good job of making it easy to find news from its 22 communities. It offered its own video and promoted itself on Twitter.

Second Place: The News-Leader, Minerva - TNL.news did a good job on its site of providing access to the community in an easy-to-navigate design. We liked the video bar on the home page and would have liked to see a greater local effort among its many videos.

Third Place: The Gazette, Jefferson - We loved the clean look of this site and the widgets that display breaking news. This site displayed content well. More local videos would have been a plus.

General Excellence Awards

Division A

Chagrin Valley Times

Division B

WestLife
Westlake

Division C

Morgan County Herald

Division D

Yellow Springs News

Attention!

The Osman C. Hooper Awards contest for the entry period
August 1, 2011 to July 31, 2012 will be an online platform.

How can you prepare?

- Set aside contest-worthy digital content for those categories you wish to enter (e.g. create a folder on your desktop and save the page PDFs) **Entries will be from August 1, 2011 to July 31, 2012.**
- Select a single point of contact for your organization's contest entries, in case any communication is needed
- Plan on submitting your entries early during the contest, to avoid any last-minute rush

Benefits of an online contest platform:

- Digital entry for print and photo - no more forms to mail or shipping fees

NOTE: Some class entries may still require papers to be submitted for judging

- Online judging allowing easy winner review and selection
- Built-in administrative reporting and winner information retrieval for awards processing, saving time and resources

If you have any questions about our online contest platform contact Sue Bazzoli at sbazzoli@ohione-
ws.org or 614-486-6677 Ext. 18.