

DIVISION 1 – DAILY NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATION MORE THAN 6,500

NEWS CONTENT

FIRST PLACE: The Journal Record (OKC). JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This is a great newsy paper. The coverage is extensive and relevant.

SECOND PLACE: The Norman Transcript. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Headlines get you into the stories, and the reporting keeps you there. Good job.

THIRD PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: What local coverage this paper gives is good and competent.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Sometimes the team's willingness to take risks ends up looking great. The "On-Ice" front page is great.

SECOND PLACE: The Norman Transcript. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very professional design, yet fun. Great team does a great job.

THIRD PLACE: The Journal Record. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Tabloids have the hardest time with design, but it's not your fault. This paper is laid out and designed well. Excellent job.

ADVERTISING

FIRST PLACE: The Norman Transcript. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The wrapper – which was actually was an insert – was really nice and a great way to show support in the community. It fits in well with the rest of the paper that has balance. Readers Choice and Music Fest are real winners.

SECOND PLACE: The Journal Record. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Tabs have challenges broadsheets do not. Still, this tab looks awesome with a great look and an exceptional classified section.

THIRD PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Home section is great and shows acumen.

EDITORIAL WRITING

FIRST PLACE: The Norman Transcript. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Solid local opinions backed by facts and strong ideas about what needs to be done. This is the first-place winner because the case in each editorial is presented succinctly and with a point of view. Great job.

SECOND PLACE: The Journal Record. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Strong reporting in local editorials, which are well-written and on interesting topics. I would make them a little more opinion, and a little less a presentation of facts, and put that opinion higher. Enjoyed reading.

THIRD PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Another set of interesting editorials, with some clever writing especially on free press issues. The writer makes the case strongly not just for a free press but for one that is objective and doesn't attempt to be the story.

PHOTOGRAPHY

FIRST PLACE: The Norman Transcript. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This was a hard category to judge – the Transcript's stood out because there was good photography throughout all sections. How can you not love the wiener dog running full force with the look of determination?

SECOND PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I liked the use of large photos with many telling the story. Great mud volleyball photos, photo page and emotion on sports photo.

THIRD PLACE: The Journal Record. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Photos complement pages.

SPORTS COVERAGE

FIRST PLACE: The Norman Transcript. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The art and layout distinguish this sports section. Great photography, given room to shine, makes this a compelling presentation.

SECOND PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I really like the balance between columns and coverage, staff and AP stories.

SALES PROMOTION

FIRST PLACE: Enid News & Eagle, "Candy Cane Cash." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Sweet promotion! The staff clearly is willing to put a twist on the "shop local" type of promotion. Any promotion like this is valid because it shows the continued relevance of newspapers to the business community.

SECOND PLACE: The Norman Transcript, "Discover Norman City Guide." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Beautiful magazine. It's great that you took this from visitors guide – who doesn't have one of those – to a city guide. Great product and great promotion.

THIRD PLACE: The Journal Record, "2018 Tribal Economic Impact Issue." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great news special. The sales staff does a commendable job in tying sales to a news issue – not always an easy task.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

FIRST PLACE: The Journal Record, "No quick revival: Hospital's sudden closure makes it harder to reopen." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Well written and balanced, highlighting the difficulty when a regional medical center suddenly closes. We see the frustration and fear from different viewpoints.

SECOND PLACE: Enid News & Eagle, "Trusting News." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Newspaper holding itself accountable to readers and encouraging interaction with clear guidelines and goals. Commendable.

THIRD PLACE: The Norman Transcript, "Scamehorn reporting." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A university professor wrongly takes advantage of his position. A good example of newspapers as community watchdog.

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All daily newspaper divisions combined)

FIRST PLACE: Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: After visiting from afar, one feels like they know the scene here. Some good use of multimedia and a layout that felt full but not overwhelming.

SECOND PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:**

A news site and content mix that makes the user feel connected to the people and happenings.

THIRD PLACE: The Journal Record. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A polished site with good content and use.

NEWS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Brian Brus, The Journal Record, "Answers sought after spike in health-related jail deaths." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** While the reporter provided great sources, I was really impressed with the effort that was put into the research of the jail deaths to those involved with the jail incident. The reporter also did his homework with research and public record requests. Great detail.

SECOND PLACE: Molly Fleming, The Journal Record, "Momentous Murphy case heard by U.S. Supreme Court."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The reporter covered both sides of the case very well. There was great information and quotes about previous history that adds depth to the story. It was an interesting read.

THIRD PLACE: Cass Rains, Enid News & Eagle, "Jail death details emerge." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I was impressed with how much detail the reporter went into as far as the affidavit. The reporter provided the right amount of details that doesn't overcomplicate the story.

FEATURE STORY

FIRST PLACE: Adam Troxtell, The Norman Transcript, "Five years later: As years pass, Moore family comes to terms with storm's impact."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Well written human interest story with details and description and various angles that show this community's character in the face of tragedy. The way it was organized gave it a good flow. Good job!

SECOND PLACE: Gary Reddin, The Lawton Constitution, "Painting of homeless woman finds real home." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Simple yet well written story about locals lifting each other up. A story of hope. Good quotes and description. Would love to see a follow up.

THIRD PLACE: Joshua Rouse, The Lawton Constitution, "Adopted Korean orphan thankful to veteran 40 years later."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Haunting story that started with a good sense of place and character. I think the ending was too abrupt and more could have been done to disclose more about the officer who rescued these children, but even without that additional information, the subject and narrative deserve at least third place.

SPORTS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Tim Godfrey, Enid News & Eagle, "Accounted for: Father figures help Gray brothers after their dad's death."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The structure of this story is fantastic. Great storytelling.

SECOND PLACE: Tyler Palmateer, The Norman Transcript, "One year later, a look back at the various reactions to Bob Stoops' retirement." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I'm a sucker for behind-the-scenes background on a big story, and this did it for me. Great work!

THIRD PLACE: Clay Horning, The Norman Transcript, "Where are they now?: Shannon Enfield."

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

FIRST PLACE: Adam Troxtell, Caleb Slinkard and Jacob McGuire, The Norman Transcript, "OU professor emeritus Scamehorn in #MeToo saga." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Very good writing, coverage and investigation of sexual harassment allegations at Oklahoma University. The Transcript did an excellent job, particularly, Adam Troxtell!

SECOND PLACE: Janelle Stecklein, Enid News & Eagle, "Teacher walkout." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Straight forward coverage of the Oklahoma teachers walkout. Facts were presented in a direct yet engaging style without overwhelming the reader with redundant information.

THIRD PLACE: James Neal, Enid News & Eagle, "60th anniversary of Enid sit-in segregation protests." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** An important matter that would have been more appropriate in the feature category but the narrative justified the category.

COLUMN WRITING

FIRST PLACE: Dave Ruthenberg, Enid News & Eagle.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Columnist Dave Ruthenberg blew me away with his consistency and ability to make me care about his subjects, especially the missing homeless vet. He can tell a tale, and his examination of Oklahoma's Death Row bangles was exacting and on point.

SECOND PLACE: Jeff Mullin, Enid News & Eagle.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Jeff Mullin is an experienced columnist, and it shows. The columns featured are all excellent reads. The overview of Christmas Carols is comfortable and more like a conversation with an old friend at the neighborhood bar. None disappointed. Each engages the reader in its own way. Great work by a veteran writer.

THIRD PLACE: Grace Leonhart, The Lawton Constitution.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Grace Leonhart provided a painfully direct and heartfelt account of her personal experiences with domestic abuse, and some sage advice earned through hard experience. Great job, and well done.

SMALL SPACE AD

FIRST PLACE: Laura Watts, The Journal Record, "Naifeh Fine Jewelry."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Simple yet classy. Negative space makes this pop.

SECOND PLACE: Rebecca Howe and Marise Boehs, The Norman Transcript, "Rose Rock Veterinary Hospital & Pet Resort."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice graphic elements and used well.

THIRD PLACE: Leslie Mahan, The Journal Record, "You'll say 'Bow-Wow' at Stone Creek!" JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Proof that a black and white ad can be effective.

LARGE SPACE AD

FIRST PLACE: Jennifer Jepson, The Norman Transcript, "Lunch 'n' learn at Pioneer Hearing Aid Centers." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great ad, it piques my curiosity to the point where I want a little more information. That's what advertising is about. Simple design for a simple message, but it is very effective.

SECOND PLACE: Wendy Duncan, The Journal Record, "Holiday happenings in Midwest City." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Colorful ad, I had fun looking for all the different little elements. I especially liked the Facebook and Twitter christmas ornaments. Very effective, this ad encourages you to take a long look.

THIRD PLACE: Laura Watts, The Journal Record, "Naifeh Fine Jewelry." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Simple, crisp and elegant. Effective ad for your customer.

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Michael D. Pope, The Lawton Constitution, "Breath-powered sailboats." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This photo has everything in place – drama, action, unique angle, and interesting expressions on all the faces.

SECOND PLACE: Michael D. Pope, The Lawton Constitution, "Emergency crews rescue woman from high water." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Pulls the viewer into the action, catching the concentration in her face, the water movement and the hope of the situation. Good storytelling.

THIRD PLACE: Brent Fuchs, The Journal Record, "Peaceful warriors: Yoga classes expand at VA." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Lots to see and unpack, interesting. What is he doing and why is he doing it?

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Michael D. Pope, The Lawton Constitution, "Faces at the Rangers Rodeo." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good photography of people comes about when you get someone going about living and doing their thing. Great timing on this, I didn't have to read the cutline to figure out what was happening. Nice framing and excellent shooting skills on display.

SECOND PLACE: Michael D. Pope, The Lawton Constitution, "Splash pad." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great photo! Shooter did a nice job catching the action. I wouldn't mind seeing the other photos taken to catch this one.

THIRD PLACE: Bonnie Vculek, Enid News & Eagle, "Mud volleyball." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice framing and excellent job of catching the action.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Kyle Phillips, The Norman Transcript, "Facemask violation at Big 12 Championship." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very nice shot that perfectly tells the story of the accompanying article's subject: Young Mr. Brown seems to have had an extremely rough day. Great action capture.

SECOND PLACE: Michael D. Pope, The Lawton Constitution, "Reserve keeper goes high." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very nice action shot. Good, clear shots of a keeper about to make a save aren't the easiest to get. Great capture, nice quality.

THIRD PLACE: Billy Hefton, Enid News & Eagle, "Seiling girls win Class A title." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The time-honored shot of the thrill of victory and agony of defeat, all in one frame. Good timing and nice depiction of a moment.

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Bryan Richter, The Journal Record, "Coming attractions." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A very eye-catching and creative page design. The popcorn placement is a cute idea, and the film strip along the side disappearing into the bucket takes the creativity up an extra notch. Clean and professional. Well done.

SECOND PLACE: Joe Malan, Enid News & Eagle, "On ice." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good, strong top-story graphic that grabs the reader's attention immediately and shows them clearly what the topic at hand is: It's pretty cold.

THIRD PLACE: Bryan Richter, The Journal Record, "Use as directed." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good, clean design and another eye-catching use of graphics with the liquid pouring through the headline.

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION – 2018 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

DIVISION 2 – DAILY NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATION BETWEEN 3,000 AND 6,500

NEWS CONTENT

FIRST PLACE: Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This paper shows a real commitment to local news with its crisp writing and reporting. The staff is very competent.

SECOND PLACE: The Ardmoreite. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great balance of community news.

THIRD PLACE: Stillwater News Press. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good local coverage.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This paper does a great job of expanding on traditional design without going too far. Color heads are used, but not to the point of distraction. The skyboxes look cool and the color resolution is great.

SECOND PLACE: The Ada News. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This was a tough call to put this as second instead of first. Your team does a great job, especially with the special sections. The photos are great and the designers know exactly what to do with them.

THIRD PLACE: Stillwater News Press. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice, clean design. Very readable.

ADVERTISING

FIRST PLACE: Stillwater News Press. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Your ad groupings are what really made this entry rise to the top. Nice use of color in the Stillwater Strong sections are great. The real estate section really sings.

SECOND PLACE: Muskogee Phoenix. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Crisp and clean copy and decent cover ads. I'm impressed that you have not one, but several grocery store ads, Nice classifieds and a good mix of color and B&W.

THIRD PLACE: The Ada News. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Very solid advertisements with a good variety. Good special sections really shined.

EDITORIAL WRITING

FIRST PLACE: Stillwater News Press. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Inviting headlines and sparkling writing in these forceful, well-argued editorials. There's no mistaking where this newspaper stands on issues; and that's the point, after all.

SECOND PLACE: Muskogee Phoenix. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The paper presents well-researched topics and then makes a case for the changes it supports. Really liked the argument against the VA decision; it's a home-town argument but one buttressed with facts.

THIRD PLACE: Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise.
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The mistake editorial was short and fun; the newspaper did not try to skirt that fact that it should not have changed the TV book. Good free press one, too, reminding the country that reporters are neighbors and friends.

PHOTOGRAPHY

FIRST PLACE: The Shawnee News-Star. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Lets the photos do the talking – great storytelling.

SECOND PLACE: Stillwater News Press. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great photography and use of photos throughout the paper.

THIRD PLACE: Muskogee Phoenix. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Love that there is lots of photos and faces.

SPORTS COVERAGE

FIRST PLACE: Stillwater News Press. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Knows how to do college sports well. Very fun and lively sports and GameDay sections

SECOND PLACE: The Ada News. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** For a newspaper with a small staff, it does very big and ambitious things!

THIRD PLACE: Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise.
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Mike Tupa does a lot with very little help. It is what a small-town sports section should be.

SALES PROMOTION

FIRST PLACE: The Shawnee News-Star, "Firefighters of the Year."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A really great way to honor all those who risk their lives daily. Good job!

SECOND PLACE: Stillwater News Press, "Bridal Showcase."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Loved the idea. Came out great!

THIRD PLACE: The Ada News, "Farm Show." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Very nice product. Great idea. I really enjoyed all the colorful ads.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

FIRST PLACE: Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise, "Night of scholars and champions." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Newspaper spearheads student achievement in a big way, complete with confetti.

SECOND PLACE: Stillwater News Press, "Taste of Stillwater."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Large community event supported by newspaper, makes for some good eats for a good cause.

THIRD PLACE: Weatherford Daily News, "Christmas in the Park."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Long running holiday event sponsored by newspaper provides community fun.

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All daily newspaper divisions combined)

FIRST PLACE: Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise.
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: After visiting from afar, one feels like they know the scene here. Some good use of multimedia and a layout that felt full but not overwhelming.

SECOND PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A news site and content mix that makes the user feel connected to the people and happenings.

THIRD PLACE: The Journal Record. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A polished site with good content and use.

NEWS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Denton Thomason, Vinita Daily Journal, "You want to tell me where my niece is?" **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The storytelling technique in this saga is engaging, with fresh quotes that capture emotions from all characters involved, even the suspect, and take the reader to the location while providing context. Great job!

SECOND PLACE: David Bitton, Stillwater News Press, "Iranian college students struggle with day-to-day hardships of travel ban."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A controversial issue during a dangerous time when a lack of understanding of other cultures is dividing society. The author gave a voice to these characters and in doing so, he offered a glimpse to their struggles and hopes. Well done!

THIRD PLACE: Kim Morava, The Shawnee News-Star, "Faith, family and forgiveness: Sentence reduced for driver in deadly crash."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I chose this story for the emotions conveyed and its message of hope, which connected to deeper issues impacting communities everywhere.

FEATURE STORY

FIRST PLACE: Denton Thomason, Vinita Daily Journal, "Walk by faith."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This stayed with me long after I read it. It's such an interesting story and demonstrates the power of friendship. I would have never thought hunting blind was even possible. I enjoyed reading the articles and thought it was really well done.

SECOND PLACE: Denton Thomason, Vinita Daily Journal, "Say thank you." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I really enjoyed this article because it stands out from all the other Veterans Day articles that are often published in newspapers. I like that the story comes full circle, with the ending connected to beginning, asking readers to shake a veteran's hand.

THIRD PLACE: Vicky O. Misa, The Shawnee News-Star, "Shenanigans in Shawnee: Famous ape spotted at local historic sites."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This could have been just an ordinary article about a class reunion, but the writer really went above and beyond to tell a good story. I was intrigued from the beginning and the writer works the humor into the story well. You don't have to be part of this graduating class or from this town to be interested in the story, which is what, I think, makes it great.

SPORTS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Mike Tupa, Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise, "Lyle Taylor forged mat destiny at College High." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This was an extremely touching, posthumous look at the life of a clearly fascinating man. The story is well-written and gives us a clear picture of the man through his accomplishments and the reminiscences of his friends. I hope it was read by young athletes; they could learn a lot.

SECOND PLACE: Mike Kays, Muskogee Phoenix, "Lilli's journey: Out of times of early peril, Muskogee senior has thrived."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Solid story about a young athlete's drive to overcome adversity and bloom no matter where she was planted. Good writing and good flow.

THIRD PLACE: Adam Ewing, The Shawnee News-Star, "Stargell uses competitive drive to build a legacy." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** An interesting peek into the pressures of being a young athlete with a famous family member. If I had one suggestion, it would be to consider the placement of the portions of the story that contribute to the dramatic impact. For example, the fact he'd driven past his relative's street sign every day since he started school would have been a great and impactful lead.

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

FIRST PLACE: Staff, Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise, "Teachers by day" **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** An excellent team effort. This package shows a newspaper in touch with its community, willing to take a risk on rolling out a package of stories that foreshadowed the big teacher walkout. The stories personalized the issues backed by graphics and data that may have had something to do with the community pulling together to raise funds for families and teachers when the walkout happened.

SECOND PLACE: David Bitton, Stillwater News Press, "Teacher walkout." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Another excellent package put together almost entirely - photos and stories - by one reporter. The package covered not only the lead up to the walkout but the impact on areas such as applicants to the college teacher program.

THIRD PLACE: Randy Spicer II, Weatherford Daily News, "Medical marijuana." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A detailed package that unfolds a town council's decision to ban marijuana shops from downtown despite public support. Lots of background and effort to follow the story to the end.

COLUMN WRITING

- FIRST PLACE:** Mike Kays, Muskogee Phoenix, "Hashmarks."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Mike Kays is the consummate sports columnist. His writing moves quickly but he knows how to linger on the right topic, like his insightful examination of a football team's response to the shooting death of a teammate, and their decision to go for the championship game instead of taking a pass. It's a column with a heart, and that's the best kind for your sports page.
- SECOND PLACE:** DeWayne E. Smoot, Muskogee Phoenix, "Off the Cuff." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: They have a conversational air that doubtless attracts many loyal readers. It's also packed with facts and figures that are presented in a digestible fashion. The three submitted columns on business or political issues break down data and discuss issues of substance to readers, such as customer service and how businesses damage their own interests when they view workers as mere commodities. Nicely done.
- THIRD PLACE:** Jordan Bishop, Stillwater News Press, "Bishop's Beliefs." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Jordan Bishop of the Stillwater News Press writes an entertaining and informative sports column that serves his readers well. Great work.

SMALL SPACE AD

- FIRST PLACE:** Kristyna Butler, Weatherford Daily News, "Pecina's Mexican Café Valentine's dinner."
- SECOND PLACE:** Maurisa Nelson, LeaAnn Wells, Ann Zimmerman and Ashley Williams, The Ada News, "Idle Time RV."
- THIRD PLACE:** Maurisa Nelson, LeaAnn Wells, Ann Zimmerman and Ashley Williams, The Ada News, "Deck restoration & pressure washing."

LARGE SPACE AD

- FIRST PLACE:** Kristyna Butler, Weatherford Daily News, "We're homerun hitters!" JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very creative ad with good use of graphic elements and color.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kristyna Butler, Weatherford Daily News, "Merry Christmas from Cummins Auto Group." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice traditional Christmas ad with good colors and lighthearted feel.
- THIRD PLACE:** Maurisa Nelson, LeaAnn Wells, Ann Zimmerman and Ashley Williams, The Ada News, "Ada Nissan July 4th specials." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Car ads have a tendency to cram too much stuff on a page. This one is pleasing to look at and it makes me linger on the page.

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

- FIRST PLACE:** David Bitton, Stillwater News Press, "Fatal motorcycle accident." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The story is in the photo, it makes the viewer think and create the story in their mind. Well composed as well.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kent Bush, The Shawnee News-Star, "Firefighters rescue resident, pets in fire." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The photo is lovely and frightening at the same time. Not a lot of drama, but good structure, and the cat glows and gets your attention.
- THIRD PLACE:** David Bitton, Stillwater News Press, "Veterans Day flags." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Boom, there it is and we know it's patriotic and sad and strong.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

- FIRST PLACE:** Chris Day, Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise, "Playin' the blues." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Awesome composition on this as every little detail, from his beard to his guitar strings, is in sharp focus. The black and white was a nice touch, giving it a retro vibe that fit well with an older musician.
- SECOND PLACE:** David Bitton, Stillwater News Press, "Tailgate fireworks." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This shot of fireworks is pretty standard fare, but this one stands out for its beauty. The firework is in perfect focus, with a rich night sky in the background. I see what you were doing with the family on the truck, and it worked all right.
- THIRD PLACE:** David Bitton, Stillwater News Press, "Orange smile." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: What a cute moment! It was well framed and pretty hilarious.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

- FIRST PLACE:** Adam Ewing, The Shawnee News-Star, "Dale softball state champions." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great showing of emotion, especially with the coach in the dog pile.
- SECOND PLACE:** Jason Elmquist, Stillwater News Press, "Chuba Hubbard leaps defender." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good showing of the vertical leap.
- THIRD PLACE:** Mike Tupa, Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise, "Missed catch." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good shot of the ball in midair as the player avoids the tag.

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

- FIRST PLACE:** Alison Morris, Weatherford Daily News, "Splash pad." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This page is so alive. The focal graphic is wonderful, with water spraying through and above the mast, and the rest of the page draws the eye cleanly to the other stories, with another good graphic use at the bottom. Really fun and well done.
- SECOND PLACE:** Samantha Spears, The Ada News, "Celebrate America." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Giving over everything above the fold to an explosion of Fourth of July photos makes this front page something that tells its own story before you even get into the article. Attractive and eye-catching, and the flag through the teaser box at the bottom was another nice touch.
- THIRD PLACE:** Joshua Cagle, Muskogee Phoenix, "Bright sight in the sky." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Really nice photo of a balloon glow through the mast is obviously attention-grabbing, and I also like the story trickling down through a gradient box on the right.

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION – 2018 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

DIVISION 3 – DAILY NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATION LESS THAN 3,000

NEWS CONTENT

FIRST PLACE: Claremore Daily Progress. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Staff does a great job of running down local news stories. This is a well-covered community and this newspaper is the reason why.

SECOND PLACE: The Duncan Banner. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great balance of stories between features and news. Great community paper.

THIRD PLACE: Tahlequah Daily Press. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This is a good, sturdy newspaper, which is a great thing.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: McAlester News-Capital. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Crisp design and great layout. Pleasing to look at without getting in the way of content.

SECOND PLACE: Claremore Daily Progress. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good basic design, but your use of graphics shot this to the top of the heap, especially the graphic of the sidewalk project.

THIRD PLACE: Tahlequah Daily Press. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good use of creative headlines without getting distracting. The track sports cover shows a highly competent and imaginative staff.

ADVERTISING

FIRST PLACE: McAlester News-Capital. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Extraordinary classified section makes the entry rise above the rest, but the special sections show a team that works hard and cares about what they do.

SECOND PLACE: Woodward News. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The Best of 2018 is a great special section with a great variety of ads. It fits well with the rest of the paper.

THIRD PLACE: Clinton Daily News. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Crisp printing really helps the vibrant colors. Ads are relevant and easy to read. Good mix.

EDITORIAL WRITING

FIRST PLACE: McAlester News-Capital. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Well-reasoned perspective on topics important to local readers and all Oklahomans. Analytical in tone, but not boring. A good example of an editorial page offering insight, as well as leadership.

SECOND PLACE: Tahlequah Daily Press. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Writing that leaves no doubt where the paper stands on issues that matter to its readers, locally and regionally. A willingness to take a stand with little equivocation. Refreshing.

THIRD PLACE: Clinton Daily News. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I enjoyed reading these concise but pointed editorials.

PHOTOGRAPHY

FIRST PLACE: Clinton Daily News. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great sports photography with the second base slide and the celebration shot but by far the wildfire photo took it straight to the top of the rankings. First place. Way to go Robert S. Bryan.

SECOND PLACE: McAlester News-Capital. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great local coverage overall, but the football catch photo and the feature photo of the kid with the cookie on his eye made the issue stand out as a solid second place.

THIRD PLACE: Claremore Daily Progress. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial photos and the rodeo photo looked great at 6 columns. Great use of photography. The picture of the cowboy entertaining the kids was a great slice of life kind of photo too.

SPORTS COVERAGE

FIRST PLACE: Clinton Daily News. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I was able to read about all sports teams including middle school squads. Great job!

SECOND PLACE: Woodward News. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Easy to see scores and I like the sports column as it adds the view of a reporter to the mix.

THIRD PLACE: McAlester News-Capital.

SALES PROMOTION

FIRST PLACE: Clinton Daily News, "Home for the Holidays." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great reading material, full of ads and articles.

SECOND PLACE: Tahlequah Daily Press, "Best of Tahlequah." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Enjoyed reading the articles and content.

THIRD PLACE: The Duncan Banner, "Gridiron Guide." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very entertaining. Good stories.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

FIRST PLACE: McAlester News-Capital, "Candidate and issue community forums." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This is a great example of what journalism is all about. Your team went that extra mile to make sure every reader knew about the upcoming elections. There shouldn't have been one reader saying they weren't informed about the candidates or issues! Great work!

SECOND PLACE: Tahlequah Daily Press, "Shop Tahlequah." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: What a great campaign this was. Your team did a wonderful job promoting this shop local effort.

THIRD PLACE: Claremore Daily Progress, "Share the Spirit." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good job! This is a great community campaign. Keep up the great work.

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All daily newspaper divisions combined)

FIRST PLACE: Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: After visiting from afar, one feels like they know the scene here. Some good use of multimedia and a layout that felt full but not overwhelming.

SECOND PLACE: Enid News & Eagle. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A news site and content mix that makes the user feel connected to the people and happenings.

THIRD PLACE: The Journal Record. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A polished site with good content and use.

NEWS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Kim Poindexter, Tahlequah Daily Press, "Sequoyah Fuels nuclear waste leaves state." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A story of importance for the newspaper's readers that includes lots of detailed background on how a major news development came about.

SECOND PLACE: Ken Milam, Poteau Daily News, "\$1 million lottery ticket." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A nicely crafted story with a clever lead and good use of quotes that made for a good read.

THIRD PLACE: Derrick James, McAlester News-Capital, "One suspect dead after shooting, explosion in Talihina." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Straight breaking news reporting of a dramatic event under a headline that captures your attention.

FEATURE STORY

FIRST PLACE: Ken Milam, Poteau Daily News, "A glowing showing: black light exhibit." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** An illuminating look at the humble beginnings of the black-light and Day-Glo fads. A well-written piece that absolutely would tell most readers something they never knew through the interesting life of the artist and her business.

SECOND PLACE: Linda Provost, The Duncan Banner, "Family found: Woman finds more than biological family in Duncan." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** An engaging and heartwarming story of a family rediscovered and the strong ties that bind us, even before we're sure of exactly what those ties may be. Good interview and quotes from those involved.

THIRD PLACE: Derrick James, McAlester News-Capital, "Suicide prevention and mental health discussion." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** An interesting piece filled with stats and information on suicide in the newspaper's coverage area. As this is a feature, I would have liked to see a bit more on the "why" of it all (personal stories, etc.), but the article provides great resources for suicide prevention.

SPORTS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Byron Beers, Tahlequah Daily Press, "Golden duo: Running to glory." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Track and field is often not the spring sport of which readers are clamoring for coverage, and it can be difficult to make it engaging. This article accomplishes that goal. A well-written and interesting look at two standout athletes that would catch the eye of even a reader not invested in the sport. Well done.

SECOND PLACE: Kayleigh Thesenvitz, Claremore Daily Progress, "Learning to walk again." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A touching and inspiring story. Well organized, allowing the reader to feel as if they are following the subject through his ordeal.

THIRD PLACE: Andy Morphew, The Duncan Banner, "Elite group." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A solid story on a significant accomplishment. Needed more background info on the athlete.

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

FIRST PLACE: James Beaty, McAlester News-Capital, "Vet fights to remain in home." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A great series that shows the power of a well told story to drive change and make a difference, even in one person's life. The reporter did the extra legwork to dig deeper into the story and find facts that pointed to a fallacy in a government policy. The first article drove the public outcry that ultimately led to change.

SECOND PLACE: Tesina Jackson, Tahlequah Daily Press, "E. coli levels in Town Branch." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A well done series tracking a town's effort to trace the source of dangerous E. coli in a stream. The series became stronger once a reporter actually dug into the situation after the first two articles. Great job explaining the science of E. coli and health effects.

THIRD PLACE: Scott Haas and Linda Provost, The Duncan Banner, "County jail funding crisis." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This was an important series told largely through dialogue between the sheriff and commissioners, an engaging approach.

COLUMN WRITING

FIRST PLACE: Kim Poindexter, Tahlequah Daily Press. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Man, I loved these columns. Maybe it's insider baseball, but I appreciate the way the columnist communicates the life of the newsroom to readers.

SECOND PLACE: Christina Clark, The Duncan Banner. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Newspaper columnists tend to be of one particular type – and this writer clearly breaks that mold. It's wonderful to see this kind of diversity.

THIRD PLACE: James Beaty, McAlester News-Capital, "Ramblin' Round." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Excellent work. The column about the Utah mayor killed in Afghanistan was one of the most moving pieces I've read in some time.

SMALL SPACE AD

FIRST PLACE: Staff, McAlester News-Capital, "McAlester Family Eyecare." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Cute kid, but the ad is simple, pleasing and effective. It tells us to get our eyes checked and this business will get it done for us. All the relevant information is there. The ad seems to tell us this is a friendly place, which could only please the client.

SECOND PLACE: Staff, McAlester News-Capital, "Classic Restorations." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Simple and pleasing. This proves that a small ad can say big things.

THIRD PLACE: Crystal Childers, The Duncan Banner, "Prom would be 'ruff' without you...." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Effective use of color. Pleasing and informative.

LARGE SPACE AD

FIRST PLACE: Juanita Lewis, Tahlequah Daily Press, "Sooner Electronics, where Santa shops for the big boys toys." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Love the way Santa is holding up the specials like it was his favorite list of "big boy toys."

SECOND PLACE: Staff, McAlester News-Capital, "Big V Feeds Pro Rodeo." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Like the rustic background look. It makes me want to go to the rodeo.

THIRD PLACE: Staff, McAlester News-Capital, "Tannehill Furniture." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I like all the different options. I have to go shopping at this store.

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Kayleigh Thesenvitz, Claremore Daily Progress, "National night out photo essay." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** "Night out" photos highlight how the police can interact positively in the community. The camaraderie is evident at this fun event.

SECOND PLACE: Grant Crawford, Tahlequah Daily Press, "House explosion." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This photo catches the moment when fireman are doing their job. We can see it in the red face of one of the firemen.

THIRD PLACE: Kayleigh Thesenvitz, Claremore Daily Progress, "Kowboy Kal and Frontier Day Camp." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Cute photo showing the kids having fun and the talented cowboy demonstrating his skill.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Amanda Corbin, Poteau Daily News, "Head over heels: bucking bronco." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great action shot and well composed image. You could tell the photographer was in the right place at the right time.

SECOND PLACE: Kayleigh Thesenvitz, Claremore Daily Progress, "The wall that heals." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A very emotional image that tells the story of two people and their feelings at the monument. I would have rated it higher if the man's head wasn't cut off and if we saw more of their facial expressions.

THIRD PLACE: Amanda Corbin, Poteau Daily News, "Honoring those who served." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I could really feel the bond in this photo. Great facial expressions.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Byron Beers, Tahlequah Daily Press, "Tahlequah second baseman gets an out."

SECOND PLACE: Rick Heaton, Claremore Daily Progress, "Stiff-arm at Claremore 35, East Central 7."

THIRD PLACE: Johnny McMahan, Woodward News, "Soccer player heading ball toward the net."

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Dawnyal Hill, McAlester News-Capital, "Veterans Day 2018." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Top-notch designer, eye-catching presentation of stories with clean, bold fonts, a well-organized front page.

SECOND PLACE: William Kujawa and Cydney Baron, Claremore Daily Progress, "Sidewalk repair project." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Excellent visual representation and graphic design brings the stories to life.

THIRD PLACE: Juanita Lewis, Tahlequah Daily Press, "On a roll with Cornhole." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Well-organized, including visual previews to give a glance at multiple stories all above the fold.

DIVISION 4 – WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATION MORE THAN 2,000

NEWS CONTENT

- FIRST PLACE:** The Eufaula Indian Journal. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This paper goes out of its way to cover its community. Editor Jerry Fink not only does a great job of bringing it, but shows what an experienced reporter can do.
- SECOND PLACE:** Choctaw Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great news coverage, this paper has it all – government, crime and schools. Nice interesting stories – a manhunt, turnpike construction and changes and the chamber of commerce are all in one issue. Great job, your community is lucky to have a great newspaper.
- THIRD PLACE:** The Purcell Register. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very good at covering your communities, especially in covering schools.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

- FIRST PLACE:** The Madill Record. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good use of simple graphics that don't overwhelm the reader. The paper is designed with an eye toward positive white space. Excellent job!
- SECOND PLACE:** The Eufaula Indian Journal. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good steady design from cover to cover. Too many times it is only the cover that gets much attention – this paper cares about the inside as well. The sports pages really shine.
- THIRD PLACE:** The Beckham County Record. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Pretty standard design, but it is done with a deft hand. The special sections really put this in the top group.

ADVERTISING

- FIRST PLACE:** The Madill Record. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice mix of ad types and sizes even though there isn't much color. Classifieds look great - easy to read and find what you're looking for. The classified displays don't get lost amongst themselves.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Eufaula Indian Journal. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great variety of display ads in both color and B&W. The stacks are a little busy, but still pop out.
- THIRD PLACE:** OKC Friday. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Fridayland's Finest is a great feature - vibrant color really makes them pop and sizzle. Great mix of B&W and color and the design is good.

EDITORIAL WRITING

- FIRST PLACE:** Choctaw Times.
- SECOND PLACE:** Mustang Times.
- THIRD PLACE:** The Purcell Register.

PHOTOGRAPHY

- FIRST PLACE:** The Eufaula Indian Journal. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Each frame in this entry brought us up close to the action. From sweet slices of life to intense breaking news, the photographers consistently produced strong, eye-catching work.
- SECOND PLACE:** Choctaw Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The sports images really stood out in this entry and helped it rise above some of the others. There was lovely visual variety in the news and feature categories, but showing more emotion would have helped.
- THIRD PLACE:** Mustang Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Lovely work by the photographers producing consistently strong images across categories. Getting closer to the people involved in the news photos would have helped this entry.

SPORTS COVERAGE

- FIRST PLACE:** The Madill Record. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice use of cutouts in sports section. Great layout design.
- SECOND PLACE:** OKC Friday. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Wonderful coverage of the local and area football teams. Lots of work done here.
- THIRD PLACE:** The Purcell Register. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice clean layout. Lots of great photos. Really nice looking sports section.

SALES PROMOTION

- FIRST PLACE:** The Purcell Register, "Football Preview magazine." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: It's hard to lose with football, but this promotion went the extra step. Great looking package and well thought out promotion.
- SECOND PLACE:** Choctaw Times, "Oktoberfest guide." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice promotion of a traditional event. Looking through it, you can tell the stories are fresh and the ads look great.
- THIRD PLACE:** The Eufaula Indian Journal, "Focus magazine." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The Focus is a nice looking product that obviously supports the community and its businesses. Great opportunity taken by the paper.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- FIRST PLACE:** The Purcell Register, "Saving the hospital."
- SECOND PLACE:** Mustang Times, "Food drive."
- THIRD PLACE:** The Eufaula Indian Journal, "Wetlands project."

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All weekly newspaper divisions combined)

FIRST PLACE: The Edmond Sun. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A good use of the medium that does a good job of keeping people up to date.

SECOND PLACE: The Countywide & Sun. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A strong contender in this category. Adjusting templates to show more clearly the hierarchy of stories' importance would help readers identify best content.

THIRD PLACE: Johnston County Sentinel. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Clean layout, easy to use. Not as much content as other sites, but also avoids the pitfall others succumb to in trying to make their offering look larger than it is.

NEWS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Sheryl Ponce, The Beckham County Record, "Local teachers at State Capitol." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great piece on teachers marching at the Capitol. I think the writer picked the right sources for this piece, making it an interesting read.

SECOND PLACE: Mike W. Ray, OKC Friday, "What's in your sewer?" **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This was just a well written, interesting piece about the weird things that end up in sewers – something people don't generally think about, but glad the writer did.

THIRD PLACE: Darrell Neale and Christina Fuson, Stilwell Democrat Journal, "Cherry Tree Water District in turmoil." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice, newsy story on a seemingly dysfunctional water district.

FEATURE STORY

FIRST PLACE: Tina Firquain, The Madill Record, "Because of Walmart the Dog." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice story. I'm a little disappointed it took five years for someone to take this dog home.

SECOND PLACE: Molly Raley, The Madill Record, "No teacher left behind." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good story explaining the problem with teacher pay and education cuts.

THIRD PLACE: Mike W. Ray, OKC Friday, "Turkey lurking around The Village." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** No word on whether the turkey ended up on someone's Thanksgiving table?

SPORTS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Molly Raley, The Madill Record, "1% Better: 1600-meter relay champs." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I don't often see stories giving accounts of a relay race by runner. It was an interesting approach.

SECOND PLACE: Sheryl Ponce, The Beckham County Record, "97-year-old grandmother is avid high school basketball fan." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** We all know an Oma Dee in our life. Good job of featuring her.

THIRD PLACE: Tina Firquain, The Madill Record, "More than just a reunion – 10 years of kindness returned." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great story about small investments in people can pay big dividends.

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

(Combined with Division 5)

FIRST PLACE: John Small, Mary Lokey and Tom Lokey, Johnston County Sentinel, "Shelley and Kevin Duncan investigations." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This series had it all: sex, public firing, bizarre and brazen theft, trials for statutory rape. If you read the first story, you had to read them all.

SECOND PLACE: Shonda Little, The Beckham County Record, "Examining State Question 788." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Started strong with first two stories. Wandered off subject telling the marine's story. Fourth story needed counter opinion on health benefits.

THIRD PLACE: Shonda Little, The Beckham County Record, "Opioid crisis." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Well-organized. Some typos, two in ledes.

COLUMN WRITING

(Combined with Division 8)

FIRST PLACE: Kyle Salomon, Yukon Review. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The columns did a great job of expressing opinions on the specific situations of local sports. Two seemed a bit drawn out, but the writing was solid. The quotes from a coach made for a stronger column.

SECOND PLACE: Patty Miller, The Edmond Sun. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Clear stances on current events. The Alzheimer's caregiver column is particularly touching.

THIRD PLACE: Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Grove Sun, "Bits & Pieces." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice personal, heart-felt columns, more interesting than joining the herd in commenting on over-analyzed national issues.

SMALL SPACE AD

(Combined with Division 5)

FIRST PLACE: John Small, Johnston County Sentinel, "Gospel Station - Tishomingo Indians."

SECOND PLACE: Christina Fuson, Stilwell Democrat Journal, "Memorial Hospital fall craft sale."

THIRD PLACE: JJ Francais, The Chronicle, "Kerbo's Frame Shop."

LARGE SPACE AD

(Combined with Division 5)

FIRST PLACE: Joshua Small, Johnston County Sentinel, "Happy Days at Houser's Furniture."

SECOND PLACE: Ron Vavak, OKC Friday, "Woman of the Year."

THIRD PLACE: JJ Francais, The Chronicle, "Hardzog's Christmas open house."

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

(Combined with Division 8)

FIRST PLACE: Zach Maxwell, Durant Democrat, "Home, church escape wildfire." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A great picture. Great angle and great background.

SECOND PLACE: Rick Carpenter, The Altus Times, "Jackson County issues burn ban." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice photo of the fireman in the smoke. This photo tells the story of the dangers of being a firefighter. Great job.

THIRD PLACE: Drew Harmon, The Edmond Sun, "Soccer kite." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Wonderful photo. Great color. Clean and crisp photo. Great timing on this shot.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

(Combined with Division 8)

FIRST PLACE: Jessica Lane, The Express-Star (Chickasha), "Anadarko Dance Troupe visits Brookdale." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I really like the use of foreground and background in this photo, with the youngsters in the background the up-and-coming dancers.

SECOND PLACE: Patty Miller, The Edmond Sun, "Corn hole tournament." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Creative framing of the photo, along with the bright green color really brings this photo together.

THIRD PLACE: Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Grove Sun, "On Fire for INTEGRIS Grove." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Excellent capture of a moment. I especially like the colors in this photo.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

(Combined with Division 8)

FIRST PLACE: Rick Carpenter, The Altus Times, "Bareback bronc." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Outstanding timing with photo. Great action shot.

SECOND PLACE: Richard Clifton, OKC Friday, "Deer Creek - PC North scrimmage." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: One of the better black and white shots I've seen in a long time. Great action.

THIRD PLACE: Kevin Farr, Durant Democrat, "Silo wins baseball championship." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great timing of a celebration shot.

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Rose Lane, OKC Friday, "Pains, trains and automobiles."

SECOND PLACE: Tina Firquain, The Madill Record, "Reduced speed ahead."

THIRD PLACE: Rose Lane, OKC Friday, "Turkey lurking."

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION – 2018 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

DIVISION 5 – WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATION BETWEEN 1,400 AND 2,000

NEWS CONTENT

FIRST PLACE: Owasso Reporter. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This is a great newspaper with great local, regional and state news. Their news coverage really shines. You can tell their reporters and editors are truly plugged into the community.

SECOND PLACE: The Delaware County Journal. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great balanced coverage of crime, government and community. You get a sense of place in reading this paper.

THIRD PLACE: Midwest City Beacon. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Stories and their placement shout out this paper's relevance in the community.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Owasso Reporter. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This is a paper that understands design. In a word it has balance. While the cover isn't overly flashy, the inside pages show the professionalism of your staff. Each page is consistent and pleasing. Your color register is a little light, but we all know how that goes. Great job!

SECOND PLACE: Midwest City Beacon. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very pleasing design. Very steady and easy to read.

THIRD PLACE: Johnston County Sentinel. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very competent. Good use of black and white and color elements.

ADVERTISING

FIRST PLACE: Owasso Reporter. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The Readers Choice Section shows how something like this should be done.

Obviously, this staff cares to give clients a great product.

SECOND PLACE: McIntosh County Democrat. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice use of color and B&W and the Gridiron Guide truly is a special section.

THIRD PLACE: Johnston County Sentinel. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Although in B&W the weekly football roster and schedule does a great job for customers and shows community support.

EDITORIAL WRITING

FIRST PLACE: The Chronicle.

SECOND PLACE: McIntosh County Democrat.

THIRD PLACE: Johnston County Sentinel.

PHOTOGRAPHY

FIRST PLACE: Midwest City Beacon. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Compelling shots on a variety of subjects. Great capturing of action and facial expressions. Good shot angles.

SECOND PLACE: The Chronicle. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Photos capture great moments and show skill and quickness on the shutter button. The photos of the violinist are particularly special.

THIRD PLACE: The Countywide & Sun (Tecumseh). JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice sports shots, and extra "points" for degree of difficulty with the lighted parade. Showed originality with angles to make what could have been boring shots interesting.

SPORTS COVERAGE

FIRST PLACE: Owasso Reporter. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This looks complete, rather than just throwing together pieces as they come to the editor.

SECOND PLACE: Johnston County Sentinel. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good first page explaining why the game was so quick. Not a fan of the "heroic effort" headline since the team lost, but the photos are all good. I don't care for the emphasis of "Now THAT was a game!" to start out a news article; however, another good photo makes up for it.

THIRD PLACE: Vian Tenkiller News. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Don't say "unidentified player" when you can see her jersey number. Do some research. But a good diversity of articles and photos.

SALES PROMOTION

FIRST PLACE: McIntosh County Democrat, "Gridiron Guide." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great football section! Loved the old photos from the past. Excellent job with the player profile cards. I'm glad you included the band!!! Cover is too busy.

SECOND PLACE: Tuttle Times, "Tri-City Today." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Excellent section to learn more about the community. Nice page layouts, healthy ad count.

THIRD PLACE: Midwest City Beacon, "Eastern Oklahoma County Football Preview." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Gorgeous cover! Excellent sports section for the smaller towns in the area. Next time please give the reader some white space.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

FIRST PLACE: The Countywide & Sun, "Tornado Preparedness Guide." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This guide is a real service to the community. Great job in making it comprehensive and for the broad distribution.

SECOND PLACE: The Chronicle (Elgin), "Elgin Winter Wishes special section." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I love this idea, and love the fact that the newspaper stepped in to help make it bigger and better.

THIRD PLACE: McIntosh County Democrat, "Domestic violence awareness." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great work in highlighting a hugely important issue. True change in those shocking statistics will come through education of young people.

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All weekly newspaper divisions combined)

FIRST PLACE: The Edmond Sun. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A good use of the medium that does a good job of keeping people up to date.

SECOND PLACE: The Countywide & Sun. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A strong contender in this category. Adjusting templates to show more clearly the hierarchy of stories' importance would help readers identify best content.

THIRD PLACE: Johnston County Sentinel. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Clean layout, easy to use. Not as much content as other sites, but also avoids the pitfall others succumb to in trying to make their offering look larger than it is.

NEWS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Delaware County Journal, "Russell brothers charged with first degree murder, deliberate intent." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great lede, grabbed my attention immediately, I wanted to know more. Paragraphs are tight, well written and the article flows. Great attributions about the incident. The only "thing" it left me wanting to know – what did the victim's family have to say, if anything, about it. Did they decline to speak?
- SECOND PLACE:** Lisa Carroll, The Chronicle, "Questions linger in Apache shooting." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great lede, sparked my interest immediately. Very informative and the article flows as I learned more about how the situation unfolded. Great photos/art that adds to the article.
- THIRD PLACE:** Mary Lokey, Johnston County Sentinel, "Missing teen's body recovered." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good lede. Article flowed and the paragraphs were tight and subject matter was to the point. Good information for such a sad occurrence. It makes me want to read a second piece to find out what happened.

FEATURE STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Art Haddaway, Owasso Reporter, "Beyond happenstance: Owasso couple, nurses reunite to bring dying daughter back to health." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This article told a unique and one-of-a-kind story in an interesting and articulate manner. It was well-written and told in a way that makes the reader want to finish the story through until the end.
- SECOND PLACE:** Art Haddaway, Owasso Reporter, "A mom's peace: Local woman reunites with twin daughters." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This was an interesting article and well-written. It has the human interest/family element to it that make for a good story. I enjoyed getting a sense of perspective from both the mother and her two daughters in this story.
- THIRD PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Delaware County Journal, "Autism diagnosis empowers Jay student." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I've read several articles on children with autism, but I really enjoyed the "super hero" angle of this story. It was nice reading a story on autism with such a positive spin and perspective on a disorder that is so often misunderstood and believed to be negative.

SPORTS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Shawn Hein, Owasso Reporter, "Alternate path: historic lacrosse scholarship." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This story showcased an often overlooked sport. It was interesting, entertaining and informative – all while not going over the reader's head.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Delaware County Journal, "Fighting Peacocks prep for national games."
- THIRD PLACE:** Rick Thielen, The Delaware County Journal, "Jay Unified Sports top in nation."

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

(Combined with Division 4)

- FIRST PLACE:** John Small, Mary Lokey and Tom Lokey, Johnston County Sentinel, "Shelley and Kevin Duncan investigations." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This series had it all: sex, public firing, bizarre and brazen theft, trials for statutory rape. If you read the first story, you had to read them all.
- SECOND PLACE:** Shonda Little, The Beckham County Record, "Examining State Question 788." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Started strong with first two stories. Wandered off subject telling the marine's story. Fourth story needed counter opinion on health benefits.
- THIRD PLACE:** Shonda Little, The Beckham County Record, "Opioid crisis." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Well-organized. Some typos, two in ledes.

COLUMN WRITING

- FIRST PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Delaware County Journal, "Bits & Pieces." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very fun to read and I enjoyed it very much.
- SECOND PLACE:** Art Haddaway, Owasso Reporter, "From the Editor." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Excellent work here. Great writing.
- THIRD PLACE:** Suzie Campbell, The Countywide & Sun, "Cows & Cabbage." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Damn that mother nature. I love the column.

SMALL SPACE AD

(Combined with Division 4)

- FIRST PLACE:** John Small, Johnston County Sentinel, "Gospel Station - Tishomingo Indians."
- SECOND PLACE:** Christina Fuson, Stilwell Democrat Journal, "Memorial Hospital fall craft sale."
- THIRD PLACE:** JJ Francais, The Chronicle, "Kerbo's Frame Shop."

LARGE SPACE AD

(Combined with Division 4)

- FIRST PLACE:** Joshua Small, Johnston County Sentinel, "Happy Days at Houser's Furniture."
- SECOND PLACE:** Ron Vavak, OKC Friday, "Woman of the Year."
- THIRD PLACE:** JJ Francais, The Chronicle, "Hardzog's Christmas open house."

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Mary Lokey, Johnston County Sentinel, "House fire blamed on faulty wiring." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great news photo – it captures the full story. You didn't have to read the cutline to realize that the interior was gutted due to the fire.

SECOND PLACE: Steve Booker, The Chronicle, "House engulfed in flames." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Technically this was an extremely hard photo to capture. It is a great visual piece.

THIRD PLACE: Steve Booker, The Chronicle, "Oklahoma National Guard Blackhawk helicopter."

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Delaware County Journal, "Patriotic bubbles." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The look of wonderment on this young girl's face as she waves her giant bubble wand says it all. The photographer captured the perfect moment.

SECOND PLACE: Steve Booker, The Chronicle, "Six-year olds celebrating America's birthday." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I could feel the kids' joy. Good job capturing the moment!

THIRD PLACE: Lisa Carroll, The Chronicle, "Smiling goat." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I just like this photo. Who can resist a smiling goat? Another great moment caught on camera.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Steve Booker, The Chronicle, "Rising above: Sterling basketball shot." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A strong composition and peak action made this photo rise above the others. The background is relatively clean, which draws our attention to the subject instantly.

SECOND PLACE: Jay DeSilver, The Chronicle, "Tour de Meers." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Kudos to the photographer for making the most of such beautiful scenery with leading lines. The image would have benefited from a stronger foreground element that introduced more emotion or a peak moment.

THIRD PLACE: Jay DeSilver, The Chronicle, "Mid-air football catch." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Excellent job of capturing an intense moment with a clean composition. However, we wish the photographer had cropped in tighter around the players, without leaving so much dead space in the frame.

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Melanie Allen, Owasso Reporter, "Vote to smoke."

SECOND PLACE: Debi DeSilver, The Chronicle, "Election issue."

THIRD PLACE: Suzie Campbell, The Countywide & Sun, "Fallen officer monument revealed."

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION – 2018 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

DIVISION 6 – WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATION BETWEEN 750 AND 1,399

NEWS CONTENT

FIRST PLACE: The Carnegie Herald. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The Herald does an exceptional job in bringing the news to its readers. The reporters and editors did a great job, especially on coverage of the flooding and storms as well as the bond issues.

SECOND PLACE: The Fairfax Chief. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The Chief did a great job of covering the teacher walk-out. Just about every paper in OK covered this story. This one went a step beyond.

THIRD PLACE: Skiatook Journal. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice community newspaper that does an admirable job bringing news to its readers.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Wagoner County American-Tribune. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A lot of newspapers use all their flash on the front page but this team makes sure that design is consistent throughout. Great use of photos and easy to navigate.

SECOND PLACE: Stroud American. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good clean design. Stacking of ads in a consistent and pleasing manner as well use of photos really drove this entry to the top of the heap.

THIRD PLACE: The Carnegie Herald.

ADVERTISING

FIRST PLACE: Skiatook Journal. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Where an ad is located is just as important as its content. This entry shows a staff that knows how to mix it up to create an attractive package of ads.

SECOND PLACE: The Fairfax Chief. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Neat and crisp, not too busy or crowded. Your clients must be happy with the reproduction on ads. Classifieds are good and easy to read and the back page is nice and consistently vibrant.

THIRD PLACE: The Carnegie Herald. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good mix of ads but it is the classified section that really stands out.

EDITORIAL WRITING

FIRST PLACE: The Fairfax Chief. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Well and clearly stated in all three entries.

SECOND PLACE: Stroud American. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A strong and clear editorial voice.

THIRD PLACE: Skiatook Journal. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** An easy to understand editorial voice.

PHOTOGRAPHY

FIRST PLACE: Stroud American.

SECOND PLACE: The Fairfax Chief.

THIRD PLACE: Drumright Gusher.

SPORTS COVERAGE

FIRST PLACE: Wagoner County American-Tribune.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Gives readers plenty of action, plenty of information and the proper context for the events.

SECOND PLACE: Skiatook Journal. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good variety of sports offered in this, and some outside-the-box thinking with some of the features.

THIRD PLACE: Stroud American. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Plenty of great photos in this paper, and great information for readers.

SALES PROMOTION

FIRST PLACE: Skiatook Journal, "Pioneer Day."

SECOND PLACE: Stroud American, "Summer Guide."

THIRD PLACE: Wagoner County American-Tribune, "Wagoner County Hometown Guide."

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

FIRST PLACE: The Carnegie Herald, "Wildcat Turkey Trot."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A great event that must have taken a ton of effort from the newspaper, as well as coverage, and had really great results.

SECOND PLACE: Skiatook Journal, "Pet of the Week for Skiatook Paws and Claws Animal Rescue." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice coverage, admirable year-long commitment. The "Pet of the Week" features made me want a kitten!

THIRD PLACE: Wagoner County American-Tribune, "Fathers and Football" movie gala." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The paper bought into this effort and used it to not only build community pride but to raise money for good causes.

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All weekly newspaper divisions combined)

FIRST PLACE: The Edmond Sun. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A good use of the medium that does a good job of keeping people up to date.

SECOND PLACE: The Countywide & Sun. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A strong contender in this category. Adjusting templates to show more clearly the hierarchy of stories' importance would help readers identify best content.

THIRD PLACE: Johnston County Sentinel. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Clean layout, easy to use. Not as much content as other sites, but also avoids the pitfall others succumb to in trying to make their offering look larger than it is.

NEWS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Rachel Snyder, Sand Springs Leader, "From poverty to the Capitol." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Congratulations for a well-written and interesting story. The reporter should be proud to have written an inspiring story that I'm sure the readers enjoyed. I did!
- SECOND PLACE:** Carol Conner, The Fairfax Chief, "Ralston residents refute school closure." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This was a good story about a complicated subject. Good job.
- THIRD PLACE:** Carol Conner, The Fairfax Chief, "Weather wreaks havoc on Fairfax." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice story. Would have liked more first-person insight. Good job.

FEATURE STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Kirk McCracken, Sand Springs Leader, "Sandite to the rescue of Thailand boys soccer team." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great article and a great lede...grabbed my attention immediately. Good attributions and very informative. A colorful piece containing relevance about our world.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kirk McCracken, Sand Springs Leader, "Power in the Blood: KFD holds blood drive for Baby Ronnie." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Such a heartfelt piece. A community and others working together to help out a child in need, a family in need. Pictures can say a thousand words, compelling! Informative about a disease I knew very little about. Great way to tell a story about a family's trials and tribulations.
- THIRD PLACE:** Kirk McCracken, Sand Springs Leader, "Gift of Love." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The connection between this friendship is truly amazing. Great job getting to the "core" of their journey. Nice paragraphs and good content. Well done.

SPORTS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Kirk McCracken, Sand Springs Leader, "Undisputed: Seniors win Powder Puff championship." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Simply because this article was complete makes it the default winner.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kirk McCracken, Sand Springs Leader, "Monster Ball." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A great idea, but no second page so I couldn't read the whole thing.
- THIRD PLACE:** Bristow News, Bristow News, "Catching a dream...Josh Crockett signs with Kansas City Chiefs." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Only includes interviews from two people who aren't involved in the college or Chiefs organization.

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

- FIRST PLACE:** Christy Wheeland and John Ferguson, Wagoner County American-Tribune, "Teacher walkout series." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A great series about teachers! They don't get enough news coverage, so this series of stories captures their struggles and resilience. Fantastic job!
- SECOND PLACE:** Lindsey Chastain, Skiatook Journal, "Osage County and Osage Nation land battle." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Clear and concise reporting on a tribal land issue that impacts the community surrounding the property.
- THIRD PLACE:** Carey Head, The Fairfax Chief, "Tornado touches down in Fairfax." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice job on weather reporting! I just really like this story because there's a lot of attention to details.

COLUMN WRITING

- FIRST PLACE:** Kirk McCracken, Sand Springs Leader, "From the editor." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Interesting breadth of topics – including Bigfoot. Remarks on office move were relatable, genuine. Like the walk-out column addendum.
- SECOND PLACE:** Christy Wheeland, Wagoner County American-Tribune, "Observation Point." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Well-thought-out comments on issues to which readers can easily relate.
- THIRD PLACE:** Jyl Hobbs, Mountain View News, "Doodles." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Fun and honest slices of small-town life.

SMALL SPACE AD

(Combined with Division 7)

- FIRST PLACE:** Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "Green Plus now open."
- SECOND PLACE:** Sherry Stinson, The Fairfax Chief, "Venture Food Stores."
- THIRD PLACE:** Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "Brush Creek."

LARGE SPACE AD

(Combined with Division 7)

- FIRST PLACE:** Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "CBD Complete Body Defense."
- SECOND PLACE:** Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "AAA Insurance."
- THIRD PLACE:** Sherry Stinson, The Fairfax Chief, "Fairfax Community Foundation's New Year's Eve party."

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

- FIRST PLACE:** Carey Head, The Fairfax Chief, "Shattered windows of church van." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This photo does double duty in showing the reader not only the damage from the storm but the response to it by using the broken windows to frame the response vehicles in the background. A clever way of adding additional impact to the visual. Nicely done.
- SECOND PLACE:** Carol Conner, The Fairfax Chief, "Iconic Tallchief Damaged." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The photographer does a good job of capturing all the elements of the damage that would likely capture the reader's emotions regarding the local landmark.
- THIRD PLACE:** Loretta Blunt, Drumright Gusher, "Car wrecks into Cushing business." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This photo provides the reader with a clear picture of the extensiveness of the damage, from the shattered windows to the dangling curtain inside to just how far into the shop the vehicle traveled.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Brian Blansett, Stroud American, "A baaaaad day."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This is a great photo because of the subject matter. It's interesting to look at. I also like that you can see the crowd in the background.

SECOND PLACE: Brian Blansett, Stroud American, "Flipping like Gumby." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This is a great shot and it's interesting to look at. I like the way it's framed. The photographer did a good job of catching the cheerleader in motion, without the image appearing blurred.

THIRD PLACE: Loretta Blunt, Drumright Gusher, "Splashing into summer." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I think the photographer did a good job of catching this child in the moment. It's up-close and personal, yet the child doesn't seem to be aware of the camera. I also like the effect of the water. The image is very clean and works well in black and white.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Brian Blansett, Stroud American, "Softball pitcher begins windup." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice, tightly focused and dynamic image.

SECOND PLACE: Dane Smart, Hughes County Tribune, "Chieftains swat Hornets to start the season."

THIRD PLACE: Don Quinn, Drumright Gusher, "Sliding in at base and headed to State."

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Melanie Allen, Wagoner County American-Tribune, "SQ 788." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great type treatment and use of graphics! Nice use of white space and good headline writing. Beautiful newspaper!

SECOND PLACE: Steven Reckinger, Sand Springs Leader, "Follow the gold rush." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice sports graphic on page one, excellent typography!

THIRD PLACE: Steven Reckinger, Sand Springs Leader, "Hot rod heaven." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The headline and art pulls into this edition. The strong type treatment works for this layout. Nicely done!

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION – 2018 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

DIVISION 7 – WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATION LESS THAN 750

NEWS CONTENT

- FIRST PLACE:** The Thomas Tribune. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The Tribune did a great job covering the drilling issues affecting the community. An outsider might think that all of Oklahoma would be on board with more drilling, but this presented good, balanced coverage on a controversial issue. Also, your coverage of county government does a great service to the community.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Newcastle Pacer. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The Pacer seems to really "get" the community it covers with a good mix of business and government news.
- THIRD PLACE:** Minco-Union City Times. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good variation in news coverage. Very little margin between third and first in this tough category.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

- FIRST PLACE:** The Newcastle Pacer. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This was a tough one to judge because of all the good entries. This one stood above the rest. The design is smooth and very attractive. The inside pages show the team knows that a newspaper is more than its cover. Nice job on the motorcycle rider on that one cover, though.
- SECOND PLACE:** Tri-County Herald (Meeker). **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Sturdy and utilitarian. Not too fancy, but sometimes that is a good thing.
- THIRD PLACE:** The Dewey County Record. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A tough category to judge. This one just missed out on being in the top 2.

ADVERTISING

- FIRST PLACE:** The Newcastle Pacer. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great package and it is telling that the business community came out to support the 40th anniversary of the paper.
- SECOND PLACE:** Tri-County Herald. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Classifieds really stand out, but the mix of color and B&W show a professional staff.
- THIRD PLACE:** Eastern Times-Register (Roland). **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Consistent throughout but the ads in the specials sections shine.

EDITORIAL WRITING

- FIRST PLACE:** Eastern Times-Register. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Fun, although this is not "persuasive" writing.
- SECOND PLACE:** Minco-Union City Times. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** I enjoyed them, although this is not "persuasive" writing.
- THIRD PLACE:** Tri-County Herald. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This is not "persuasive" writing.

PHOTOGRAPHY

- FIRST PLACE:** Minco-Union City Times.
- SECOND PLACE:** Tri-County Herald.
- THIRD PLACE:** The Dewey County Record.

SPORTS COVERAGE

- FIRST PLACE:** Tri-County Herald.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Dewey County Record.
- THIRD PLACE:** Minco-Union City Times.

SALES PROMOTION

- FIRST PLACE:** Eastern Times-Register, "Four school special sections."
- SECOND PLACE:** Tri-County Herald, "Teacher of the Week."
- THIRD PLACE:** The Newcastle Pacer, "Pigskin Press Pass."

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- FIRST PLACE:** Minco-Union City Times, "Minco-Union City Food Drive." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Food drives, unfortunately, are a fact of life for many small communities. This newspaper shows its leadership by taking on the problem with heart and leadership.
- SECOND PLACE:** Eastern Times-Register, "Weekly pet adoptions for Ahimsa Rescue." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The paper shows a commitment to making sure the shelter gets not only the support of the newspaper, but the community as a whole.
- THIRD PLACE:** Tri-County Herald, "School at stake." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice coverage of the walkout, a credit to your communities.

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All weekly newspaper divisions combined)

- FIRST PLACE:** The Edmond Sun. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A good use of the medium that does a good job of keeping people up to date.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Countywide & Sun. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** A strong contender in this category. Adjusting templates to show more clearly the hierarchy of stories' importance would help readers identify best content.
- THIRD PLACE:** Johnston County Sentinel. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Clean layout, easy to use. Not as much content as other sites, but also avoids the pitfall others succumb to in trying to make their offering look larger than it is.

NEWS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Tami Adams, The Thomas Tribune, "Custer City: Story of a town divided." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good explanation of how conflict on the board spilled out into the community and the consequences.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kevin Farr, The Dewey County Record, "Historic wildfire rages in Dewey County." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Solid coverage of a fast moving, large-scale event.
- THIRD PLACE:** Tami Adams, The Thomas Tribune, "Bond issue heats up as election nears." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Nice balance of coverage of the supporters and opponents to the bond.

FEATURE STORY

FIRST PLACE: Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald, "Waco: 25 years after the raid on Mount Carmel." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great lede and very well written. After twenty five years, there was still more information about this tragedy I was not aware of. Creative take on it while providing facts and strong details about what happened. Kept my attention throughout the entirety of the piece.

SECOND PLACE: Todd Newville, The Newcastle Pacer, "Lloyd Gramling - a legend lost." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Great human interest piece. Well written article about a town that cared for their Mayor and a man that cared for his community. Great attributions and tight paragraphs. A positive take about positive people.

THIRD PLACE: Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "Local Scout earns prestigious honor." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good to see a positive piece about a young person's journey to achieve a goal. Paragraphs were well written and tight, keeping the story to the point.

SPORTS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Todd Newville, The Newcastle Pacer, "Pro Cowboy Blaine Stacy rides for his future." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good storytelling, weaving the numbers with the personal

SECOND PLACE: Todd Newville, The Newcastle Pacer, "Former Racer QB throws seven TDs." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Short, sweet, easy to read.

THIRD PLACE: Kevin Farr, The Dewey County Record, "Wildcats maul Carnegie in season opener." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Full of information, maybe a bit too dense, but engaging never-the-less.

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

FIRST PLACE: Sage Le Blanc, The Dewey County Record, "Wildfire series." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good effort. So much more could have been done with this series. More students needed to speak. What exactly was done on these cleanups, how much, how long?

SECOND PLACE: Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "Earthquake prompts closure of Bridge Creek fracking well." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** These stories skimmed the surface through talking heads and internet quotes about a serious story. What about truckers, families, chamber, environmentalists, road fund, taxes? so many questions. Avoid one source stories using Facebook.

THIRD PLACE: Ariana Farris Parkinson, The Thomas Tribune, "Fay triple homicide of 1933." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This is a great story, but told jarringly between old news accounts and a dime store novel. It's hard to follow attribution and tense. The lack of journalistic "he/she said" takes gravity from the story. I don't know what are real accounts or second hand stories.

COLUMN WRITING

FIRST PLACE: Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Wonderfully written columns by a wonderfully talented columnist. Yes, I love Vienna Sausages and can't stand pinched nerves! Great work!

SECOND PLACE: Jeremy Freeman, The Newcastle Pacer, "Setting the Pace." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** These are very well-written columns; very telling and emotional. Great job!

THIRD PLACE: Tami Adams, The Thomas Tribune, "Tami's Tales." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** These tales are nicely-written. Good job.

SMALL SPACE AD

(Combined with Division 6)

FIRST PLACE: Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "Green Plus now open."

SECOND PLACE: Sherry Stinson, The Fairfax Chief, "Venture Food Stores."

THIRD PLACE: Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "Brush Creek."

LARGE SPACE AD

(Combined with Division 6)

FIRST PLACE: Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "CBD Complete Body Defense."

SECOND PLACE: Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "AAA Insurance."

THIRD PLACE: Sherry Stinson, The Fairfax Chief, "Fairfax Community Foundation's New Year's Eve party."

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Lia Hillman, The Dewey County Record, "Historic wildfire rages." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This photo was the most impactful in the category in terms of newsworthiness, as the photographer was able to gain access to the scene of an ongoing wildfire. The flames are visible and a response vehicle can be seen, effectively telling the story. Well captured.

SECOND PLACE: Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald, "Oklahoma winter." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This photo does an effective job of providing the reader with a perfect visual of its story's subject before the reader delves into the article itself. Good composition and quality.

THIRD PLACE: Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald, "Walk-to-school day." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The photographer captures the essence of the topic at hand: children walking to school together to promote safety on the streets. Also, well done to accommodate the photobomber in the background.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

- FIRST PLACE:** Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald, "Meeker senior Raceton Sedlacek." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice framing and use of light to get the water drops coming off his head. The smile shows a captured moment in time that tells a story. Very nice!
- SECOND PLACE:** Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald, "Pott Co. livestock show." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Well, the steer doesn't look as happy as his handler, but this shot shows the excitement that comes with showing. Nice capture of the moment.
- THIRD PLACE:** Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald, "Summer at the Meeker Library." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice framing and catching both the action in the foreground and the background.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

- FIRST PLACE:** Rick Hester, Tri-County Herald, "Softball player takes a shoe to the chin." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: You can feel that shoe on your neck when you see this photo. Great action overall.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kevin Farr, The Dewey County Record, "Steer wrestling during Rodeo Week." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Rodeo is sometimes difficult to get just the right action. This photo accomplishes it.
- THIRD PLACE:** Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald, "Roughed up in tournament." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great job of getting the timing just right on this foul.

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

- FIRST PLACE:** Clarence B. Wright, The Newcastle Pacer, "Flying High." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Clean, refreshing, good use of type! Loved the manslaughter headline...it pulled me in.
- SECOND PLACE:** Brian Blansett, Tri-County Herald, "Bulldogs win big." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great photo for page one. Excellent layout and use of type. The football quote in the flag is a classic, perfect for this edition. If you are going to put an ad on page one, sell it to an advertiser!
- THIRD PLACE:** Kevin Farr, Lia Hillman and Toni Goforth, The Dewey County Record, "Historic wildfire." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Amazing photo of the fire in the flag. Second photo is flat. Need help with typography.

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION – 2018 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST
DIVISION 8 – SEMI- AND TRI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

NEWS CONTENT

- FIRST PLACE:** Sequoyah County Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: So the sheriff's father was murdered? That coverage alone was exceptional, but what put this entry on top was the most excellent headlines, like "Commissioners buzzed about beer."
- SECOND PLACE:** Okmulgee Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: News coverage is exceptional. The stories are interesting as well as well-written and reported.
- THIRD PLACE:** Durant Democrat. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This paper had a great mix of news and features that give it an excellent snapshot of the community. Great work!

LAYOUT & DESIGN

- FIRST PLACE:** Okmulgee Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great front page and effective use of graphics draw you in without getting in the way. Love the section heads and the contents box on the front page. Editorial page is a little gray – perhaps a cartoon will help liven it up? Ads are good and varied.
- SECOND PLACE:** El Reno Tribune. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Tough call on this – great photos and you use them very well. Photos and text go well together. This entry hits all the marks!
- THIRD PLACE:** The Edmond Sun. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great entry, the sports page is a cut above.

ADVERTISING

- FIRST PLACE:** The Grove Sun. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good decent advertising. Classifieds are pleasant and easy to find. Nice mix of B&W and color ads. Classified display layout is easy and logical.
- SECOND PLACE:** El Reno Tribune. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: What really pushed this into the top 3 was the Salvation Army ad – great use of white space and an nice array of ads. Classifieds are nice and clean.
- THIRD PLACE:** Okmulgee Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great effort and nice selection of ads.

EDITORIAL WRITING

- FIRST PLACE:** Durant Democrat. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Lively and at times fiery editorial writing – but the tone remains professional. Informative and hard-hitting, but fun to read. Readers will be thinking about the topics covered long after putting down the paper.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Edmond Sun. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Well written, solidly-researched commentary. A service to readers.
- THIRD PLACE:** Sequoyah County Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The kind of insight only an interested and engaged resident of a community, one with a stake in its well-being, can provide.

PHOTOGRAPHY

- FIRST PLACE:** The Altus Times. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Consistently strong images across all categories made this entry rise to the top. The news photos were impactful, easy to read and well composed. Love the emotion and peak action captured in the sports photos.
- SECOND PLACE:** Durant Democrat. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A close second. These are the strongest sports images in the category, with heartfelt and surprising moments we don't see very often. The news photos do a good job of giving us a sense of place, but would benefit from bringing us closer to the people involved.
- THIRD PLACE:** El Reno Tribune. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The photographers did a great job of composing and cropping these photos, guiding our eyes right to the action. Would love to see a little more emotion.

SPORTS COVERAGE

- FIRST PLACE:** Yukon Review. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Kudos to Kyle Salomon, Brody Feldmann, Hayden Tucker and Terry Groover of the Yukon Review for producing a sports section that rose above the field in this contest for both quality of writing and use of photography to record the events that shape young athletes' lives in your community
- SECOND PLACE:** Henryetta Free-Lance. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Free-Lance staffers Larry Owen and Carrie Bailey provide excellent local sports coverage and excellent art. The writing is the key, the lede that brings you into the story instead of just telling you what happened. It's easy to tell the score but harder to tell the tale. Good work.
- THIRD PLACE:** El Reno Tribune. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Glen Miller of the El Reno Tribune is a talented sports writer who sends the section over the top with excellent photography. That's the full package. This section is packed with a variety of sports and pictures the local parents must be clamoring to buy. A visual treat.

SALES PROMOTION

- FIRST PLACE:** El Reno Tribune, "Annual Easter ham giveaway." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Love this promotion! Who doesn't want a free ham for Easter? Great way to get local businesses involved and get more people shopping local. Fun graphics and nice promotion.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Edmond Sun, "Seniors Today: 7 over 70." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good going after the demographic that is the most loyal to the paper. Nice product and good, successful effort.
- THIRD PLACE:** Okmulgee Times, "Focus magazine." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The Focus goes beyond a simple visitors guide. Good example of a product that benefits not only the business community but the newspaper as well.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- FIRST PLACE:** The Grove Sun, "Wizard of Oz at Grove High School."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A beautifully written and informative series about the locally performed Wizard of Oz play. Especially like the mugshots of all the players, including Toto. Great job!
- SECOND PLACE:** El Reno Tribune, "Biographies of El Reno High School." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: What a wonderful series on past high school graduates – something all newspapers should do! Terrific job.
- THIRD PLACE:** Sequoyah County Times, "General Election Voter's Guide." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nicely organized voters guide, and each Q&A was just the right length, not too long and not too short. Fantastic job.

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All weekly newspaper divisions combined)

- FIRST PLACE:** The Edmond Sun. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A good use of the medium that does a good job of keeping people up to date.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Countywide & Sun. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A strong contender in this category. Adjusting templates to show more clearly the hierarchy of stories' importance would help readers identify best content.
- THIRD PLACE:** Johnston County Sentinel. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Clean layout, easy to use. Not as much content as other sites, but also avoids the pitfall others succumb to in trying to make their offering look larger than it is.

NEWS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** James Coburn, The Edmond Sun,
"Jones hopes DNA analysis proves innocence."
- SECOND PLACE:** Lynn McCulley, Sequoyah County Times,
"Sheriff's father found dead."
- THIRD PLACE:** Michael Clements, Durant Democrat,
"Attorney General: Board overstepped authority."

FEATURE STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller and Rodney Echohawk,
The Grove Sun, "Love on the battlefield."
- SECOND PLACE:** Lynn McCulley, Sequoyah County Times,
"Centennial marks memory of Dwight Mission tragedy."
- THIRD PLACE:** Stacy Sanborn, Alva Review-Courier,
"Humor, coffee and a whole lot of Jesus."

SPORTS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Aaron Albertson, The Edmond Sun,
"Dauber dominance: Oklahoma's quietest three-sport letterman."
- SECOND PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Grove Sun,
"Achieving her goals: Pennington joins women's wrestling program."
- THIRD PLACE:** Larry Miller, Durant Democrat,
"Walk-off homerun stuns Lady Lions."

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

- FIRST PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Grove Sun, "Teacher workout." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This is a great example of in-depth reporting. All the facts were reported in well-written articles. Great job!
- SECOND PLACE:** Glen Miller, El Reno Tribune, "Booster club finances." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This was a close one. Your reporting is spot on and gives the reader a whole different outlook on booster clubs. Great reporting on a subject a lot of people don't really think a whole lot about.
- THIRD PLACE:** Patty Miller, The Edmond Sun, "New opioids guidelines stifling pain management." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This was a different take on the opioid epidemic in this country. There was a lot of interesting information in this well-written piece. Good job!

COLUMN WRITING

(Combined with Division 4)

- FIRST PLACE:** Kyle Salomon, Yukon Review. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The columns did a great job of expressing opinions on the specific situations of local sports. Two seemed a bit drawn out, but the writing was solid. The quotes from a coach made for a stronger column.
- SECOND PLACE:** Patty Miller, The Edmond Sun.
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Clear stances on current events. The Alzheimer's caregiver column is particularly touching.
- THIRD PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Grove Sun, "Bits & Pieces." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice personal, heart-felt columns, more interesting than joining the herd in commenting on over-analyzed national issues.

SMALL SPACE AD

- FIRST PLACE:** Kim Self-Hutchison, The Grove Sun,
"High Winds Casino, dinner for two." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Love the flames in the front of the black background.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Grove Sun,
"Great Grand Bobber Drop."
- THIRD PLACE:** Larissa Copeland, Yukon Review,
"State Farm, Cherie Logan."

LARGE SPACE AD

- FIRST PLACE:** Carrie Carberry and Silver Cole, Sequoyah County Times, "Diamond Daze Festival." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very nice ad. Great use of white space. There is a good number of elements, but it doesn't look too busy. It gives me a good idea about Diamond Daze to the point that I'm sorry I missed it.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kim Self-Hutchison, The Grove Sun, "Grand Lake Sports Center, early bird season sale." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Simple ad yet very effective. It's not in your face but we get the idea that fishing season is starting and you better check out this three-day sale. Great job.
- THIRD PLACE:** Lyndsay Bayne, El Reno Tribune, "City of El Reno, Burger Day." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great. Now I want to head to El Reno for Burger Day. Effective ad even though you guys put onions on your burgers instead of green chile. Keep up the good work.

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

(Combined with Division 4)

FIRST PLACE: Zach Maxwell, Durant Democrat, "Home, church escape wildfire." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A great picture. Great angle and great background.

SECOND PLACE: Rick Carpenter, The Altus Times, "Jackson County issues burn ban." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice photo of the fireman in the smoke. This photo tells the story of the dangers of being a firefighter. Great job.

THIRD PLACE: Drew Harmon, The Edmond Sun, "Soccer kite." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Wonderful photo. Great color. Clean and crisp photo. Great timing on this shot.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

(Combined with Division 4)

FIRST PLACE: Jessica Lane, The Express-Star (Chickasha), "Anadarko Dance Troupe visits Brookdale." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I really like the use of foreground and background in this photo, with the youngsters in the background the up-and-coming dancers.

SECOND PLACE: Patty Miller, The Edmond Sun, "Corn hole tournament." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Creative framing of the photo, along with the bright green color really brings this photo together.

THIRD PLACE: Kaylea Hutson-Miller, The Grove Sun, "On Fire for INTEGRIS Grove." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Excellent capture of a moment. I especially like the colors in this photo.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

(Combined with Division 4)

FIRST PLACE: Rick Carpenter, The Altus Times, "Bareback bronc." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Outstanding timing with photo. Great action shot.

SECOND PLACE: Richard Clifton, OKC Friday, "Deer Creek - PC North scrimmage." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: One of the better black and white shots I've seen in a long time. Great action.

THIRD PLACE: Kevin Farr, Durant Democrat, "Silo wins baseball championship." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great timing of a celebration shot.

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Glen Miller and Lyndsay Bayne, El Reno Tribune, "Veterans Day Parade." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great photography, clean, well-organized design with lots of stories above the fold. A nice snapshot of what's going on in town in one glance.

SECOND PLACE: Kari Tompkins, The Edmond Sun, "Jan. 27, 2018." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Eye-catching headlines, clear separation of stories with plenty of photos, and great preview of special section at the top.

THIRD PLACE: Stacey Neal, Durant Democrat, "State Bound." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great photography and overall design, easy to read fonts, nicely organized.

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION – 2018 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

DIVISION 9 – COLLEGE NEWSPAPERS

NEWS CONTENT

- FIRST PLACE:** The Oklahoma Daily, University of Oklahoma.
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A leap above the competition, The Oklahoma Daily is a great newspaper. The staff and editors do a great job covering the ins and out of the university.
- SECOND PLACE:** Collegian, Cameron University.
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good college paper with relevant stories.
- THIRD PLACE:** Gazette, Langston University. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A good snapshot of campus life and the issues relevant to students.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

- FIRST PLACE:** Collegian. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good heads and typography. Use of pull quotes is effective. Photos and graphics make for a pleasing package.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Oklahoma Daily. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good organization if a little redundant. Very readable.
- THIRD PLACE:** Pioneer, Oklahoma City Community College.
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: No color but your use of B&W is very effective.

ADVERTISING

- FIRST PLACE:** The Oklahoma Daily. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice ads and of a good variety. Design is good and not too busy or dull.

EDITORIAL WRITING

- FIRST PLACE:** The Oklahoma Daily. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Technically good writing and clear stances. Points are clear, and editorials often take other perspectives into account without sacrificing clarity or waffling. Great work!
- SECOND PLACE:** Pioneer. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Editorial leads were overall good. Points could have been more clear at times, but editorials showed thoughtfulness.
- THIRD PLACE:** Northwestern News, Northwestern Oklahoma State University. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Editorials stated clear points. Writing was technically rough, but these are a good start on editorial writing.

PHOTOGRAPHY

- FIRST PLACE:** O'Colly, Oklahoma State University. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Wow, great emotion with the sports photos. You feel like you're right there! Excellent use of type with the photos and good cropping. Nicely done!
- SECOND PLACE:** The Oklahoma Daily. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The "jumpman" photo is amazing! Beautiful job with the president's portrait on the cover.
- THIRD PLACE:** Gazette. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good layout and composition with the Underwood photo spread.

SPORTS COVERAGE

- FIRST PLACE:** O'Colly. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Color, reaction, excitement and remarkable use of creative imagination set this section apart. Extremely well done with the use of text inside photos, not to mention catchy headlines and art that jumps off the page.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Oklahoma Daily. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Fans love their Sooners football and this section takes that passion and adds to it with fantastic use of eye-catching design and wonderful photos.
- THIRD PLACE:** Gazette. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A decent section with a lot of copy in limited space.

SALES PROMOTION

- FIRST PLACE:** The Oklahoma Daily. "Heisman issue."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice colorful advertisements throughout this sports section.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- FIRST PLACE:** The Oklahoma Daily. "Presidential search and transition." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Kudos to the OU Daily for walking their student community through this transition of power from start to finish in a way that makes clear how seemingly distant administrative actions at a university directly affect its students. More than that, the OU Daily staff has proven it IS possible to make print journalism relevant again through a return to quality, in-the-trenches journalism rather than gimmicks. The students have become the teachers in this instance. I hope your alumni have given you your due!
- SECOND PLACE:** Pioneer. "The Female Experience."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This was a timely, relevant, and impactful effort by the Pioneer to open eyes to an issue that is finally coming to the forefront of the national consciousness. With college campuses in particular need of paying stronger attention to the female experience, this was a well-undertaken and well-executed effort by the OCCC staff.

DIGITAL MEDIA

FIRST PLACE: The Oklahoma Daily. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The OU Daily provides a wide array of content and shows promise in its multimedia capabilities. The recurring video feature summaries were fun and just short enough to keep a user from losing attention. The projects section is interesting, but loads a bit slow, perhaps being a bit off putting for a new user.

SECOND PLACE: Pioneer. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Pioneer's simple interface makes it easy for a user to find topics easily but needs some more curation on the front, which has many repetitive icons making one wonder about the breadth of content available. What is fun is the usage of podcast and the obvious engagement of the audience with the hosts. This is a great aspect to build upon in the community. Good job, Pioneer.

NEWS STORY

FIRST PLACE: Nick Hazelrigg, The Oklahoma Daily, "Time's up at OU." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Couldn't stop reading. Such a strange case and perfectly documented from people who were directly victimized. The story sought to not only report the news but reflected the greater social issue of sexual assault and the power structures that support them.

SECOND PLACE: Kelsy Schlotthauer, O'Colly, "Officers in shooting cleared, family still wants answers." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Very detailed look at an officer-involved shooting with some good numbers and facts. I liked the narration in the beginning, but the story slowed down a bit with the numbers and reflections from the professor.

THIRD PLACE: Tallorial Bonds, Gazette, "Student finds mistake in textbook." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** It was interesting reading further into it and finding the racial issue. That could have been emphasized more.

FEATURE STORY

FIRST PLACE: Anna Bauman, The Oklahoma Daily, "Paving the way." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This writer truly paints a picture with her words. The piece is clear and well-organized with appropriate subheads which helped to keep the story flowing and my attention focused.

SECOND PLACE: Katie Duer, 15th Street News, Rose State College, "Positive Tomorrows: School offers hope for homeless children." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Inspiring, well-written story with creative use of the business name in the headline/subhead combo.

THIRD PLACE: Drue Watkins, Madison Lyda, Sarae Ticeahkie and Cheyenne Cole, Collegian, "Bethany Hines, Cameron Aggie Softball." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Well-rounded, clearly written feature story on an individual.

SPORTS STORY

FIRST PLACE: George Stoia, The Oklahoma Daily, "Dual dedication: Two-sport star Kyler Murray balances baseball, football."

SECOND PLACE: Drue Watkins, Katie Livingston and Zack Crow, Collegian, "The runners are women."

THIRD PLACE: Sami McGuire, Northwestern News, "Mental strength fuels win."

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

FIRST PLACE: Jana Allen, The Oklahoma Daily, "Former OU Drama director Tom Orr had 'no intention of punishing' John Scamehorn for indiscretions, emails reveal." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Very good use of documents, including emails and communications between two men at the top of the controversy and apparent legacy of sexual abuse at the school. These kinds of stories take courage and dedication to continue to peel back the layers and follow up. Great work!

SECOND PLACE: Jana Allen, The Oklahoma Daily, "Crossing the line: Title IX investigated professor, former School of Drama Director Tom Orr after accusations of sexual harassment." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Very well executed investigative journalism. I appreciate that you spoke with a lot of sources and people affected. That would take some strong relationship building, which is essential to in-depth reporting.

THIRD PLACE: KaraLee Langford, Sean Stanley and Jenna Lowrance, Pioneer, "The female experience." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This was a very unique project to shed light on the realities women face. Took guts to dedicate a whole issue to it, but after reading I think it was more than justified. Nice job tackling the issue.

COLUMN WRITING

FIRST PLACE: George Stoia, The Oklahoma Daily. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** This was a no-brainer. George, you're simply an excellent writer and columnist. Keep up the good work and write more!

SECOND PLACE: Payton Williams, Collegian. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** These were innovative columns, well-written and made me think – exactly what columns are supposed to do. Good job.

THIRD PLACE: Tatyana Nyborg, TCC Connection, Tulsa Community College. **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** These were very informative and heart-wrenching. Good work!

SMALL SPACE AD

FIRST PLACE: Amelia Kinsinger, The Oklahoma Daily, "Conan's Academy, How do you look naked?" **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Love this ad! How many of you read the ad and pictured yourself naked? haha

LARGE SPACE AD

FIRST PLACE: Amelia Kinsinger, The Oklahoma Daily, "OU Graduation Office." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Loving the red look. It pops out.

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Motaz Al Azayza, Pioneer, "The Gaza Strip." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** The injured boy photo carries the section well. The photo of the man with the injured leg and the smoke screen add perfectly to the story.

SECOND PLACE: Stacie Larsen, Collegian, "Tree lighting." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good package of photos capturing the tree lighting festivities. Great use of a 6-column photo to lead the page with. Well done photos from a low light environment. Second Place.

THIRD PLACE: Jenna Lowrance, Pioneer, "Back to school." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Good package of photos. I like that the photographer got a bird's eye view of the line. Good job thinking outside the box. But I do wish we could have seen more of the people's faces on the photo showing the line of computers.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Jenna Lowrance, Pioneer, "A fair carousel rider." **JUDGE'S COMMENTS:** Although black and white, this is a good photo showing a moment in time. The photo is a little blurry, but with the light the way it was it is difficult to get your aperture opened enough and the shutter slow enough to not get a blur. Nice effort.

SECOND PLACE: Stacie Larsen, Collegian, "Pumpkin Smash."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good catch on action.

THIRD PLACE: Kimberly Thompson, Gazette, "Sheryl Underwood."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Competent shooting, good use of available light and flash.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Caitlyn Epes, The Oklahoma Daily, "Jumpman."

SECOND PLACE: Drue Watkins, Collegian, "Softball catcher."

THIRD PLACE: Katie Livingston, Collegian, "Runners are women."

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Madison Lyda, Collegian, "Indigenous Peoples' Day."

SECOND PLACE: Savannah Saing and Sarah Barney, The Oklahoma Daily, "Shrouded in secrecy."

THIRD PLACE: Jasmine Mayes, Gazette, "Class of 2018."