

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION – 2020 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS CIRCULATION LESS THAN 900

NEWS CONTENT

FIRST PLACE: *The Altus Times*, July 23, Nov. 19, Nov. 26.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good content, a nice balance of photos versus copy. There was a variety of coverage and the copy was well written.

SECOND PLACE: *Cushing Citizen*, March 4, April 1, June 3.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I liked the modern font and the layout. They have a lot of color and the copy was also well written.

THIRD PLACE: *The Hinton Record*, Sept. 16, Dec. 2, Dec. 30.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A variety of coverage and interesting articles with an appealing layout.

LAYOUT & DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: *The Hinton Record*, Feb. 12, Oct. 28, Nov. 25.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great job with the design and layout of these papers. The fonts were consistent for the headlines and articles throughout. Photos complemented the layout. Best of the class!

SECOND PLACE: *Drumright Gusher*, Oct. 15, Nov. 5, Nov. 26.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The design and layout of this paper was consistent throughout the three issues judged. The layout person has a good eye for an attractive layout.

THIRD PLACE: *Eastern Times-Register*, Sept. 9, Sept. 16, Nov. 25.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: An easy to read layout, with a consistent organization through the three editions. Took 3rd due to using too many different fonts for headlines in the individual editions. Pick a style and stay with it.

ADVERTISING

FIRST PLACE: *Minco-Union City Times*, July 2, July 23, Sept. 10.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great looking banner ads.

Spotlight/Directory pages are very impressive.

SECOND PLACE: *Eastern Times-Register*, Feb. 5, March 18, June 24.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great colorful banners and full page salutes. Very attractive ads all around.

THIRD PLACE: *Cushing Citizen*, Feb. 5, March 4, Sept. 30.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great salute full page for the girls basketball team. Very interesting laundry/cleaners advertisement.

EDITORIAL WRITING

No eligible entries.

PHOTOGRAPHY

FIRST PLACE: *Yale News*, "12-17 Jennings, 11-26 Food Drive, 11-19 Round One, 11-12 Yale High School, 8-13 Gods Garage, 12-24 He's a Mean One." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I love how the photos you chose pertain to community service/involvement. Your sports photos are also very crisp. Job well done.

SECOND PLACE: *Minco-Union City Times*, Sept. 10, Nov. 5, Dec. 10, Dec. 24, Dec. 24b, Sept. 24. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The hay fire photo and the ice storm photo are great, I could personally visualize being there. I also compliment you on how crisp your sports photos are. Job well done!

THIRD PLACE: *Cushing Citizen*, "2-19 Fire, 5-27 BBQ Fire, 2-5 Not in My House, 9-9 Camden Crooks, 2-1 D Fence, 4-15 Parade." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Very nice shots of both fires. Your basketball photos aren't super crisp but I like the layout. The football photos are great especially the one of the players jumping in the air. I love the snow removal photo ... from an Iowa judge.

SPORTS COVERAGE

FIRST PLACE: *Eastern Times-Register*, Oct. 14, Jan. 22, May 6. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This entry featured the best writing and headlines in the class and also had the deepest coverage, with more than game reports.

SECOND PLACE: *Cushing Citizen*, Jan. 29, Feb. 26, Sept. 30. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Strong photography carried this entry.

THIRD PLACE: *Drumright Gusher*, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 19. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Exciting to see your local team have its best season in a long time. The writing, photography and headlines are fine, though I would have liked to see more sports covered than football.

SALES PROMOTION

FIRST PLACE: *The Geary Star*, "Geary Invitational Section." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The layout, photography, and information in this program were superior.

SECOND PLACE: *Cushing Citizen*, "Cimarron Christmas." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I bet your community really appreciated this very attractive booklet. It was lighthearted and visually very bright. Loved it.

THIRD PLACE: *Eastern Times-Register*, "School Tabs."

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- FIRST PLACE:** Minco-Union City Times, "Helping Paw."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Full color photos and front page placement illustrate the commitment the newspaper has made to find homes for stray animals.
- SECOND PLACE:** Eastern Times-Register, "Ahimsa Rescue Foundation." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Efforts like this one make all the difference to non-profit organizations staffed entirely by volunteers. The support offered by the newspaper creates much needed awareness about the stray animal challenges of their coverage area.
- THIRD PLACE:** The Hinton Record, "Sports Scholarship Offered."
JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Utilizing the passionate support for high school athletics from local businesses to create college scholarships is a great way to give back to the community.

DIGITAL MEDIA

(All weekly newspaper divisions combined)

- FIRST PLACE:** Johnston County Sentinel, johnstoncosentinel.com, Facebook. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice looking website. Clean design.
- SECOND PLACE:** The Purcell Register, purcellregister.com, Facebook, Twitter. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Website is clean and easy to navigate/follow. Great social media presence.
- THIRD PLACE:** El Reno Tribune, elrenotribune.com, Facebook. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Clean website design. Good social media presence.

NEWS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Thomas Martinez, The Hinton Record, "Ice storm causes major damage." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great lead. Love using a storm victim from beginning to end with multiple other sources covering several angles in this concise well written story.
- SECOND PLACE:** Allie Prater, Yale News, "Car theft on the rise." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A very informative story not only about the thefts but how to protect yourself and how to report it and what you need. A thoroughly complete story.
- THIRD PLACE:** Kevin Hilley, The Altus Times, "High-efficiency train loading capacity plan show great promise." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A good job explaining not only how the plan works but the economic impact for everyone from the farmer to the consumer.

FEATURE STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Kevin Hilley, The Altus Times, "Annual fall festival hosted at Martha Valley Farms." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: What was expected to be a generic festival story (due to the headline) was a marvelous exploration of the hosting family and its history on the farm. A well written story that I enjoyed reading from start to finish.
- SECOND PLACE:** Kevin Hilley, The Altus Times, "Football player carves out her own path in Altus sports." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: If not for a few typos and opinions, this could have been a contender for first place. Great storytelling and transitions.
- THIRD PLACE:** Todd Brooks, The Comanche Times, "Love for hunting turns into ingenuity." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Well written, interesting story. Keep up the good work!

SPORTS STORY

- FIRST PLACE:** Todd Brooks, The Comanche Times, "Comanche finds last-minute replacement for homecoming; 'Tweet' success." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: This was the best of the bunch.
- SECOND PLACE:** Todd Brooks, The Comanche Times, "Big house bound; Indians blank Lindsay in season opener, 5-0." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: A little over-use of the word 'would' throughout the story.
- THIRD PLACE:** Todd Brooks, The Comanche Times, "Kooper Doucet wins Jr. High State in final attempt." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Part of the story was awkward to read, but a good story.

COLUMN WRITING

- FIRST PLACE:** J.D. Meisner, Cushing Citizen, "Missing Ink." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: You impart straight-forward, unarguable advice that is for the benefit of all in your community. I hope everyone is reading your column! I really like your "sign-offs" that sum up the key points.
- SECOND PLACE:** Jyl Hobbs, Mountain View News, "Doodles." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The catchy headlines of your columns and the wise, well-organized advice you share are well-worth your readers' attention!
- THIRD PLACE:** Allie Prater, Cushing Citizen, "Adventures with Allie." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I enjoy the sincerity of your entertaining columns that also contain wonderful nuggets of advice such as, "Our goal as adults is to make our young selves proud."

SMALL SPACE AD

(Divisions 6 and 7 combined)

- FIRST PLACE:** Sherry Stinson, The Fairfax Chief, "Town of Fairfax." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Love the graphic and good use of font size in the ad.
- SECOND PLACE:** Sherry Stinson, The Fairfax Chief, "First Osage Baptist Church." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Really like the quilt for the ad background. Nice use of shading also.
- THIRD PLACE:** Angie Gentry, Bristow News, "Happy Birthday Basil Baker." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Love the wording you used. That made the ad.

LARGE SPACE AD

FIRST PLACE: Tatiana Ryland and Kimberly Jenkins, *The Geary Star*, "2020 Spring Livestock Show."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Good use of graphics; well laid out.

SECOND PLACE: Kimberly Jenkins, *The Geary Star*, "Cimarron Electric: So much to celebrate!"

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Love the layout and use of colors.

THIRD PLACE: Tatiana Ryland, *The Geary Star*,

"Congratulations Landon Holt." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice ad.

NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Allie Prater, *Drumright Gusher*,

"Schoolbus maintenance before school begins."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Nice news photo and story about beginning the school year even though COVID was going strong. Nice work.

SECOND PLACE: Brian Blansett, *Tri-County Herald*,

"Y-M-C-A boy dancing." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Fun to see this spirited image of the young boy dancing!

THIRD PLACE: Brian Blansett, *Tri-County Herald*,

"Hampshire hog shown in Meeker swine jackpot show."

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The essence of the rural community and the showing of animals in the show ring....there is nothing better! Nice work!

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Brian Blansett, *Tri-County Herald*,

"Tiny Cheer blows a kiss." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great emotion! Love the other girl in the background.

SECOND PLACE: Allie Prater, *Drumright Gusher*,

"Homecoming king and queen." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Great job capturing the emotion of the queen. In a perfect world you would frame the pair in the middle or crop it tighter.

THIRD PLACE: Kevin Hilley, *The Altus Times*,

"Cattle Stampede at Altus Air Force Base." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Love the depth of the photo and the one bull facing forward. Could be improved by having a person in the photo.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

FIRST PLACE: Kevin Hilley, *The Altus Times*, "Volleyball player dives to keep the ball in play." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: You did a really studious job of capturing tension and motion in this image. The player's flying body reinforces the ball's flight and both are connected by the eyes of the spectators behind them. Great job!

SECOND PLACE: Rick Hester, *Tri-County Herald*, "Bound for state - basketball coach hugs player." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: I really struggled with this decision because this is a first-place worthy photo, but I had two, so I had to make a tough choice. I truly admire the moment you so artfully captured here, both compositionally and emotionally. Outstanding work!

THIRD PLACE: Kevin Hilley, *The Altus Times*, "Navajo softball player at home base against Snyder." JUDGE'S COMMENTS: Really good job in the whole array of photos here. Proximity to the subjects gives you great perspective. Keep it up.

FRONT PAGE DESIGN

FIRST PLACE: Tatiana Ryland, *The Hinton Record*, September 9.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The use of text in the headlines grabs attention right away moving from top to bottom. In this case, the lack of a photo in the bottom right article actually creates a perceived negative space that helps move the eye back around the page to hold the viewer's attention.

SECOND PLACE: Juanita Lewis, *The Westville Reporter*,

November 12. JUDGE'S COMMENTS: There's good delineation of where one story ends and another begins. The staggered photos give a clean and professional feel to the front page.

THIRD PLACE: Tatiana Ryland, *The Hinton Record*, February 19.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS: The Ferris wheel adds an arc to keep the viewer's eye interested in an odd number of photos, while the sports teaser informs without distracting.