

RULES + CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

BEST OF SHOW AWARDS

28. Community Service

Recognizes accomplishment in dealing with a significant community problem or issue. Any community service effort of the newspaper relating to one specific subject may be entered. This can involve either investigative work exposing a situation needing correction or a positive project to stimulate some facet of community progress. May include editorial series not entered elsewhere in this contest.

Entrants are urged to present entries demonstrating journalistic enterprise and coverage beyond that normally given to the endeavors specified. Projects must be promoted and/or developed and completed principally through the newspaper's own effort.

Exhibits should include stories, editorial support and follow-up evidence of accomplishment. The project must be completed, or significant progress made, during the contest period.

Explanatory or background letter (one 8 1/2" x 11" page maximum) MUST accompany entry. Judges will consider the project's relative importance, quality of reporting, depth of research, degree of newspaper involvement and results.

Entries in this category may not be entered elsewhere. For example, newspapers cannot enter the same story or series for Best Ongoing News Coverage (Category 3) AND Community Service.

29. Best Newspaper Design

Judges for this category look for attractive and effective graphics, along with a layout that enhances readability throughout the paper.

Overall graphic design, typography, consistency and the use of photographs are considered, as well as special applications in news columns. Special emphasis will be placed on Page One design.

Submit three complete editions: one from August 2016, one from April 2017, and one from any month during the contest period (including August or April if desired). Only one entry composed of the three editions will be accepted from each newspaper.

30. Blue Ribbon Newspapers

The Blue Ribbon Award, presented each year to one daily and one nondaily newspaper, is the highest accolade of the HSPA Foundation's Better Newspaper Contest. It is based on an overall evaluation of editorial quality.

The question posed by the judges is which paper, all variables considered, does the best job of serving its readers.

Newspapers MUST submit three complete editions: one from the month of November 2016, one from the month of February 2017, and one from any month during the contest period (including November or February if desired).

Only one entry composed of the three editions will be accepted from each newspaper. No more than two Saturday/Sunday or Sunday issues may be used.

Judges consider breadth and depth of coverage, quality of reporting and copy editing, news judgment and content balance, general appearance, imaginative approach to problem news areas, originality, reader interest and overall professionalism.

The enclosed Blue Ribbon entry form MUST be uploaded with the three editions, or the newspaper will be disqualified.

Max file size for uploading is 100 MB.

General Excellence

General Excellence Award will be given to one paper in each of the six circulation divisions based on a point system. Winners in this category exemplify excellence in all aspects of newspaper publication, including mechanical excellence, editorial content, layout and general appearance.

Points will be awarded as follows:

- Writing and Photography Categories – 5 points for first, 3 points for second, 1 point for third.
- Section and Website Awards – 10 points for first, 6 points for second, 2 points for third
- Community Service and Newspaper Design categories – 10 points for first, 6 points for second, 2 points for third.

This category will not be judged but will be an accumulation of points earned in the other categories.

Photo of the Year

From the first place awards in each of the photography categories, judges will choose the best in each of the six circulation divisions. These six semifinalists will compete for Photo of the Year. (No points toward General Excellence.)

Story Of The Year

Recognizes one piece of writing as the most outstanding – regardless of paper's circulation.

After awarding first place in Categories 1, 2, 3, 10 and 12, judges will choose one story as the best in each of the six circulation divisions. The six semifinalists will compete for Story of the Year.

Judges will select the best example of journalistic excellence combining all criteria they deem applicable. (No points toward General Excellence.)

DEADLINE

All entries must be uploaded by 5 p.m. Friday, July 28, 2017.

HSPA phone and email support available through noon July 28.

Summary sheet due 5 p.m. July 28.

Check may follow if necessary.

Questions?

Call HSPA at (317) 803-4772
or email sgoldsby@hspa.com

Contest Period

Entries must be published between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017.

Deadline

Submit all entries digitally at www.newspapercontest.com/hspa by 5 p.m. Friday, July 28, 2017.

Summary Sheet

Submit summary sheet by 5 p.m. Friday July 28, 2017.

Your summary sheet is included in your contest packet, or you may print a copy at www.HSPA.com/newspaper-contest2017. **All papers entering the contest must send summary sheet via fax, email or mail.**

Fax: (317) 624-4428 • **Email:** sgoldsby@hspa.com

Mail: HSPA Foundation BNC, 41 E. Washington St., Suite 301, Indianapolis, IN 46204. *Check may be included with summary sheet or mailed later.*

Format for Submitting Entries

Register all entries at www.newspapercontest.com/hspa.

Fees

Each newspaper pays an entry fee based on circulation as follows. (See enclosed list for divisions.)

- (N1) Division One – Nondailies less than 3,001: \$60
- (N2) Division Two – Nondailies more than 3,000: \$65
- (D3) Division Three – Dailies less than 6,000: \$70
- (D4) Division Four – Dailies 6,000-13,999: \$95
- (D5) Division Five – Dailies 14,000-34,999: \$120
- (D6) Division Six – Dailies 35,000 and more: \$145

ALL DIVISIONS may submit **three** entries in each category except categories 8, 9, & 10. **Additional entries may be included for \$10 per entry.**

Use enclosed Summary Sheet to determine amount due. Make check payable to HSPA Foundation. If necessary, write "Check will follow" on summary sheet.

Entries

Newspapers must be in good standing as HSPA members. Entries must be entirely the original work of the person or persons submitting them; must be published online or published and distributed as part of the paper, ROP or insert (work published only in free publications is not eligible); and are considered the property of HSPA Foundation. **Contestants grant permission for use of their entries for educational purposes.**

**ALL CONTEST ENTRIES ARE DIGITAL
NO MAIL-IN ENTRIES**

Awards Presented

at Annual Newsroom Seminar

Judges may award first, second and third places. No honorable mentions will be given. If three or fewer entries are submitted in a category, the judges may opt to give no awards. Judges may not award a second or third without a first and must give at least a first place in any category with four or more entries.

Winners will be announced during the 2017 HSPA Foundation Newsroom Seminar, Saturday, Dec. 2 at Indianapolis Marriott North.

Restrictions

- An article or section may not be entered in more than one category or division unless an exception is noted under the individual category. Neither may the same photograph be entered twice. A photo entered as part of a series may not be entered singly in another category.
- All corrections and clarifications associated with an entry must be submitted as part of the entry. Failure to comply could result in nullification of award.
- Preferably, stories should be submitted as official newspaper archived copies in PDF format, showing the headline and date of publication. By submitting stories this way, the newspaper affirms they appeared exactly as submitted. Submission of the story confirms it appeared within the contest period. Stories outside the contest dates will be disqualified.
- If an article or photo appears in two or more publications, it must be entered by only one newspaper.
- Freelancers', stringers' or correspondents' work must be submitted by the newspaper where it first appeared.
- Stories written by the *newspaper* staff for other publications (magazines, etc.) and *inserted* in the newspaper may be entered.
- Stories in Sunday editions published jointly by individual newspapers under one ownership must be entered by the daily paper where the journalist is employed.
- Nondailies operating under different banners with the same staff in the same city/town may enter stories from both papers in Categories 2, 3 and 28.
- Any entries listing more than three writers will be recognized as "Staff."
- If a daily/nondaily publication changes status during the contest year, it must enter the division that represents the publication frequency for the majority of the contest year, or six months and one day.
- Designation of daily or nondaily is determined by number of print editions each week: Nondaily – three or fewer; daily – more than three.
- Newspapers or individuals may order additional awards. Information for ordering will accompany awards.

ENTRY AND SUMMARY SHEET DEADLINE = 5 p.m. Friday, July 28, 2017

HSPA phone and email support available through Noon, July 28. • **Check may follow** after the deadline if necessary.

QUESTIONS? Call (317) 803-4772 or email sgoldsby@hspa.com

2017 HSPA Foundation Better Newspaper Contest Categories

WRITING AWARDS

Judging will be based on clarity, thoroughness and enterprise.

For categories where digital components are allowed, paste URL(s) in the appropriate field on entry pages.

✓ 1. Best News Coverage Under Deadline Pressure

Recognizes excellence displayed by an individual or team in covering a developing news event in one print publication cycle across all platforms.

For daily newspapers, the story or stories must have been published in the first edition of the newspaper following the event. For weeklies the story or stories must have appeared in the first run following the event. The date of publication must accompany the entry.

A letter, no longer than one page, *may* be uploaded to recognize any special circumstances under which the story or stories were written.

Sidebar for the same edition by the same writer or team may be included with the entry. Judges will give weight to story or stories written under especially tight deadlines. They will consider all elements of coverage, including digital.

✓ 2. Best News Coverage With No Deadline Pressure

Recognizes excellence by an individual or team in reporting an event or situation where an immediate deadline is not a factor. (Example: A series on children's issues that is planned and executed over time.)

An entry may include more than one story on a single subject, as long as they were by the same writer or team. Series are accepted here.

Judges will consider all elements of coverage, including digital.

✓ 3. Best Ongoing News Coverage

Recognizes news events too extensive to be handled in one day's reporting or recognizes ongoing coverage of a developing story. (Example: Continuous coverage of State Fair stage collapse – an unplanned news event.) In addition to quality of coverage, judges consider organization and cohesiveness.

Coverage does not need to be from consecutive days. Sidebars may be included. **Entry *may* include a one-page (8 1/2" x 11") summary of news event uploaded with entry.**

This category may include stories submitted in Category 1 or 2. This category may NOT include stories submitted in Category 29. Include no more than 10 articles per entry. Judges will consider all elements of coverage, including digital.

4. Best General Commentary

Recognizes a regular local column or blog on any subject, written by any individual staff member on any platform. **Any *three* samples of the columnist's work make up *one* entry. Please note only one entry per writer may be entered.**

Three samples judged as one entry for consistency. Judges will consider all elements of coverage, including digital.

5. Best Editorial Writer

Recognizes excellence in editorial writing by a single author on any platform. Judging is based on persuasiveness, worthiness of purpose, clarity and effectiveness.

Three samples of an entrant's work constitute *one* entry. Only *one* entry per writer. (Only two editorials in a series may be submitted. Newspapers wanting to submit an entire series may consider the Community Service category, No. 29.) Three samples judged as one entry for consistency.

6. Best Business/Economic News Coverage

Recognizes a single article or series of articles (not to exceed three) on the same topic by one writer or a team that emphasizes analysis and research. Articles may appear in the same issue or several issues.

Entries can be either a business/economic story on deadline or not and is not confined to the business section. Judges consider cohesiveness, organization and impact. Judges will consider all elements of coverage, including digital.

7. Headline Writing

Recognizes excellence and creativity in writing headlines. Judging will be based on whether the headline fulfills the mission of the story, clarity and creativity. May include news brief and editorial headlines. **Three headlines equal *one* entry.**

FEATURE ENTRIES: Total number of entries in Categories 8, 9 and 10 combined may not exceed 15 (ie: six in No. 8, seven in No. 9, and two in No. 10.)

8. Best Short Feature Story

Recognizes a single article, 1,000 words or less, by any reporter that deals with people and their lifestyles, activities or concerns. Judges consider reader interest and effectiveness in conveying human element and quality of reporting and writing.

9. Best Profile Feature

Recognizes the best single story focusing on a person. Judges will give emphasis to timeliness, quality of writing and depth of reporting, including multiple sources and way the author(s) sets the tone, mood or setting.

✓ 10. Best In-Depth Feature or Feature Package

Recognizes feature material published as a single article, set or related articles on the same day, or a series of related articles by the same writer or team.

Entries featuring more than one article *MUST* include a letter (one 8 1/2" x 11" page maximum) summarizing the package. Include no more than 10 articles per entry. Judges will use same criteria as Best Short Feature.

11. Best Sports Event Coverage

Recognizes a main "game story" from coverage of sporting events – most likely by a single writer but may be a multiple byline on a single story or in the package. Sidebars (pull-outs, graphics, breakouts) by the same writer may be included.

Judging is based on clarity, thoroughness and enterprise. Judges will consider all elements of coverage, including digital.

✓ 12. Best Sports News or Feature Coverage

Recognizes in-depth coverage of sports personalities and issues. Entries may consist of a single article or a series by one writer or a team.

13. Best Sports Commentary

Recognizes a regular column written by any individual staff member on any platform. ***One* entry consists of *three* samples of *one* writer's work. Please note only one entry per writer.** Judging is based on selection of material, reader interest and quality of writing.

PHOTOGRAPHY and MULTIMEDIA AWARDS

All entries are judged on journalistic merit. Photographs, video stories and photo stories with audio must have been published in the paper or online within the contest period. **Photos should approximate the original cropping as published.**

14. Best Spot News Photo

Recognizes a photo of an *unscheduled* news event for which no advance planning was possible. Judging is based on newsworthiness, photographic ingenuity and technical quality.

15. Best General News Photo

Recognizes a photo of a *scheduled* news event where some planning was possible. Judging is based on newsworthiness, photographic ingenuity and technical quality.

16. Best Sports Feature Photo

Recognizes a sports-related photo that is not action (reaction, sidelines, coaches, cheerleaders, crowds, etc.) Judging emphasizes originality, reader appeal and technical excellence.

17. Best Sports Action Photo

Recognizes an action photo of an athletic event. Judging emphasizes newsworthiness, originality, reader appeal and technical excellence.

18. Best Feature Photo

Any subject matter is acceptable. Factors to be considered include human interest, candid appeal, originality and technical excellence.

19. Best Multiple Picture Group

Submit any group of photographs on a central theme published as part of a package or series. **Group must include *at least three and not more than 10 photos*. No collages. Photo entered as part of a group may not be entered singly in another category. Upload ALL photos in the same group into ONE entry.**

Judging is based on originality, reader appeal, cohesiveness of subject matter and technical excellence. *All photos submitted in the package or series must have been published in the newspaper and/or online. Entry may include work of multiple photographers.*

20. Best Video Story or Photo Story with Audio

Recognizes a good story on any topic. Judging is based on originality, audience appeal, cohesiveness of subject matter and technical excellence.

Quality of the sound and video is an important consideration. Judges will consider editing of the pictures and sound and the juxtaposition of each in photo stories.

Entries must have been published online and may include work of multiple photographers.

When submitting video/photo stories, paste a URL where judges can access the entries. If content is behind a paywall, enter a user name and password in the comments box.

✓ = Category eligible for Story of the Year

NEWSPAPER SECTION AWARDS

Max file size for uploading is 100 MB.

21. Best Editorial Page

Recognizes community leadership through an outstanding editorial page. Judging is based on the overall quality of editorials, planning, originality and organization of the page, readership appeal, content balance and distinctive typography.

Submit any *three* editorial pages to make up a *single* entry. One op-ed page may be included as part of the three-page entry. Other opinion/analysis/commentary pages will not be considered.

This entry may include an editorial entered under Category 5. **Newspapers may submit no more than *one* entry.**

22. Best Use of Graphics

Recognizes the best use of graphics originated locally. Can be free-standing or part of package. However, this entry is a visual graphic device and not a page layout or design. **Newspapers may submit *one* entry with *three* samples. Must submit PDFs of *whole* pages.**

23. Best Website

Judges evaluate news content, design and presentation, navigation, interactivity and connectivity to other sites. **Type your newspaper website's URL in the Headline box *and* in the appropriate URL field, adding a user name/password in the Comments field if site is behind a paywall.**

24. Best Sports Section

Judges consider planning and organization, general typography and use of graphics, readership appeal, content balance, readability and originality.

Newspapers may submit only *one* entry with *three* samples. May include sports special sections published those same days. This entry may include a sports story entered in either the Sports Event Coverage and/or the Sports News or Feature Coverage category.

25. Best Feature Section or Page(s)

Recognizes a feature section or page(s) that appears on a continual basis in the newspaper. (i.e., entertainment, lifestyle, home).

Newspapers may submit *two* entries with *three* samples each. Must come from different sections. (For example, you may submit three lifestyle sections as one entry and three arts sections as another). The entry may include a feature story entered under Best Short Feature or In-Depth Feature Package categories.

Judges will consider planning and organization, typography and use of graphics, readership appeal, content balance, readability and originality.

26. Best Business Section or Page(s)

Judges consider planning and organization, typography and use of graphics, readership appeal, content balance, readability and originality.

Newspapers may submit only *one* entry with *three* samples. This entry may include stories entered under either the Business/Economic News or other news category.

27. Best Special Section

Recognizes a special section published one time during the contest period. Any topic is eligible. May include digital components. Judges consider content on all platforms including newspaper-produced magazines and inserts. **Entry must be delivered as part of the newspaper.** A letter no longer than one 8-1/2" x 11" page *may* accompany entry.