



# 2025

## Better Newspaper Competition

### Contest opens

Regular Deadline: Thursday, Jan. 01, 2026

### Contest deadline

Regular Deadline: Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026

Late Deadline: Friday, Feb. 6, 2026

### Contest period

January 1 to December 31, 2025

### Maximum number of entries

Three entries per category unless stated otherwise

### Cost to enter

Regular Deadline: Jan. 28: \$7 per entry

Late Deadline: Feb. 6: \$10 per entry

### Questions?

Contact McHugh at [mchugh@lapress.com](mailto:mchugh@lapress.com)

### Payments: Pay by Pay Pal or Mail to:

9618 Jefferson Highway, Suite D

Box 378

Baton Rouge, LA 70809

### Mail FOI Awards Submissions to:

9618 Jefferson Highway, Suite D

Box 378

Baton Rouge, LA 70809

Received  
your rules?  
Please email  
"Rules Received" to  
[info@lapress.com](mailto:info@lapress.com)



## Eligibility

Open to LPA members in good standing. DUES MUST BE CURRENT. TMC issues are not eligible. All entries must have been printed or circulated in the member newspaper publication or online to subscribers.

## “Regular Employees”

In all categories, particularly in reporting, feature writing and photography; “regular employees” are those who work or who are contracted to work exclusively for the newspaper or publication.

## Letters

A letter of clarification may be submitted with any entry where the newspaper feels it would be helpful to the judges.

## Duplicate Submissions/Limits

No entry should be submitted in more than one category when judging is based on the same criteria. **Writers/Columnists/ Photographers are limited to three (3) entries per category.**

## Submission Format

All uploads should be a URL upload or be a full page PDF tearsheet of the actual page(s) that were published. Text and Word documents will NOT be accepted.

When uploading PDF files, it will be helpful if the entry name matches the headline of the entry. We also recommend placing a red box around the entry (see examples below and on page 10). This is so the judges can find the entry easily. If the judges cannot tell what is to be judged, the entry will be discarded without refund.

**Unless part of a series or otherwise stated in the rules, every entry should be submitted individually. Multiple entries in a single entry will be disqualified.**

If you have any questions or problems with uploads, contact McHugh via e-mail at [mchugh@lapress.com](mailto:mchugh@lapress.com).

## Disqualification

Any entry in the LPA Contests that does not meet the requirements as outlined in the contest rules set by the Contest Committee and approved by the LPA Board of Directors will be disqualified. Disqualification may occur during any one of three phases: submission/preparatory phase, the judging phase or subsequent to the awards presentation phase. If the disqualification occurs during the submission/preparatory phase or the judging phase, the entry will be declared ineligible for consideration. If the disqualification occurs after the awards presentation, the entry will be declared ineligible and any plaques or certificates awarded should be returned to LPA and an official announcement of the disqualification will be made. No fees will be refunded on disqualified entries.

## Newspaper of the Year

Newspaper of the Year will be awarded based on points for Division 1-5. In the event of a tie for Newspaper of the Year, the tied newspaper with the most first place awards will be declared the winner. If the first place awards do not break the tie, second place awards and then third place awards will be counted to break the tie.

## Points Breakdown

Points will be awarded in each contest, except General Excellence using the following system:

Place	Regular Awards	General Excellence
First place	3 points	6 points
Second place	2 points	4 points
Third Place	1 point	2 points

## Awards

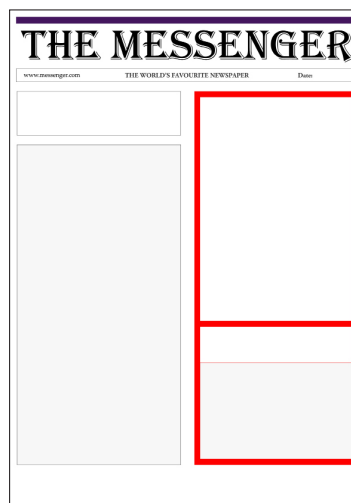
Certificates will be awarded for most 1st, 2nd and 3rd places. Plaques will be awarded to 1st place in General Excellence, Newspaper of the Year, Freedom of Information, The Sam Hanna Award, The Gibbs Adams Award, and The Gary Hebert Award.

## Divisions

LPA members are classified in one of six divisions (see breakdown elsewhere in this packet). Divisions 1-4 are based on frequency of publication and circulation. Circulation figures are based on postal or audit statements on file with LPA.

If only a single newspaper enters a division, the newspaper will be moved up or down depending upon the newspaper’s placement within the division. If the newspaper is in the lower third of the division, the newspaper will be placed to compete in the lower division. If the newspaper is in the upper two-thirds, the newspaper will be moved up.

Newspapers published three times or more a week are classified as daily. If a paper changes frequency during the contest timeframe, the paper will be placed in the division it spent the most time in during the contest timeframe.



Please refer to page 8 for step by step instructions on how to draw the red box using Adobe Acrobat Professional software.

# DIVISION BREAKDOWN

## DIVISION 1

### Large Daily Newspapers

The Advocate (Baton Rouge)  
Daily Courier (Houma)  
Daily Advertiser (Lafayette)  
American Press (Lake Charles)  
News Star (Monroe)  
The Times-Picayune | The New Orleans Advocate  
The Times (Shreveport)

## DIVISION 2

### Small Daily Newspapers

Daily Town Talk (Alexandria)  
Daily Star (Hammond)  
Jennings Daily News  
Acadiana Advocate (Lafayette)  
Daily Iberian (New Iberia)  
Daily World (Opelousas)  
Ruston Daily Leader  
Daily Comet (Thibodaux)

## DIVISION 3

### Large Weekly Newspapers

Crowley Post-Signal  
Abbeville Meridional  
St. Bernard Voice (Arabi)  
Plaquemines Gazette (Belle Chasse)  
Bogalusa Daily News  
Bossier Press Tribune  
St. Tammany Farmer (Covington)  
Livingston Parish News (Denham Springs)  
Concordia Sentinel (Ferriday)  
Era-Leader (Franklinton)  
Jena Times  
L'Observateur (LaPlace)  
News Examiner Enterprise (Lutcher)  
The Enterprise and Interstate Progress (Mansfield)  
Natchitoches Times  
Sabine Index (Many)  
Marksville Weekly News  
Minden Press Herald  
Morgan City Review  
Louisiana Weekly (New Orleans)  
The Tangi Times  
Rayne Acadian Tribune  
Shreveport Sun  
The Inquisitor (Shreveport)  
Teche News (St. Martinville)  
Ouachita Citizen (West Monroe)  
Winn Parish Enterprise (Winnfield)  
Franklin Sun (Winnsboro)

## DIVISION 4

### Small Weekly Newspapers

Bienville Democrat (Arcadia)  
Basile Weekly  
Bernice Banner  
St. Charles Herald Guide (Boutte)  
Bunkie Record  
Cameron Parish Pilot  
Church Point News  
Clinton Watchman  
Colfax Chronicle  
Caldwell Watchman (Columbia)  
Coushatta Citizen  
DeQuincy News  
DeRidder News Leader  
Donaldsonville Chief  
Eunice News  
Farmerville Gazette  
Franklin Banner-Tribune  
Gonzales Weekly Citizen  
Gueydan Journal  
Homer Guardian Journal  
Catahoula News-Booster (Jonesville)  
Kaplan Herald  
Kinder Courier-News  
Providence Journal (Lake Providence)  
Pointe Coupee Banner (New Roads)  
West Carroll Gazette (Oak Grove)  
Oakdale Journal  
Bayou Pioneer (Pierre Part)  
Post South (Plaquemine)  
West Side Journal (Port Allen)  
Richland Beacon-News (Rayville)  
St. Francisville Democrat  
Tensas Gazette (St. Joseph)  
Madison Journal (Tallulah)  
Ville Platte Gazette

## DIVISION 5

### Associate Active Publications

Acadiana Lifestyle (New Iberia)  
AN17.com  
Catholic Commentator (Baton Rouge)  
The Current (Lafayette)  
Forum News (Shreveport)  
Gambit (New Orleans)  
The Istrouma Journal (Baton Rouge)  
Lafourche Gazette  
Louisiana Municipal Review  
Louisiana Sports Magazine (Baton Rouge)  
Point of Vue Magazine (Houma)  
Psychology Times (Baton Rouge)  
St. George Leader (Baton Rouge)  
Thrive Magazine (Lake Charles)  
Tiger Rag (Baton Rouge)  
Central City News  
Slidell Independent  
Zachary Post

## DIVISION 6

### College Publications

Alamagest  
Bayou Bengal  
Conglomerate  
Contraband  
Courtbouillion  
Current Sauce  
The Reveille  
The Dolphin  
Gramblinite  
Tulane Hullabaloo  
Lion's Roar  
Loyola Maroon  
The Nicholls Worth  
Sentry News  
The Hawkeye  
Southern Digest  
Vermilion  
Jaguar Speaks  
The Tech Talk  
Wildcat  
Xavier Herald

Newspapers in Divisions 2-4 are allowed to compete up in the divisions. For example, a newspaper in Division 4 is eligible to compete in Division 3.

**IF A NEWSPAPER CHOOSES TO COMPETE UP IN DIVISION, LPA MUST BE NOTIFIED PRIOR TO UPLOADING ENTRIES**

# 2025 LPA CONTEST ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS:

**STEP 1** — Your Association Code is LPA.

Register at: [www.newspapercontest.com/lpa](http://www.newspapercontest.com/lpa) using your e-mail address. You will receive a confirmation e-mail, which you will need to complete registration.

**STEP 2** — Login to [www.newspapercontest.com/lpa](http://www.newspapercontest.com/lpa). You will see a page showing any entries you have already submitted.

**STEP 3** — Click on the “Add New Entry” link.

**STEP 4** — On this page, select your newspaper name. A lot of information will auto fill. (If that information is incorrect, please call McHugh at (225) 351-0702. Your Division will be selected for you based on your circulation. Fill in the preparer’s name.

**STEP 5** — Select “Editorial” or “Advertising” to begin submitting entries. As you create entries, this field will not change unless you select to change it. All required fields are marked with a red asterisk.

**STEP 6** — Select the contest class (name of contest.) These are drop-down menus for your convenience. This field will clear each time you save an entry, so you must select a class for each new entry. When you select the class, special instructions will appear below it.

**STEP 7** — If necessary, provide an explanation of your entry. The explanation/cutline box is limited to 3,000 characters. It’s a good idea to write your explanation in another program, such as Word, and copy/paste into the explanation box. If a URL is required, fill in the URL box; there is no need to type “http://.”

**STEP 8** — Include the name of the entry. When uploading PDF files, it will be helpful if the entry name matches the headline of the entry. We also recommend placing a box around the entry (see examples on pages 2 and 8). This is so the judges can find the entry easily. If the judges cannot tell what is to be judged, the entry will be discarded without refund.

**STEP 9** — Include the name of the person or people who

should be credited for any award. This is generally the writer, reporter, photographer, graphic artist, cartoonist, etc. It is not necessarily the name of the person submitting the entry nor the person picking up the award at the convention.

**STEP 10** — Add your file or files. You can drag and drop files or use the “Add files” button to navigate your files. Generally, files should be in PDF format except photos, which should be in high-resolution JPG format. Other files and URLs may be acceptable as noted in the special instructions. Upload as many files as are necessary to complete your entry but refer to the special instructions for any limitations.

**STEP 11** — When you have completed your submission, click the “Save” button. If you click the “Back to list” button, you will lose the entry you just completed. After clicking “Save,” you will be directed back to the list of your entries.

**STEP 12** — To submit another entry, click “Add New Entry.” As long as you have not logged out of the system, your newspaper name will still be in place and you can simply start at Step 6 again. You may log out and log back in later to continue adding entries. You will need to select your newspaper name each time you log in.

**STEP 13** — If you are done submitting entries, please review the list. You may not change an entry, but you may delete an entry and resubmit it. When done uploading all your entries, click the “Billing” button on the list page. This will take you to a page where the entry fee is automatically generated.

**You may pay by PayPal or you may mail payment to:**

Attn.: Louisiana Press Association  
9618 Jefferson Highway, Suite D  
Box 378  
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

Once payment is made, we will disable your access to the page. If you find out later that you need access, you would need to email McHugh at [mchugh@lapress](mailto:mchugh@lapress) or register using a different e-mail address.

**Note - Charges are made on a PER ENTRY basis. Any entry that requires multiple assets will only be charged a single-entry price.**

# ENTRY GUIDELINES:

## 1. BEST FRONT PAGE:

SUBMIT TWO FRONT PAGES **PER PAPER**. **Two front-page tear sheets equal one entry.** Criteria: Overall excellence in layout and design, photography and news with emphasis on local content. Strong emphasis placed on design, effective headlines, photos and art as well as news writing, reader appeal, news balance, and overall news coverage.

## 2. BEST HEADLINE:

SUBMIT UP TO TWO WRITER'S WORKS. **Each headline should be submitted as its own entry. Three entries per writer max.** Submit two full-page tearsheets with one headline each outlining headline to be judged and story it promoted. Criteria: Accuracy, originality, creativity, appropriateness, impact and attention-getting quality

## 3. BEST BREAKING NEWS STORY

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER REPORTER. Print or online stories accepted. Entries should be written by a regular staff member or contract content producer. More than one staff writer may author stories. Each entry may be a single story or a single-story w/ sidebars. **Criteria: A single story, or a group of stories PUBLISHED IN THE SAME ISSUE, COVERING A SINGLE NEWS EVENT that is unplanned and unanticipated.** The event must have occurred no more than 24 hours before the publication's deadline. Quality of writing and thoroughness of fact reporting will be considered. This category is for coverage of events which happened with NO advance warning. If an event had been anticipated enough to allow a publication to have added matter or pages ready to go, it does not qualify for this category. All entries will be reviewed for compliance. If an entry consists of more than one story, all of the stories must have been published on the same date. **Coverage of hurricanes or other predicted weather phenomena is NOT considered breaking news.** An entry in this category may be included in a general news entry if the breaking news story launched multi-day, continuing coverage.

## 4. BEST FEATURE STORY

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER REPORTER. Entries should be written by a regular staff member or contract content producer. More than one staff writer may author stories. Criteria: Subject, content, readability and interest. Photos and artwork receive no consideration. Strong emphasis placed on sentence and paragraph structure and lead. **Each entry may be a single story, single story with sidebars OR A SERIES OF ARTICLES WHEN MARKED "FIRST OF A SERIES, SECOND OF A SERIES..." when published.**

## 5. BEST NEWS STORY

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER REPORTER. Entries should be written by a regular staff member or contract content producer. More than one staff writer may author

stories. **Each entry may be a single story or a single-story w/ sidebars.** Criteria: Subject, content, readability and interest. Photos and artwork receive no consideration. Strong emphasis placed on sentence and paragraph structure and lead.

## 6. BEST SINGLE EDITORIAL

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER PAPER. **Each Editorial should be submitted as its own entry.** Entries should be written by a regular staff member. The same editorial may not be submitted for more than one newspaper for those in groups. In the case of a group, the originating newspaper should submit the entry. Criteria: Logic, persuasiveness, originality and manner of presentation.

## 7. BEST REGULAR COLUMN Sam Hanna Award

SUBMIT UP TO THREE COLUMNISTS' WORKS. **Two published columns by the same columnist equal one entry.** Please combine the two columns into one PDF for submission. Columns must be regular features of the newspaper, original and written by regular members of the staff or contract content producer.

The Sam Hanna Award is given to columnists for the 1st place entry in the Best Regular Column category. The award is given in memory of long-time columnist and publisher of the Concordia Sentinel in Ferriday, the Franklin Sun in Winnsboro, and the Ouachita Citizen of West Monroe. First Place winners of the Sam Hanna award will receive two plaques – one for the newspaper and one for the columnist. Criteria: Columns may be specialized with the exception of sports (separate category). A special plaque honoring the late publisher of Hanna Publishing, Sam Hanna, will be awarded to the newspaper in each division. Additional plaques may be purchased.

## 8. BEST INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING Gibbs Adams Award

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES **PER PAPER**. \*A letter of explanation, including a description of the steps the reporter made in the investigation must be included. Entries should be written by a regular staff member. More than one staff member may author stories. **Entry may be a single story, single story with sidebars or a series of stories if the stories are part of the same series.**

The Gibbs Adams Award is given to the investigative reporter for the 1st place entry in the Best Investigative Reporting category. The award is given in memory of long-time State Times-Morning Advocate investigative reporter Gibbs Adams. Criteria: Entries should demonstrate staff initiative and enterprise. Judges will consider overall quality of writing and how deep writers had to dig to find the story. One Gibbs Adams plaques will be awarded in all divisions in honor of The Advocate's investigative reporter. Additional plaques may be purchased. A letter of explanation must be included.

## 9. BEST SPORTS STORY

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER REPORTER. Entries should be written by a regular staff member or contract content producer. **Each entry may be a single story or a single story with sidebars.** Criteria: Subject, content, readability and interest. Photos and artwork will receive no consideration. Strong emphasis placed on sentence and paragraph structure and lead.

## 10. BEST SPORTS COLUMN

SUBMIT UP TO THREE COLUMNISTS WORKS. **Two published columns by the same columnist equal one entry.** Please combine the two columns into one PDF for submission. Columns must be regular features of the newspaper, original and written by regular members of the staff or contract content producer.

## 11. BEST LAYOUT AND DESIGN Gary Hebert Award

**ONE ENTRY PER PAPER.** Criteria: **one entry consists of up to three (3) full-page layouts.** More than one staff member may design a page. Entry may be section pages & may or may not contain color. The Gary Hebert Award is given to graphic designers for the 1st place entry in the Best Layout and Design category.

The award is given in memory of Gary Hebert, who was a trendsetter in the world of weekly newspaper design. Under his reign, the Plaquemine Post/South received many awards for graphic design and effective use of spot color. First Place winners of the Gary Hebert award will receive two plaques – one for the newspaper and one for the designer. Effective use of layout and design and overall appearance of the page featuring enhanced editorial design, not as a stand-alone element. Strong emphasis placed on creativity and imagination, as well as reader impact and eye-appeal. One plaque for each division. Additional plaques may be purchased.

## 12. BEST NEWS PHOTO

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES **PER STAFF.** Both Online and Print photos now eligible. Submit full-page tearsheets or print-out from web with one photo clearly outlined. No photo that is part of a photo package entered elsewhere may be submitted in this category. **Criteria: Each photo should be its own entry and will be judged separately for its news value.** No original photos should be sent. News refers to events that are currently developing, or “breaking” i.e. events that are unexpected, such as a plane crash or building fire.

## 13. BEST FEATURE PHOTO

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES **PER STAFF.** Both Online and Print photos now eligible. Submit full-page tearsheets or print-out from web with one photo clearly outlined. No photo that is part of a photo package entered elsewhere may be submitted in this category. **Criteria: Each photo should be its own entry and will be judged separately for its news value.** No original photos should be sent. Feature news is defined as “soft news” covering lifestyle, art, social and community events.

## 14. BEST SPORTS PHOTO

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES **PER STAFF.** Both Online and Print photos now eligible. Submit full-page tearsheets or print-out from web with one photo clearly outlined. Criteria: **Each photo should be its own entry and will be judged separately.**

## 15. BEST PHOTO PACKAGE (3 or more photos)

**SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER PAPER.** More than one staff member may take the photos in each entry. Each entry should consist of tearsheets of three or more photos in a collective layout relating to the same subject. Online photo galleries will also be accepted. Criteria: Editorial content will receive no consideration.

## REMINDER ABOUT AD CATEGORIES (16 - 19):

**As long as any ad is sold by its local Louisiana sales representative, the ad may be designed out of state (i.e. central office) and may be entered into the advertising competitions. Clarification on the definition of contract employees and centralized advertising design operations: As long as the material is produced at the newspaper's direction, the entries can be submitted in the appropriate contest. Agency ads will NOT be accepted in any advertising category. Examples of agency ads are co-op ads and car dealerships where the local dealers' logo is placed in the “pre-designed” ad. Ads will be carefully screened and disqualified if there is cause to believe it is an agency ad.**

## 16. STAFF GENERATED AD

SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES **PER DESIGNER.** **Each ad should be submitted as its own entry.** Show a single ad that represents your newspaper's best quality in content, artwork and layout. Submit a full-page tearsheet for each entry. Ad must be for a single advertiser Criteria: The basic idea, layout, copy, typography and originality. No house ads may be submitted.

## 17. BEST AD CAMPAIGN

**SUBMIT UP TO THREE CAMPAIGNS PER PAPER. Each campaign should be submitted as its own entry.** Show a novel or unusual idea carried out through a series of ads either in one issue or in a series of issues. Ads should show a continuity of theme. Each entry may consist of multiple parts although no more than five parts to any campaign or series should be submitted. Submit a full-page tearsheet for each ad in a series. Criteria: Creativity, layout, typography, originality and development of a theme. No house ads may be submitted.

## 18. IN-PAPER PROMOTION

**SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER PAPER. Each ad/campaign should be submitted as its own entry.** Each entry may consist of multiple parts although no more than five parts to any campaign or series should be submitted. Submit a full-page tearsheet for each ad in a series. Criteria: Creativity and continuity of theme.

## 19. BEST MULTIPLE ADVERTISER PAGE

**SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER PAPER.** Entries should feature three or more advertisers under a common headline or theme. Each entry is eligible to win. Submit a full-page tearsheet. Criteria: Originality of basic idea, layout, copy typography and creativity as a revenue producer.

## 20. BEST OVERALL WEBSITE

Judged on the usefulness of the site to the “reader,” quality and quantity of community content and ease of navigation and design. Judges will consider special features such as community forums, advertising information and interactive elements which encourage significant audience engagement. Please submit your website address.

## 21. BEST WEB PROJECT

**SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER PAPER. Each project should be submitted as its own entry.** Recognizes the presentation and content on a single topic. Projects may integrate both print and online elements, and should be innovative, visually stunning and have interactive components to engage readers. May include a description of the project and any promotion done in print. Submit your URL.

## 22. BEST NEWS VIDEO

**SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER PAPER. Each video should be submitted as its own entry.** Recognizes a video to tell a story and serve a community. Emphasis will be placed on visitor experience, engagement and response as well as on creative use of technology. It may be part of a larger project or stand on its own. May include a description of the project and any promotion done in print. Submit your URL.

## 23. BEST SPECIAL SECTION

**SUBMIT UP TO THREE ENTRIES PER PAPER.** Entries should be either special sections or special editions dealing with one overall theme. Each section or edition will be judged individually. Criteria: Quality of news content, originality, advertising quality, layout, design and reader appeal.

Originality of Idea	20 points
Editorial/News Quality	20 points
Advertising Quality	20 points
Reader Appeal	20 points
Layout/Design	20 points

## 24. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Judged as one division only

**ONE PER PAPER.** In a cover letter, describe the circumstances of the incident and the role your newspaper played in preserving Freedom of Information. Include clippings of material you published concerning the incident. Letters from community leaders may be included. **Submit your Freedom of Information entry in clipping form (photocopies are acceptable.) Attach those clippings to an 8½ x 11-inch paper or legal-size paper and fix those sheets inside a standard or legal-size folder. Loose clippings are not acceptable. Mail the entries to the LPA Office.** Cover letters and letters from community leaders should lead off the entry. No entry fee is required. Criteria: **Entry may be a single story, single story with sidebars or a series of stories if the stories related to the same issue.** A panel of the LPA Freedom of Information Committee will conduct judging.

## 25. GENERAL EXCELLENCE

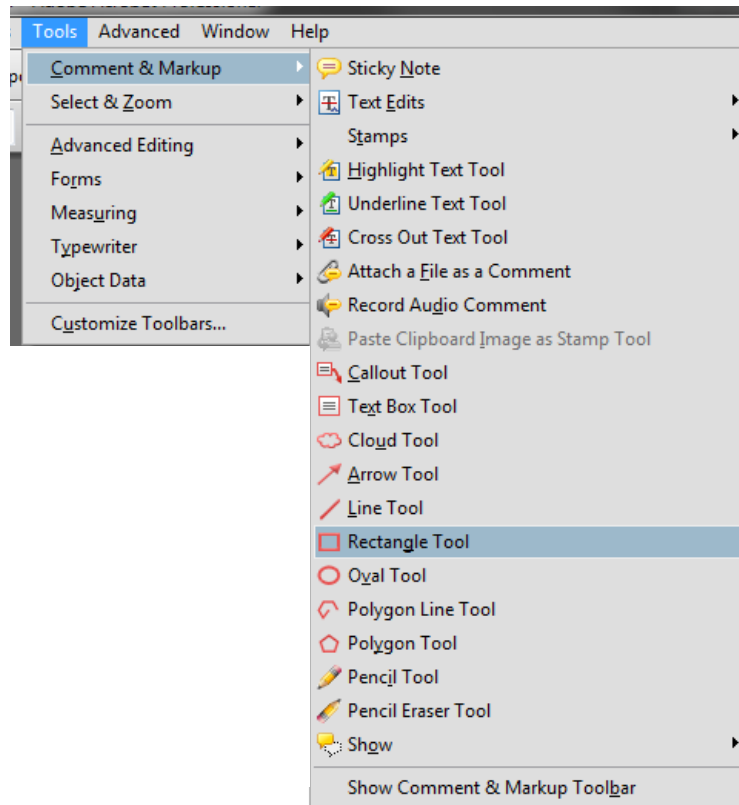
**ONE ENTRY PER NEWSPAPER. Two issues equal one entry.** Please combine the two issues into one PDF for submission. Remove all inserts that are not staff-generated. Criteria: Overall creativity, layout and design as well as reader appeal, news quality and editorial page. Special consideration will be given to the overall variety of ads and advertisers, classified page/section and how public notices are handled by the publication.

## Adobe Acrobat Pro: Red Box Instructions:

1. Open your document in Adobe Acrobat Professional

Important Note: You MUST have Adobe Acrobat Professional full software. The following instructions WILL NOT work in Adobe Acrobat Reader

2. Select Tools. Then Select Comment and Markup. In the Comment and Markup Menu select the Rectangle Tool.



3. When the Rectangle tool is selected, your mouse cursor will change to a small cross, this will allow you to drag and draw a red box around your entry.

4. Save your PDF as the headline of your entry (your entry ID). for example OneForTheDogs.pdf

5. Update your PDF into the system.

If you have any questions, please contact McHugh via email at [mchugh@lapress.com](mailto:mchugh@lapress.com).

