



CELEBRATING THE BEST OF ONTARIO'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS



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OF ONTARIO'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS!



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring has finally arrived, and with it the time has come to honour the great work of Ontario's weekly community newspapers.

The pandemic has made this year a difficult one, with some offices closed and staff working from home, but we persevere. For the second year, we have had to cancel our in-person celebrations. But we will celebrate nonetheless, just in a different way, with the hopes that soon we will be able to join our peers for a handshake and a congratulations.

The 2020 Better Newspapers Competition received over 1,450 entries, showcasing the hard work and dedication the publishers, editors, reporters, photographers, designers and others do each and every day to hold their newspapers to the highest standards. Just a quick look at the entries, and you will agree that Ontario's community newspapers have some very talented staff.

With all the challenges and upheaval this year, our newspapers made covering both the pandemic and marginalized communities a priority. For this reason, two new categories were created: Best Covid-19 Coverage and Diversity Coverage, both informing their communities of the challenges and successes of these issues.

We have a lot of people to thank for the success of this awards program.

Thank you to the judges who, after a full week of putting their own papers to press, spent their free time examining the entries and shared their thoughts and wisdom to help make our program a success.

Thank you to the category sponsors for their generous support, enabling us to highlight the accomplishments of our members.

A big thank you to Ontario Power Generation, our Gold Awards Gala sponsor, for continuing their support, even though we are again unable to celebrate together.

And a final thank-you to the staff of Ontario's weekly community newspapers whose dedication, talent, and resourcefulness we celebrate today.

Congratulations to all the winners!

John Willems
President
Ontario Community Newspapers Association

General Excellence Awards



GENERAL EXCELLENCE | CLASS 1

CIRCULATION 1,999 & UNDER

13 ENTRIES



1

THE INDEPENDENT SERVING PETROLIA AND CENTRAL LAMBTON

The Petrolia Lambton Independent covers the community thoroughly and provides a clean, easy-to-read newspaper. It demonstrated a commitment to excellence throughout, beginning with an attractive, newsy front page. It is a solid, well laid out paper with an interesting mix of news and features supplemented by strong photos and effective, attractive advertising. Great read from front to back. Well done!



2

DEEP RIVER NORTH RENFREW TIMES

The Deep River North Renfrew Times is a great paper. It is a well laid out, clean newspaper to read with some compelling photos. It has a strong editorial page as well with one to three letters to the editor. A community well covered in all aspects.



3

HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

The Haliburton County Echo has a strong commitment to content, both in quality and in volume. The pages were jam packed with interesting and important stories and local features. Strong front page photos and excellent coverage of the community entice the reader.

HONOURABLE MENTION

PARRY SOUND NORTH STAR – The Parry Sound North Star does many things well. Readers get a wealth of information from its pages, which include a mix of solid hard news and interesting features. It has a strong editorial page with locally written editorials and multiple letters to the editor. This is a nice looking paper with a commitment to design.

GENERAL COMMENT

As always, this category was a pleasure to judge. Every paper does a commendable job covering their communities. Reading these was a reminder of the hard work and dedication shown day in and day out by men and women in the community newspaper industry. The papers that rose to the top exhibited a commitment to quality throughout the newspaper, beginning with strong, newsy front pages and continuing with extensive news and feature reporting, engaging opinion sections and interesting sports sections. Completing the packages were attractive, effective ads, both display and classified. Class 1 papers might be small in circulation, but they deliver a big product that provides valuable service to the communities they serve. We congratulate everyone for not only continuing to put out a newspaper every week, but also for achieving a high standard while doing it.

Judges

Roger Knox
Multimedia Journalist
The Morning Star
Vernon, BC



Frank McTighe
Editor & Publisher
The Macleod Gazette
Fort Macleod, AB



Rob Vogt
Editor
Claresholm Local Press
Claresholm, AB



GENERAL EXCELLENCE | CLASS 2-3

CIRCULATION 2,000 - 6,499

7 ENTRIES



1

EGANVILLE LEADER

The Eganville Leader is a great example of an all-round community newspaper. Chock-a-block full of good news stories, many excellent photographs, unrivalled community news and superb coverage of sports and the arts. The coloured heds were well written and tight fitting. Congratulations!



2

NIAGARA THIS WEEK, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE ADVANCE

The Niagara This Week, Niagara-on-the-Lake Advance has a clean and easy to follow layout. Advertising initiative taken in the use of a wrap and ads were well placed and designed. Several letters to the editor in both issues showed good community engagement with the paper and editorials were well written and had local focus.



3

MIDLAND/PENETANGUISHENE MIRROR

The Midland/Penetanguishene Mirror is a great looking paper, with good community coverage and clean writing. A couple of arts pieces were written more like an editorial style review than a news piece, but overall, the writing is strong. Well done!

GENERAL COMMENT

A great group of newspapers overall. Strong entries in a tough category. All the entries were interesting and gave a good general view of the communities they represent. Each had standout strengths, with plenty of good stories to read and great presentations of photos. Sports coverage was generally lacking, which is too bad, as minor league sports has always been the domain of community newspapers. All papers demonstrated connection to their communities and that is what newspapers are all about. Keep up the good work!

Judges

Krisi Marples

Editor
Saint Croix Courier
St. Stephen, NB



Shannon Robinson

Publisher
Shootin' the Breeze
Pincher Creek, AB



Manfred Tempelmayr

Retired Publishing Company President
Past BCYCNA President
Gabriola Island, BC



GENERAL EXCELLENCE | CLASS 4

CIRCULATION 6,500 - 12,499

15 ENTRIES



1

HALIBURTON, THE HIGHLANDER

Haliburton, The Highlander was the clear winner in this class. Clean and concise writing, headlines and design, appealing layout from start to finish, excellent use of colour and strong local photography throughout. The dedicated arts and sports sections, along with the other special sections like environment and health, offer readers a broad slice of community life. This is a shining example of community news not only done well in terms of content but presented in an appealing package. Loved that they take the time to go out and do a streeeter! An excellent community newspaper.



2

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE LOCAL

A prominent, good quality photo and local news are front and centre for readers picking up The Niagara-on-the-Lake Local. It includes excellent local news and solid community reporting. There were photos with almost every story. The arts coverage and special sections (School page, holiday, new year new interior) reflect the fact that a community newspaper should serve readers of all ages. This is what a community newspaper should feel like.



3

NIAGARA THIS WEEK, FORT ERIE POST

The Niagara This Week, Fort Erie Post impressed us with the extent and quality of the local content covered, both through strong writing and good community focus. There was an excellent selection of local news, and both sports and arts coverage. A well-laid out newspaper with great use of photos to go with stories on almost every page. It was wonderful to read the stories put together by this newsroom.

HONOURABLE MENTION

OTTAWA COMMUNITY VOICE, WEST CARLETON – The Ottawa Community Voice, West Carleton edition has a strong editorial page and represents the community it serves well. The front page, although a little busy, has a nice modern format. It clearly puts editorial content and reporting on the community in the forefront with the layout and design of this paper.

GENERAL COMMENT

It is clear community newspapers are alive and well in this category. There is great community and hyper local content overall. Journalism is a key component to our democratic values of accountability and transparency, and it is great to see that at work. The advertising base generally seems solid, and the papers will hopefully be serving their collective communities for a long time to come. The newspapers with unique identities stood out best, and notably these entries had more community engagement. It is clear that community journalism is alive and well in Ontario with compelling stories being written by local reporters across the province.

Judges

Tanya Foubert

Editor
Rocky Mountain Outlook
Canmore, AB



Sarah Strother

Publisher
Pique Newsmagazine &
The Squamish Chief
Squamish, BC



Andy Walker

Editor
Island Farm
Montague, PEI



GENERAL EXCELLENCE | CLASS 5

CIRCULATION 12,500 - 22,499

10 ENTRIES



1

ELMIRA-WOOLWICH OBSERVER

The Elmira-Woolwich Observer ran away with this class with an extremely well-balanced paper from start to finish, thanks to the strength of its extensive community coverage, its locally focused editorials, and its great design. This newspaper shows a wonderful representation of community news, arts, sports, advertising, and excellent photography. The design is bright, fresh, and modern. These issues were a pleasure to read.



2

OTTAWA COMMUNITY VOICE, STITTSVILLE & RICHMOND

The Ottawa Community Voice, Stittsville & Richmond edition obviously has a strong connection to its community. It clearly reflects what is going on in its community. It has a great layout, with both strong writing and photography. The lack of sports and arts representation are the reasons this newspaper did not place first. Overall, an informative and entertaining newspaper to read, that seems to serve the local population well.



3

ANCASTER NEWS

A nice community newspaper. The Ancaster News is another strong entry with good photography, strong local reporting, well written articles, and powerful editorials.

HONOURABLE MENTION

WATERDOWN FLAMBOROUGH REVIEW – The Waterdown Flamborough Review receives an honourable mention based on its strong community reporting. This newspaper obviously places a priority on local news, and it shows.

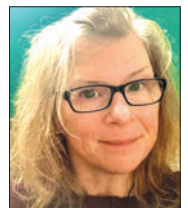
GENERAL COMMENT

It is clear looking through these newspapers that there are a lot of hardworking journalists trying to tell their communities' stories. The top newspapers in this category are those that allowed their journalists the space to properly tell those stories. You all deserve a pat on the back. This isn't an easy job, especially in these times. Well done.

Judges

Kimberley Kielley

Assistant Editor
Shilo Stag
CFB Shilo, MB



Kevin Laird

Editor
Sooke News Mirror
Sooke, BC



Kevin Weedmark

Editor & Publisher
The World-Spectator
Moosomin, SK



GENERAL EXCELLENCE | CLASS 6

CIRCULATION 22,500 - 44,999

18 ENTRIES



1

FERGUS WELLINGTON ADVERTISER

The Fergus Wellington Advertiser makes good use of the front page as well as in its general layout. It's strong variety of local content and good use of photos also helped put this newspaper at the top of the list. Although the editorial page comes without a cartoon, it makes up for it with letters and opinion pieces. This paper packs in a lot of community news and has a little bit of everything that would appeal to broad readership. Congratulations.



2

WHITBY THIS WEEK

Whitby This Week is an attractive paper that kept that small town community coverage intact. It is filled with community news and features as well as the category's best sports coverage. Good photos, too. The overall layout made flipping the pages to get to the next story a pleasure. Well done.



3

NIAGARA THIS WEEK, NIAGARA FALLS

Niagara This Week, Niagara Falls contains a good variety of local stories, including excellent news features and community stories that cover all the bases. The editorial page is clean and compelling, with an effective front page and a nice layout throughout.

HONOURABLE MENTION

GUELPH MERCURY TRIBUNE – The Guelph Mercury News is a strong local paper that could easily have made it into the top three, on the strength of its standout front pages, overall presentation, photos, and feature stories. Keep up the good work.

GENERAL COMMENT

With a lot of entries from the same chain featuring the same general design, judges read closely to try to determine which papers provide more to their readers. A lot of impactful layouts. The community news was covered capably and there was plenty of evidence of reporter initiative. A great year for papers - less so about the news they had to carry this year.

Judges

Anthony Bonaparte

Features Editor
The Suburban
Montreal, QC



Rob Brown

Managing Editor
Dawson Creek Mirror
Dawson Creek, BC



Greg Sakaki

Editor
Nanaimo News Bulletin,
Nanaimo, BC



GENERAL EXCELLENCE | CLASS 7

CIRCULATION 45,000 & OVER

12 ENTRIES



1

AJAX PICKERING NEWS ADVERTISER

The Ajax Pickering News Advertiser contained superior, impressive local news and features coverage, which moved it to the top of the category. A clean and newsy front page with a strong photo to go with the story. Well done.



2

OAKVILLE BEAVER

The Oakville Beaver has a nice crisp, clean layout of both advertising and editorial. The real strength of this particular publication is the photography. That's what makes this paper stand out: lively, active photos. A solid package overall.



3

BURLINGTON POST

The Burlington Post has a good local news section. Fabulous to see specific coverage of upcoming arts and entertainment events, which are all too often overlooked. A strong front page. You get the feeling the photographers are working to grab the reader's attention.

GENERAL COMMENT

This category ended up being difficult to judge, not because of the quality of the entries but because of the uniformity of the entries, using the same layout and design and often some of the same content. Editorial design was clean and crisp for all of papers. Advertising content and design was strong and obviously shared throughout the regions. The newspapers that came out on top had subtle nuances that made their copies a little different from all the rest. These were more local than others, concentrating on hyperlocal human-interest stories, matters of regional civic politics or education.

Judges

John Kendle

Managing Editor
Canstar Community News
Winnipeg, MB



Alistair Taylor

Editor
Campbell River Mirror,
Campbell River, BC



Jules Xavier

Editor
Shilo Stag
CFB Shilo, MB



GENERAL EXCELLENCE | CLASS 8

COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY

6 ENTRIES



1

DURHAM COLLEGE THE CHRONICLE

Congratulations and well done! This is a very professional paper with great photography and layout. Solid stories and editorial.



2

FANSHAWE COLLEGE INTERROBANG

Almost won first place. Great artwork throughout. Good folksy editorial. Good story mix. Sports photography could use some action shots. Photos could be larger.



3

ALGONQUIN COLLEGE ALGONQUIN TIMES

Good paper. Would have had a higher score if an editorial/oped page was included. Suggestion - solicit comments from students via Facebook or Twitter. Photography & college sports room for improvement.

HONOURABLE MENTION

HUMBER COLLEGE | ET CETERA – Solid paper. Consider an editorial page with commentary. Local advertising and community news could be included.

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO | IMPRINT – Good editorial page. More campus news and university sports would have significantly increased your score. Great job!

GENERAL COMMENT

I am extremely pleased to see that these future journalists are so talented! If they stay in the newspaper profession, these next generation professionals will enhance our community newspapers well into the future!

Judge

Mike Wollock
Publisher
Your Community Voice
Ottawa, ON



Mike Wollock has been involved with newspapers for more than 50 years. His papers have won numerous awards over four decades from OCNA, CCNA and QCNA. Taking over the family business of a small community newspaper in Montreal at the tender age of 24, within 10 years, he was able to grow the paper into Quebec's second largest English community newspaper, after the daily Gazette. Moving to Ottawa in 1988, he started 7 community newspapers on his kitchen table, before retiring in 2005. Mike came out of retirement in 2019 to start 3 community newspapers after the closure of the local papers. He strongly believes that a vibrant community newspaper enhances the communities that it serves, and that there will always be a place for the local paper.

Premier Awards



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

45 ENTRIES



1

MANOTICK MESSENGER

The power of Jeff Morris' narrative storytelling style made this musician profile jump to first place, with no other contenders. The feature illustrates the difference between writing and reporting. Morris gives depth to the story by the way he puts himself in the moment – and takes the reader with him. Insightful, well-paced and with touches of give-me-shivers drama. Well done!



2

LISTOWEL BANNER

Of all the entries about the impact of the pandemic on the lives of artists and artisans, Colin Burrowes' stands out. His feature in the Listowel Banner is well researched, bringing many voices into the conversation. He earns second place by letting artists tell readers why the shut-down has been so hard on them but also providing the glimpses of hope that everyone needs to survive this.



3

HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

Darren Lum's portrait of an artist finding meaning as she lives through the pandemic is a reminder of why we need artists in our lives. They have an ability to sift through all our shared emotions and provide us with a visual interpretation of what they mean. Lum makes us understand why this artist's work matters. Strong photos are also part of the storytelling, giving this entry from the Haliburton Echo the edge for third spot.

HONOURABLE MENTION

ORANGEVILLE BANNER – Kudos also to Chris Halliday's story about Schitt's Creek's Rosebud Motel in the Orangeville Banner. A fun read!

Judge

Martha Perkins

Retired journalist of
30 years
ON and BC



Martha Perkins is the former editor of several newspapers including the Haliburton Echo, Bowen Island Undercurrent and Vancouver Courier.

Sponsored by: *Listowel Banner*

BEST BUSINESS & FINANCE STORY

67 ENTRIES



FORT FRANCES TIMES

What I liked about this submission and what made it stand out from the rest is the attention to technical detail given by the reporter. It explained in layman terms how a mine functions and how it works to produce. I have no clue how mining ore works and after reading the story I feel I now have a pretty good understanding. I like how the story breaks down different viewpoints of what the issues are, how they are being resolved and the future of mining life. The photo only added to the story as a means of context. Sam Odrowski was bang on!



ORANGEVILLE BANNER

This story captures the human experience of owning and operating a business. The reader was able to capture the story within the story. The article tugged at my heartstrings for the risk and ultimate failure of the company. Alexandra Heck was able to capture a story and made me want to invest in the company to help Sheila get it up and running again. A great human interest story that truly captured my heart. Well done.



CAMBRIDGE TIMES

This story by Bill Doucet was an interesting take on PTSD and what can happen when people come together. It was a great human interest story and well written with a narrative that draws the reader in. Technically sound, it captured me as the reader. Well done!

GENERAL COMMENT

This is the first time I have been approached to judge a newspaper competition and I must say it was one I truly enjoyed. I've been in the industry for 21 years. Started on Compugraphic computers typesetting local news, learned how to use the wax machine, and cut and glue errors into the paper, learned how to shoot the negatives in the back room and here I am 21 years later an owner and publisher. When they say our industry is dying, I say that's a garbage statement. People will eventually realize the importance of newspapers as the bridge between trust and lies. We are the check and balance in a world where social media and government want to control the message. We are the last failsafe of democracy on many levels. I was extremely impressed with the caliber of writing in this competition. The technical work is there, but it's the attention to detail that surprised me. It is as if the writers understand the power they wield with the public. Well done everyone, I have no doubt our industry is in good hands when I see such quality work.

Judge

Lisa Sygutek

Publisher
Crowsnest Pass Herald,
Blairmore, AB



Lisa graduated from the University of Lethbridge with a Bachelor of Arts in English and then received a second degree with a Bachelor of Management in Human Resources. She started working at the family owned Pass Herald in 1999 and is now the owner/ publisher. She is a municipal councillor and an executive member of Alberta Weekly Newspaper Association. The Pass Herald is the second oldest business in the Crowsnest Pass and is celebrating its 91st year.

BEST EDITORIAL circ. 10,000+

15 ENTRIES



ELMIRA-WOOLWICH OBSERVER

This has got some great, thought provoking statements in it. It's rather a shame that it isn't an exciting topic like crime or scandal, rather than water bills and taxes, because I'm sure that some readers didn't read this. The thought of the real costs of scarcity and environmental damage is very interesting, and true. Well done. I chose this as the first place because it made me continue to think all afternoon about some of the points made, and that's EXACTLY what you want an editorial to do – make the reader think.



ANCASTER NEWS

Well developed. It's interesting how our realities are shifting, and what might have seemed preposterous a year ago is a fact of life now, and that the timeframe is really not so far fetched. Good questions to pose.



STONEY CREEK NEWS

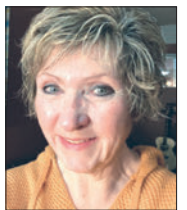
Good background information for those not in the know on the issue. This is a great issue. There are so many follow up articles that you have probably written to go along with this. This editorial was written quite conservatively – you could have hit much harder with your questions, and it would not have been amiss.

GENERAL COMMENT

A good editorial should make the reader think about the issue. They don't have to agree, but your job is to make them think. If you can sway them to your newspaper's view on the issue, then you've done a great job. So, you want your editorial to be thought provoking, and in order to do this, you need to have a strong point of view. Your article has to have relevance in your reader's life, otherwise it's just water off the proverbial duck's back. You want to stop them right in their tracks for a few moments, so your words need to have the strongest impact. You want your editorial to tweak the reader with some emotional response, and that's why community issues are always a great source for editorial content – you KNOW you can get a community response! Both the over and under circulation categories were tough categories to judge. There were probably a dozen editorials that were so close in their level of writing. Well done.

Judge

Sheena Read
Freelance Journalist
AB



Sheena Read has lived in southern Alberta for most of her career, writing about the issues of her communities and connecting with as many people as possible. She continues that work with contract communications and promotions.

BEST EDITORIAL circ. -9,999

25 ENTRIES



1

THE HALDIMAND PRESS

A very well developed article. There was good knowledge of subject matter, with excellent use of facts and data to corroborate the viewpoint.



2

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE LOCAL

Well developed. A good use of getting an emotional response from the reader. Good tie-in of an international incident that the world watched, to a national incident where probably not enough people watched.



3

VOICE OF PELHAM

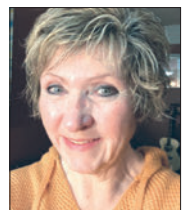
Very well written with good examples to develop your editorial. Good job. Nice flow to your writing.

GENERAL COMMENT

A good editorial should make the reader think about the issue. They don't have to agree, but your job is to make them think. If you can sway them to your newspaper's view on the issue, then you've done a great job. So, you want your editorial to be thought provoking, and in order to do this, you need to have a strong point of view. Your article has to have relevance in your reader's life, otherwise it's just water off the proverbial duck's back. You want to stop them right in their tracks for a few moments, so your words need to have the strongest impact. You want your editorial to tweak the reader with some emotional response, and that's why community issues are always a great source for editorial content – you KNOW you can get a community response! Both the over and under circulation categories were tough categories to judge. There were probably a dozen editorials that were so close in their level of writing. Well done.

Judge

Sheena Read
Freelance Journalist
AB



Sheena Read has lived in southern Alberta for most of her career, writing about the issues of her communities and connecting with as many people as possible. She continues that work with contract communications and promotions.

EDUCATION WRITING

60 ENTRIES



1

HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

Jenn Watt gives us an extremely well written, researched, and important story about violence and stress endured by teachers and educational assistants in schools.



2

MINDEN TIMES

Lots of effort went into this story by Sue Tiffin, about different families' approaches to returning to school (or not) in COVID times.



3

SARNIA JOURNAL

A well-researched investigative piece by Troy Shantz.

HONOURABLE MENTION

DUNDAS STAR NEWS – A solidly crafted and interesting story by Craig Campbell about educators adapting to online teaching.

GENERAL COMMENT

With stories on teachers' strikes, online learning forced by COVID-19, bullying in schools and many more subjects, the entries in this category were diverse and for the most part engaging to read and important to their respective communities.

Judge

Gail Sjuberg

Editor

Gulf Islands Driftwood
& Aqua-Gulf Islands
Living Magazine
Salt Spring Island, BC



Gail Sjuberg has been the editor of the award-winning Gulf Islands Driftwood newspaper in B.C. since 2003 and in the community newspaper business for more than 30 years. She is also the editor of the Driftwood's Aqua - Gulf Islands Living magazine and other company publications. She has been a judge for numerous community newspaper competitions over the years.

Sponsored by: Ontario Journalism Educators Association



HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

A well written feature that celebrates the passion of those behind this forest school project. Environment stories often reflect the passion of a person or people to get something done, and that is well showcased in reporter Sue Tiffin's article.



VOICE OF PELHAM

Well researched piece by Don Rickers that no doubt caught the attention of bird watchers but also offered others an opportunity to learn more about bird migration.



DEEP RIVER NORTH RENFREW TIMES

Time and effort are on display in Terry Myers' article about the development of major low-level waste disposal site. Both sides of the issue are given ample opportunity to be expressed.

GENERAL COMMENT

For the most part, this category offered a diversity of stories and issues from more than 60 entries. Some positive journalism work going on here but sometimes the best showcase for stories was from how they appeared in print as opposed to website presentation. Photography and layouts remain powerful components in helping illustrate a story and drawing the reader in. While community relevance was a judging aspect of stories, there were numerous entries that tended to quote 'experts' rather than residents in your communities. Stories always carry greater relevance when the issues you are covering can be translated to people in your communities and how they are affected or take an interest in a given topic. Without that element, particularly in a category like the environment, the commentary can be a little dry for readers to stay interested from beginning to end. The top three stories each had different elements and topics that were well written and reflected elements of passion for the people involved that help readers take an interest in the topic being covered.

Judge

Barry Gerding
Regional Desk Editor
Black Press
Okanagan Valley, BC



Barry Gerding has been a journalist in the community newspaper industry since 1981. He has worked as a reporter and editor of more than nine different publications in different communities across the province of British Columbia, having won numerous writing and newspaper excellence awards over the span of his career. Currently, Barry is the regional desk editor for Black Press Okanagan division, overseeing the pagination of 15 newspapers along with contributing stories on a weekly basis. He lives in Kelowna, married with two teenage children and far too many pets.

FEATURE WRITING circ. 10,000+

45 ENTRIES



1

MARKHAM ECONOMIST & SUN

An exceptional, superbly crafted story by Kim Zarzour about the positive power of Restorative Justice.



2

VAUGHAN CITIZEN

Writer Kim Zarzour shared the stories of distraught families who had lost loved ones in long-term care during the COVID-19 crisis, but not necessarily due to the virus. One hopes this story will contribute to a tide of change in such facilities.



3

OSHAWA THIS WEEK

Jeff Mitchell gave us a strong piece that effectively combines a description of past horrific events and current day reflections by family members of a murdered toddler.

GENERAL COMMENT

The range of subjects covered, and the overall quality of the writing was so impressive in this category. If Kim Zarzour's two standout stories were removed from the mix, any number of entries could have made the top three.

Judge

Gail Sjuberg

Editor

Gulf Islands Driftwood

& Aqua-Gulf Islands

Living Magazine

Salt Spring Island, BC



Gail Sjuberg has been the editor of the award-winning Gulf Islands Driftwood newspaper in B.C. since 2003 and in the community newspaper business for more than 30 years. She is also the editor of the Driftwood's Aqua - Gulf Islands Living magazine and other company publications. She has been a judge for numerous community newspaper competitions over the years.

Sponsored by: O'Donnell, Robertson & Partners

FEATURE WRITING circ. -9,999

31 ENTRIES



1

MANOTICK MESSENGER

This may sound odd. It may sound heartless. But if ever there was the “best” writer to get life threatening cancer, it is Jeff Morris. Thankfully, judging from the tone of his feature about the malignant tennis ball-sized tumour that ate a hole through his skull, I think Morris would be the first one to forgive me for saying so. Morris has always been an effective and gifted storyteller. He’s a craftsman who works hard to capture and sustain a reader’s interest. His ability to intelligently poke fun at life’s foibles has won him numerous OCNA accolades. And while there is humour in this feature, it’s used as a bridge to help people understand a very serious and complex subject. Morris doesn’t just share his ordeal; he uses his experience to uplift others and educate them about cancer. He’s both forthrightly honest and cheerfully upbeat. Thank you, Jeff.



2

THE INDEPENDENT SERVING PETROLIA AND CENTRAL LAMBTON

Initially there was a tie for second place. Heather Wright’s craftsmanship – that awareness of what it takes to tell a compelling story – gave her story that extra nudge. Amongst several stories about the coronavirus and its devastating impact, she uses a PSW’s experience to take us inside a long term care home during the pandemic. She then augments why we should care with interviews and statistics that explore tough issues.



3

NIAGARA THIS WEEK, NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE ADVANCE

Jordan Snobelen got full marks for initiative. He accompanies two volunteers who deliver supplies and hope to the migrant workers who are keeping us all fed. By outlining their stories, Snobelen makes those workers’ sacrifices real and, in doing so, turns the workers into real people we should all feel compassion for.

Judge

Martha Perkins

Retired journalist of
30 years
ON and BC



Martha Perkins is the former editor of several newspapers including the Haliburton Echo, Bowen Island Undercurrent and Vancouver Courier.

Sponsored by: O’Donnell, Robertson & Partners

HEALTH & WELLNESS

56 ENTRIES



ARNPRIOR CHRONICLE-GUIDE

This piece showed the excellent writing skills, research techniques and balance of Derek Dunn. The lede was interesting and pulled me in immediately. I kept reading because it held my interest. Job well done. This piece appealed to the community as a whole. Everyone in the community is potentially impacted by this technology.



HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

This piece also showed excellent writing skills, research techniques and balance, with a great lede. I was pulled in immediately. I felt empathy for the subject and was appalled at his circumstances. While this was an excellent piece by Jenn Watt, the community as a whole isn't impacted as broadly as the first place winner.



OAKVILLE BEAVER

Well researched piece by Kathy Yanchus. Interesting and well written. The community appeal is narrower in this piece thus my justification for placing it third.

GENERAL COMMENT

Ultimately, someone had to be first, second and third. The quality of writing was exceptional in most cases. Having more than one first place and whittling it down was the hardest. To those who submitted, don't be discouraged with your score. It's one person's opinion. Keep submitting. Keep writing awesome pieces. Keep putting yourself out there. Good job everyone.

Judge

Kimberley Kielley

Assistant Editor
Shilo Stag,
CFB Shilo, MB



Kimberley Kielley is the assistant editor of the Shilo Stag at CFB Shilo, Manitoba. She brings over 20 years in the field as a journalist and author. Originally from North Bay, Ontario, Kimberley has worked from coast-to-coast, and Europe. She has written for every media source in Newfoundland and Labrador and also published three books: A Boat called Hipjoint; Angels and Miracles True Stories and Idolized. She has two grown children and a goofy black Labrador Retriever and lives in Brandon, Manitoba. This is her first time judging for the OCNA.

HERITAGE

56 ENTRIES



1

HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

This story stood out because it combined not only a worthy history project but a lasting friendship between seniors and volunteers. Often, history is about saving buildings. While they are good stories, the direct human element in this story makes a history project truly come alive. This was one of a few stories which really tugged at my heart. Yes, saving buildings is a noble and very important gesture, but the formation of new friendships is heart-warming. Good writing by Jenn Watt certainly helped this story. The only criticism is that the story was on page 13. It merits page 1! But I did not punish the paper because of that decision. Congratulations!



2

KEMPTVILLE, NORTH GRENVILLE TIMES

It is difficult to take a photo or photos in this category that truly have impact. This was the single entry that had impact. It showed perfectly what the story was all about. An in-depth explanation in the well-researched story by David Shanahan made it a second place winner. The story was right where it should be! On the front page! People in the photo would have been nice and the headline was horribly small, but everything else about this story was superb. The shortcomings were easy to overlook.



3

ETOBICOKE GUARDIAN

This story is a perfect example of a writer taking on a cause and informing the public of an injustice. Little Jamaica and the lack of heritage-designated properties in Toronto is hard to reason. The story is supported with stats and comments from the community. The story is so well written it is hard to figure out why this has occurred. Terrific graphic stats and a good lead photo make it an award-winner. Well done to Megan DeLaire! Good luck to Little Jamaica!

GENERAL COMMENT

If you want to learn about the history of a town or city, read the community newspaper. In these entries you learn so much about just that. Newspapers strive to record the history and they succeed. In these 56 entries, the top 30 scored between 29 and 25 points. Needless to say, the quality of entries was exceptional. Five different judges may have chosen five different winners. To be a winner, the writer or paper had to do something which caught my attention. The top three did just that. Overall, writing was very strong. I can't be too critical of photos because how do you take a photo of an old building and make it exciting? I would like to stress that features do deserve front page attention. Only a truly exceptional effort can overcome a poor placing, which is exactly what the Haliburton County Echo did. Overall, an exceptional effort by well over half the entries. History is worth preserving and reporting on and you all did that. Thank you!

Judge

Chris Clegg
Editor
South Peace News
High Prairie, AB



Chris Clegg has held the position of editor at the High Prairie South Peace News since December 1988. South Peace News has won over 90 AWNA and CCNA awards since his arrival in virtually every judging category. Clegg has also served on the High Prairie and District Museum and Historical Society for about 10 years and has a keen interest in history.

Sponsored by: Fort Frances Times

BEST NEWS STORY circ. 10,000+

45 ENTRIES



1

CHATHAM VOICE

Communication by local officials in Chatham-Kent about the flooding of homes along the Lake Erie shoreline was poor, but very detailed digging by reporter Jenna Cocullo made the whole situation much clearer to both affected residents and the Chatham-Kent community at large. Offers of assistance from local residents made a very bad situation somewhat more tolerable. This is an excellent example of how a community newspaper can really make a difference.



2

CORNWALL SEAWAY NEWS

As COVID-19 became “the” story of 2020, Cornwall was one of the first communities in Canada affected on February 15, as it was chosen as a quarantine centre for passengers from a cruise ship. The community was not kept well informed as federal government decisions were made. This story by reporter Nick Seebruch explains the whole situation in detail. Excellent reporting in circumstances that were challenging to say the least.



3

PORT PERRY STAR

Great reporting by Chris Hall told the story of not only the tragic death of Todd Burgess while doing his job as a tow truck operator, but the impact he had on his community during his lifetime.

HONOURABLE MENTION

CAMBRIDGE TIMES – Pedophiles are reviled. This story by Bill Doucet examined in detail how a “pedophile hunter” operates and what police have to say about citizens taking such steps.

WATERLOO CHRONICLE – The willingness of two women to report and provide evidence of a man parking his car outside their home and masturbating – and the lack of consequences he faced – are fully explored in this disturbing story. Solid reporting by Bill Jackson.

GENERAL COMMENT

The scores given to most of the 45 entries in this category are quite close. This reflects the fact that almost all entries contain good solid journalism. Picking the winners was difficult, but ultimately came down to the value provided to the audience in the information they offered. Stories focused on difficult issues but were told with compassion and balance.

Judge

Frank Bucholtz

Columnist
Black Press Media and
Retired Editor
Langley Times, BC



Frank Bucholtz is a retired community newspaper editor, and a freelance writer and blogger with more than 40 years of media experience. He worked for community newspapers in Surrey, Langley, White Rock and other parts of the B.C. Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley. He served as editor for both the Langley Times and the Surrey Leader. He has judged various categories in the OCNA awards over the past eight years. He also serves as a judge with the Jack Webster Foundation, which presents annual awards to B.C. journalists in all media. He is a past winner in both the CCNA and BCYCN journalisms awards.

Sponsored by: Hydro One

BEST NEWS STORY circ. -9,999

24 ENTRIES



1

AYLMER EXPRESS

A solid story from Veronica Reiner on a major event, with multiple sources and strong photography.



2

BRADFORD WEST GWILLIMBURY TOPIC

A potent and important piece, albeit single sourced as the accused could not comment. Lisa Queen gaining the trust of the victim was key, as was a measured account of her experience.



3

MINDEN TIMES

A strong breaking news piece by reporter Chad Ingram, which includes a statement from a key witness. Time may have been a factor, but this piece would have scored much higher if some work had been put into determining who lived at the residence where the shooting took place, and details on that individual.

GENERAL COMMENT

This category featured a wide variety of entries, from breaking news to more feature-style stories. Many of the 'investigative' efforts would have benefited greatly from more research and context to give the local story scale and relevance. A heavy and excessive reliance on quotes was also prevalent in the majority of these pieces, at the expense of good journalistic legwork in terms of setting background and providing extra supporting detail. The three winners all took on important news events or issues and told the tales in easily consumable fashion.

Sponsored by: Hydro One

Judge

Andrew Holota
Editorial Director
Black Press Media
BC



Andrew Holota is the editorial director of Black Press Media, the largest independently owned newspaper company in Canada, with more than 150 titles in print and online in British Columbia, Alberta, the Yukon, Washington, Hawaii, and Alaska. In his role, Andrew oversees editorial strategies and standards, including print and digital, coordinates hiring, training and mentoring programs for multimedia journalists, and provides first-line legal advice to the chain's publications. Andrew's journalism career began more than 40 years ago as a photographer. He moved into reporting and was an editor since at various B.C. community newspapers. Throughout his career, he has won numerous provincial, national, and continental awards.

BEST RURAL STORY circ. 10,000+

30 ENTRIES



NORTHUMBERLAND NEWS

This piece written by Sarah Hyatt was well researched, balanced and showed excellent writing skills. The photography was relevant to the story and contained good composition. It has broad appeal to the community thus my decision to award it first place in this category.



WATERDOWN FLAMBOROUGH REVIEW

A well researched, balanced piece showcasing the excellent writing skills of Mac Christie. Its appeal is a little less broad than first place but very relevant.



CORNWALL SEAWAY NEWS

Nick Seebruch gave us a great story with good research. Well balanced. Good effort.

GENERAL COMMENT

There was some exceptional researching in these entries. Choosing first, second and third was hard. There were some tough decisions. In most cases, the photography was relevant, but in some cases, not so much. Overall a great job everyone.

Judge

Kimberley Kielley

Assistant Editor
Shilo Stag
CFB Shilo, MB



Kimberley Kielley is the assistant editor of the Shilo Stag at CFB Shilo, Manitoba. She brings over 20 years in the field as a journalist and author. Originally from North Bay, Ontario, Kimberley has worked from coast-to-coast, and Europe. She has written for every media source in Newfoundland and Labrador and also published three books: A Boat called Hipjoint; Angels and Miracles True Stories and Idolized. She has two grown children and a goofy black Labrador Retriever and lives in Brandon, Manitoba. This is her first time judging for the OCNA.

Sponsored by: Ontario Federation of Agriculture

BEST RURAL STORY circ. -9,999

29 ENTRIES



1

BARRY'S BAY, THE VALLEY GAZETTE

Reading this story by Mark Jones was peaceful. The respect for nature is brought out in a touching story about a person who found their passion in quality handmade products and has made a beautiful life despite obstacles and the touching ending of the full circle life cycle of a canoe. It was a pleasure to read.



2

FORT FRANCES TIMES

While some sectors of the economy have slowed, farming remains constant. The report from Ken Kellar shares the importance of cattle sales and purchasing local beef, as well as how they are adapting to early COVID-19 requirements. Photo of the seating helps make clear the physical distancing and reduction of seating capacity at the auction.



3

NIAGARA THIS WEEK, THE LEADER

Chicken debates are hot topics in rural communities. With a renewed interest in backyard gardening and food security many rural communities are faced with the question of if this is acceptable, and in this case a family being unjustly targeted by a complaint driven bylaw system that doesn't apply to others. Would like to see the resolution. Well done James Culic!

HONOURABLE MENTION

WALKERTON HERALD TIMES – Stories like this need to be told. This information is important and well done to Pauline Kerr for the story and the Walkerton Herald-Times for running it. The only thing holding this back was not including an image that was more thought provoking.

GENERAL COMMENT

Rural stories give value to often overlooked but equally important underpinnings of rural communities. The importance of water diversion, the introduction of a doctor, the value of thoughtful and technologically advanced agriculture all matters. Rural journalism, reporting rural stories, brings community identity together.

Judge

Sarah Holmes

Publisher
Gabriola Sounder
Gabriola Island, BC



Sarah Holmes is a 4th generation newspaper publisher. She, alongside her husband, run the Gabriola Sounder, a weekly community newspaper in BC. She is a director on the BCYCNA and CNMA news media boards, as well as chair of the elementary school Parents Advisory Council. Sarah regularly puts cameras in the hands of the potential 5th generation publishers. She provides photo credit and peanuts as payment for services rendered.

Sponsored by: Ontario Federation of Agriculture

BEST FEATURE/NEWS SERIES circ. 10,000+

31 ENTRIES



1

OSHAWA THIS WEEK

This series by Reka Szekeley was well done with fantastic original character driven stories and writing that came at a crucial time for the community you reflect. Each piece was easy to follow and everything from the photos to the follow up stories was beautifully done. Excellent entry.



2

SARNIA JOURNAL

These two stories pull all the heartstrings. They shined a light on a ridiculous situation. The stories were well written and illustrated the human cost of bureaucracy at the worst possible time. The reporting led to immediate change, which Cathy Dobson should be very proud of. This kind of reporting is exactly what a community newspaper is for.



3

INNISFIL JOURNAL

Fantastic writing and work on these pieces by Janis Ramsay and Rick Vanderlinde. I was hooked from start to finish on each one and impressed at the quality of story here. It is not often you see stories like this in a community newspaper.

HONOURABLE MENTION

AJAX PICKERING NEWS ADVERTISER – This series had compelling original reporting and nice ledes with well researched facts. The stories offered a rare insight into the world of gangs and were important for parents to read. I learned a lot from this series by Jennifer O'Meara.

GENERAL COMMENT

I was impressed with the high quality of the top four stories. The competition for the top spot was tight due to the impressive storytelling and writing among the best pieces. The journalists who left the office and went out into the community to gather original stories really shined here. Kudos!

Judge

Austin Grabish
Reporter
CBC News
Winnipeg, MB



Austin Grabish is a reporter at CBC News based in Winnipeg. In the last year, his investigative reporting has been credited with creating change at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. He's covered crime, politics, and the plight of asylum seekers since joining the CBC in 2016. He is a former community newspaper reporter and did work for several newspapers across Canada before joining the public broadcaster, where he now reports daily, local, and national stories on TV, radio, and web.

Sponsored by: *Hydro One*

BEST FEATURE/NEWS SERIES circ. -9,999

16 ENTRIES



1

VOICE OF PELHAM

Anyone who lives in a small town knows how turbulent relationships can be, especially in politics. Staff at the Pelham Voice, including Dave Burket, John Chick and Samuel Piccolo, wades into a hornet's nest and emerges un-stung because of fair, thorough reporting. They exhaustively lay out council's bizarre infighting and let readers make up their own minds. Of course, there are times when you wish the reporter(s) would come out and say, "This is crazy but true." Instead, they let others do it for them in follow up coverage. All that's missing is a staff written editorial.



2

BARRHAVEN INDEPENDENT

When it came to determining second and third place, I decided to base it on strength of writing. Jeff Morris nudged his way to second place because his features were framed as a series: 30 profiles to celebrate the paper's 30th anniversary. He has a way of digging beneath the surface of people's lives and revealing the gems. By giving meaning to the lives of the people he's profiling, he gives meaning to the lives of us all.



3

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE LOCAL

Penny Coles imbues her stories about the life of a dying man with beauty and dignity. She respects and honours the task she's been given. She doesn't shy away from sadness and regret but reveals how, when nurtured, they can be transformed into something deeply meaningful.

GENERAL COMMENT

A series provides writers a chance to take a deep dive into an issue facing society. Yes, some of this year's entries broached serious subjects but they tended to start out with an issue and then simply follow up on the outcome. Some were simply news stories on a single subject. Even among the top contenders, the word "series" was broadly thematic.

Judge

Martha Perkins

Retired journalist
of 30 years
ON and BC



Martha Perkins is the former editor of several newspapers including the Haliburton Echo, Bowen Island Undercurrent and Vancouver Courier.

Sponsored by: Hydro One

BEST INVESTIGATIVE NEWS STORY

32 ENTRIES



1

THE INDEPENDENT SERVING PETROLIA AND CENTRAL LAMBTON

Heather Wright gave us a strong investigative story with many spokes and thrusts to the tale, and long reaching impact in the community and with the leaders in it.



2

HALIBURTON, THE HIGHLANDER

Strong open – huge story. Straight forward and simple writing by Lisa Gervais going a long way. Sometimes the work put into a story is directly related to what is on the page. Congrats.



3

BRACEBRIDGE EXAMINER

Great effort from Doug Crosse. A strong, simple news package.

GENERAL COMMENT

Investigative journalism is just that – it is more than the who what when where and why. However, it isn't always dark underground parking garage meetings – sometimes it is straightforward questions on simple agenda points or matters. This year's submissions ran the cross section of all of these – making it for a very tough judging year. However - almost all the submissions were strong.

Judge

Rob Brown

Managing Editor
Dawson Creek Mirror
Dawson Creek, BC



Rob Brown is an award-winning journalist, and photographer, and the managing editor of the Dawson Creek Mirror. He has been writing for newspapers, stage, and screen, each and every day since 1998. He is British Columbia's only 2019 News Media Canada Quill recipient for 20 plus years in journalism. In 2020, he and his daughter Blake appeared in the Huey Lewis and the News video 'I am There for You', saluting front line and essential workers during the pandemic.

SPORTS & RECREATION STORY

44 ENTRIES



1

WINGHAM ADVANCE TIMES

Great quote "the rocks talk to you." A good read and colour for a sports story that's not about the curler on the ice, but the ice itself, and the man massaging it so curlers can play. Congratulations to Dan McNee.



2

EGANVILLE LEADER

A great read by Danny Gallagher, going back in time with the southpaw pitcher who is battling Alzheimer's. Lots of reflections and colour in this sports feature. Well written and researched and I bet well received by Leader readers.



3

SARNIA JOURNAL

Brought tears to my eyes reading this story by Tara Jeffrey. Impactful look at how someone slowed by pandemic still made her bucket list check off with help... she ran her half marathon.

GENERAL COMMENT

It was easy to differentiate strong sports/rec stories from those which scored out of the top three. Tell a story. There were a number of COVID-19 pandemic-related submissions, but these were more business/news related, compared to those telling the story about a sport or rec activity or an athlete or coach. Let's get back to telling stories when it comes to covering our sports and recreation in communities across Ontario. A team talking about moving a franchise makes for a great sports business story, but sport/rec stories should be about the athletes and recreation enthusiasts. They are the ones looking for stories in the sports/rec pages of your community newspaper.

Judge

Jules Xavier
Editor
Shilo Stag
CFB Shilo, MB



It has been 37 years since editor Lorne Drury (now retired) offered him his first reporter job at the Brampton Guardian, and he is still going like the Energizer Bunny. A '59 baby, Xavier is still having fun at 62, so there's no thought of retirement just yet. Perhaps after the Stag celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2023. Currently in Manitoba looking after the award-winning army newspaper Shilo Stag, which published its first edition in July 1947, he's kept busy in a two-person newsroom which focuses on army life, including infantry 2PPCLI and artillery 1RCHA soldiers. Xavier has been with the Stag for nine years, relocating from Vancouver Island following newspaper and radio jobs in Ontario, B.C., and Alberta. Being embedded among soldiers who are honing their fighting skills for deployment to Ukraine or Latvia is a lot more fun than covering school board or city council meetings.

BEST COVID-19 COVERAGE

74 ENTRIES



1

SCARBOROUGH MIRROR

Excellent and detailed analysis of the horrific situation in some care homes, complemented by a compelling look at two of the people affected. Telling the stories of those impacted by COVID-19 and putting faces to statistics is vital work; the Mike Adler's analysis of why this was happening added a layer of depth that set this entry apart.



2

VOICE OF PELHAM

Thorough and well packaged reporting by Dave Burket and John Swart on several different aspects of this pandemic. The feature on the MS Zaandam was particularly well done, but each of the articles in this submission stand on their own as compelling journalism.



3

VAUGHAN CITIZEN

This is as in depth as analysis gets. Solid effort by Dina Al-Shibeeb and Kim Zarzour to look at all aspects of this important subject using a vast array of sources and perspectives.

HONOURABLE MENTION

CALEDON ENTERPRISE – This reporting by Karen Martin-Robbins takes us into the heart of Ontario's health system and couples personal stories of COVID-19 survivors with the stories of health care workers. An important subject explored very well.

GENERAL COMMENT

The range of stories submitted for this category show just how overwhelming COVID-19 was. With so many stories that needed to be told quickly, these submissions show how committed reporters were to serve their communities. Although a few entries stood out above the rest, the reporters behind each of these submissions should feel enormously proud of the work they have done.

Judge

April Hudson

Editor
St. Albert Gazette
St. Albert, AB



April Hudson has been a journalist for a decade and is the editor of the St. Albert Gazette, an award-winning community paper that routinely ranks among the best in Canada.

DIVERSITY COVERAGE

61 ENTRIES



1

ETOBICOKE GUARDIAN

Talk about going beyond the headlines! Great effort. Interesting, relevant, and gives voice to so many who aren't always in the news. One of the big issues with modern newspapers is reaching young people and different voices, this does that in spades. Well done Aaron D'Andrea and Joanna Lavoie.



2

MISSISSAUGA NEWS

Can't think of a more important topic at the time or a better way to have written it. Well done Sabrina Gamrot.



3

PARRY SOUND NORTH STAR

This is diversity reporting. Going beyond marches to the people and the issues and the voices. Well done Stephannie Johnson and Strength of Two Buffalo.

HONOURABLE MENTION

THE HALDIMAND PRESS – An important story really well told with research and context. Well done Kaitlyn Clark.

GENERAL COMMENT

It was inspiring to see the range of submissions in the category. As media, we have a long way to go in representing all of our readers in our newsrooms and on the page, but these submissions show we are well on our way. Some of the thought and research that went into these projects shows that reporters and editors know that it matters and are dedicating valuable time to these stories. Kudos to all who submitted quality work to this category. Well done.

Judge

Jennifer Thuncher

Editor
The Squamish Chief
Squamish, BC



Jennifer Thuncher is the editor and a roving reporter at The Squamish Chief. She can be found chasing down the paper's other journalists, local politicians, or wildlife, depending on the day. She is a Simon Fraser University and Langara journalism grad. She had careers as an English instructor, administrative assistant, and ice-cream scooper in her life before journalism.

BEST HEADLINE WRITING

26 ENTRIES



1

CHATHAM VOICE

Jenna Cocullo is willing to think outside the box with headlines. A lot of headline writers have tried and failed when making up a word, using an acronym or using wordplay with a name, but each of these makes me want to read more.



2

LISTOWEL BANNER

Good, solid headlines, with a variety of styles. The range of writing shows a strong commitment to the craft of writing headlines.



3

HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

Great use of wordplay in Jenn Watt's headlines. However, the aphasia headline didn't tell me much until after I read the story. Then it made sense to me.

HONOURABLE MENTION

PERTH COURIER – While these headlines could have been shortened, they are all enjoyable and draw the reader into the story. Well done Desmond Devoy.

GENERAL COMMENT

There were some strong headline submissions in this year's entries. The best of the bunch from writers who were willing to take risks and try something unusual, think outside the box. A few additional notes: A little alliteration goes a long way, but it's easy to take it too far. Not all headlines need to have a partial quote. If it isn't a zinger, leave the quote out of the headline. Many of the headlines submitted were too long. Shorter is better. Overall, some great headlines this year!

Judge

John Arendt

Editor
Summerland Review
Summerland, BC



John Arendt is the editor of the Summerland Review in British Columbia. He has been working as a journalist for more than 30 years.

HUMOUR COLUMNIST OF THE YEAR

10 ENTRIES



1



NIAGARA THIS WEEK, THE LEADER JAMES CULIC

James Culic succeeds due to a deft use of language and the ability to walk and chew gum at the same time. Erm...he can be funny while making a point and delivering facts.



2



ELMIRA-WOOLWICH OBSERVER STEVE GALEA

Steve Galea finds humour in some pretty out of the way places and has a pleasing conversational style.



3



MANOTICK MESSENGER JEFF MORRIS

Jeffrey Morris has a fine grasp of narrative and a little bit of shock value.

HONOURABLE MENTION

FERGUS WELLINGTON ADVERTISER | KELLY WATERHOUSE – Nice variety of relatable topics and a friendly voice. Kelly Waterhouse seems like a person the reader could have over for coffee.

GENERAL COMMENT

It's easy to imagine the top placers in this category have significant followings in their markets. Dedicating time and space to this kind of writing is perhaps more important than ever, and all the entrants should be commended.

Judge



Andrea DeMeer
Publisher/Editor,
Similkameen Spotlight,
Princeton, BC

Andrea DeMeer is the publisher and editor of The Similkameen Spotlight newspaper in Princeton, B.C. She is a former Sun Media executive, and over the last 20 years has been recipient of numerous awards and honours for opinion, column, and humour writing.

COLUMNIST OF THE YEAR

21 ENTRIES



1



MINDEN TIMES JIM POLING SR.

Excellent selection of columns that make a reader think deeply. Well written, with elegant prose. A pleasure to read.



2



THE INDEPENDENT SERVING PETROLIA AND CENTRAL LAMPTON HEATHER WRIGHT

The columns are well written, and the subject matters should resonate with readers as they are subjects with which many can identify. It's like sitting next to friend at the pub and having a conversation.



3



EGANVILLE LEADER JOHANNA ZOMERS

Well written and informative. The columns have a natural, confident pace, with the underlying reminder of the simpler things in life.

GENERAL COMMENT

I like the fact there was a great diversity of subject matter in the columns submitted. The columns that always resonate more with me are the ones in which the writer is focused on an issue as local as possible – with, of course, creativity, wit, passion, and flair. That is not to say columns touching on broader issues cannot also be well done at a local level. Many columns connected with the reader by making it easy to understand their viewpoint or plight. Overall, I'd say the column submissions were strong and it was very difficult to choose the top three placements. Columns and the opinion/letters pages in general are the glue that keeps community papers together. We should be looking at ways to expand those pages as they, more than any other section of the paper/website, truly reflect a community.

Judge

Chris Foulds

Editor
Kamloops This Week
Kamloops, BC



Christopher Foulds is editor of Kamloops This Week, a twice-weekly newspaper published in Kamloops, B.C., a city of 95,000 in the province's Interior. Foulds has been editor for 15 years and spent 13 years before that as assistant editor and reporter at the Abbotsford News.

REPORTER OF THE YEAR – STEPHEN SHAW AWARD

15 ENTRIES



1

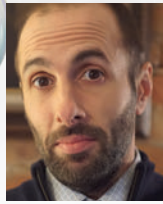


MARKHAM ECONOMIST & SUN | KIM ZARZOUR

Kim Zarzour's work is impressive. All three of the stories submitted required a huge amount of research and relationship building. The subjects of two of the entries were very important aspects of what seems like the never ending subject of COVID-19. The one featuring families of residents of Woodbridge Vista long-term care home was both detailed and heartbreaking. The third story in the package really stood out and, in my experience, is unique. It is the story of a sexual assault victim pushing for restorative justice, against the advice and ingrained approach of the criminal court system. That story was powerful and hopeful. It offered a light in the midst of a very dark subject, and in the midst of a very challenging year for all of us.



2



VAUGHAN CITIZEN | JEREMY GRIMALDI

The three entries which formed Jeremy Grimaldi's submission were all very important hard news stories. The entry dealing with workplace violence at Southlake Regional Health Centre had to be a very difficult one to pin down, given the fears of employees for their jobs. The tow truck turf wars entry revealed a very seamy side to an industry most of us take for granted, and the story of Aaron Bank-Sedore's suicide and its effect on his family was very powerful.



3



RICHMOND HILL/THORNHILL LIBERAL | SHEILA WANG

The work of Sheila Wang in detailing the effects of COVID-19 in the York Region, including the many graphs she created, is truly impressive. Residents of this hard hit region have excellent local information as a result of her research, and this goes to the heart of what community journalism is all about. Her extensive research on the bankruptcy of a Richmond Hill councillor is also an impressive piece of work.

HONOURABLE MENTION

CALEDON ENTERPRISE | KAREN MARTIN-ROBBINS – Karen Martin-Robbins is obviously a very versatile reporter. Her research on these stories, and the amount of emotion shown about the victim of human trafficking and the teen fighting brain cancer must have drawn in thousands of readers. The third story on a longstanding environmental issue was well explained and very balanced.

OSHAWA THIS WEEK | TIM KELLY – Tim Kelly's work stood out. There were many stories relating to the horrific murder-suicide in Oshawa that left five people dead, but his story about the events on the ball field the night before was exceptional. The detailed and painstaking look at Taunton Road and its future was put together very well and would be of interest to almost all readers.

WASAGA/STAYNER SUN | IAN ADAMS – Ian Adams' three stories showed his versatility and research abilities. He also captured a lot of human emotion in two stories related to near deaths. Well done.

GENERAL COMMENT

Wow. We may be a year or more into COVID-19 and several years into very challenging times for the community newspaper industry, but superb journalism remains intact. All 12 of the entrants in this category submitted very solid work. These ranged over a huge variety of subjects - showing that despite the financial challenges in the industry - people in newsrooms are focused on doing their best for their communities. The top six all could have finished first. It was a very tough decision. However, it had to be made. All the winners showed by their work that they are solid and intrepid reporters, performing a community service to thousands of readers.

Sponsored by: Ontario Power Generation

Judge

Frank Bucholtz

Columnist
Black Press Media and
Retired Editor
Langley Times, BC



Frank Bucholtz is a retired community newspaper editor, and a freelance writer and blogger with more than 40 years of media experience. He worked for community newspapers in Surrey, Langley, White Rock and other parts of the B.C. Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley. He served as editor for both the Langley Times and the Surrey Leader. He has judged various categories in the OCNA awards over the past eight years. He also serves as a judge with the Jack Webster Foundation, which presents annual awards to B.C. journalists in all media. He is a past winner in both the CCNA and BCYNA journalism awards.

BEST FEATURE PHOTO circ. 10,000+

17 ENTRIES



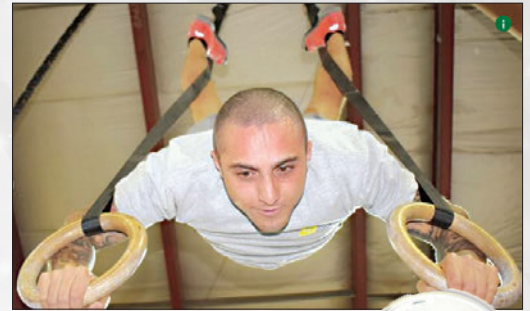
OAKVILLE BEAVER

Superb quality in this photo and Graham Paine's idea of capturing the paddlers from above to catch all the sunlight reflecting off the water was well thought out. Congratulations!



BARRIE ADVANCE

Wow, who would have thought! Chris Simon put his mind to how can I shoot a "spectacular" photo and did it! Congratulations.



ORILLIA TODAY

Frank Matys did a great job taking a photo that would capture anyone's attention on a fundraiser that could have been a relatively boring assignment. Newspaper photographers are to take the reader to a place they wouldn't normally go, and this entry did that. Congratulations.

GENERAL COMMENT

I found a lot of entries did not reach the threshold of what we judges are looking for – spectacular "impact and originality", not just quality. The top two choices were easy. They had all the necessary components for a "spectacular" feature photo. First place got extra points for quality of reproduction while second place got extra points for imagination! Choosing third place was harder but this entry took readers to a view that is not normally a visual a reader would see. Congratulations to all the winners.

Judge

Joyce Webster

Publisher/Owner
East Central Alberta Review
Coronation, AB



Joyce Webster is the 40-year publisher/owner of the East Central Alberta community newspaper in Alberta and throughout those 40 years has attended many photography sessions at newspaper symposiums.

BEST FEATURE PHOTO circ. -9,999

17 ENTRIES



1



2



3

HALIBURTON, THE HIGHLANDER

Lisa Gervais used a tremendous amount of imagination to figure out how to shoot this photo and make it spectacular. Everything about the photo from human interest, originality, and quality of reproduction made it #1.

THE HERALD SERVING THAMESVILLE, DRESDEN AND BOTHWELL

This is what I see as the photographer, Heather Wright, thinking outside the box to turn an ordinary photo shoot into an eye catching photo. Congratulations.

DEEP RIVER NORTH RENFREW TIMES

Very good photo. Vance Gutzman put thought into capturing this gentleman working on a bike wheel front and center and yet still had the bikes used for parts in the background. Excellent.

GENERAL COMMENT

Most entries, although great photos, were just ordinary photo shoots with little imagination used. Three photos were beautifully captured, thought out scenic photos that scored high for quality. The top three winners scored higher because they were all great photos that you could tell by just looking at them that the photographer spent time imagining how they could make this photo different than the ordinary and they all did super work. Again, I must say – the description in the entry form should not be used to explain the photo. If you need to do that, then the photo doesn't tell the story. The description should be used to tell the judges how the photographer came up with the idea for the 'spectacular' photo. The top three winners found ways to make their photos spectacular. Congratulations to all!

Judge



Joyce Webster

Publisher/Owner
East Central Alberta Review
Coronation, AB

Joyce Webster is the 40-year publisher/owner of the East Central Alberta community newspaper in Alberta and throughout those 40 years has attended many photography sessions at newspaper symposiums.

BEST PHOTO LAYOUT

31 ENTRIES



1

CORNWALL SEAWAY NEWS

The cut-out image immediately draws one into the layout and immediately tells the story in a powerful way with backup from the shots around it. Use of a drop shadow would have made the focal point stand out even more. Great job by Nick Seebruch, Colleen Parette and Kim Poirier-Froats.



2

THE HALDIMAND PRESS

Having professional photos to work with never hurts! The challenge is putting things together in a manner that looks good as a whole yet allows each image to shine on its own. This is a bold and beautiful page put together by Jillian Zynomirski and Charlene Papasodaro.



3

FORT FRANCES TIMES

Oh, so pink! The variety of shapes and cutouts make this bold layout a standout. Good participation from all age groups makes this appealing for the community.

HONOURABLE MENTION

MILTON CANADIAN CHAMPION – Gorgeous photo of the hot iron on the anvil! Love the close-up! Congratulations Graham Paine.

GENERAL COMMENT

Overall, there were many solid entries in this class. In judging, I was looking for something out of the ordinary that immediately captured my attention by way of unique content and presentation.

Judge

Shannon Robison

Publisher
Shootin' the Breeze
Pincher Creek, AB



Shannon Robison is owner and publisher of Shootin' the Breeze, a weekly community newspaper in southwestern Alberta. She is passionate about the power of words and about her community and its people. Shannon believes community papers will continue to have value for many years to come.

BEST SPORTS PHOTO

18 ENTRIES



1

HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

Darren Lum's basketball action capture in the paint finished first. Player facial expression and good peak action won it for him. Tight capture too, filling the frame.



2

OTTAWA COMMUNITY VOICE, WEST CARLETON

Runner-up went to a rodeo scene taken by Erin McCracken. Having shot a lot of rodeo in Alberta, this is a sport that always provides shooters with great action. However, needed to run this photo vertically, to make it snap. Crop out the right side cowboy in DOF, and give the horse his feet, to show the viewer the cowboy coming off and the ground below. Focus is looked after in this capture, with DOF.



3

VOICE OF PELHAM

Another good action capture. Facial expression, the Michael Jordan tongue, added to the image on the drive to the basket and helped Bernie Puchalski garner third spot.

GENERAL COMMENT

What's happening with our photographers when it comes to covering sports action? Fill the frame. Find the peak action. If you are outdoors, make use of depth of field. This was a disappointing category based on the submissions, although very close among the top three placings. Remember – sports is about action – so let your camera tell the story of what you are focusing, whether in an indoor or an outdoor environment.

Judge

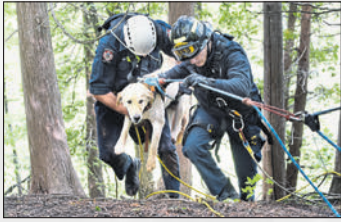
Jules Xavier
Editor
Shilo Stag
CFB Shilo, MB



It has been 37 years since editor Lorne Drury (now retired) offered him his first reporter job at the Brampton Guardian, and he is still going like the Energizer Bunny. A '59 baby, Xavier is still having fun at 62, so there's no thought of retirement just yet. Perhaps after the Stag celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2023. Currently in Manitoba looking after the award-winning army newspaper Shilo Stag, which published its first edition in July 1947, he's kept busy in a two-person newsroom which focuses on army life, including infantry 2PPCLI and artillery 1RCHA soldiers. Xavier has been with the Stag for nine years, relocating from Vancouver Island following newspaper and radio jobs in Ontario, B.C., and Alberta. Being embedded among soldiers who are honing their fighting skills for deployment to Ukraine or Latvia is a lot more fun than covering school board or city council meetings.

BEST SPOT NEWS PHOTO

24 ENTRIES



1

OAKVILLE BEAVER

Wow. Impact! This is how to tell the story with an image. The timing and composition on this shot by photographer Graham Paine is darn near perfect. We have the firefighters struggling at the crest of the steep slope, the leading lines created by the tension of the ropes and, topping it all off is the look on the dog's face as he's carried over the crest to safety. Spot news photography is difficult, not easy, and opportunities for shots like this are as rare as being in just the right position at the right time to nail the shot. Well done, photographer Graham Paine.



2

MILTON CANADIAN CHAMPION

A really strong, well timed, well exposed and well composed image that portrays the rescue efforts by emergency personnel to save the victim who, sadly, died in spite of their efforts. Graham Paine did a great job of getting on the scene and capturing an image that helps further the telling of the story.



3

EGANVILLE LEADER

A great shot of the action. Good choices of focal length, viewpoint, and exposure settings. Not a great reproduction of the image, but the interest carries, nonetheless. Mike Yeas was also able to get on scene as firefighters were setting up equipment, so kudos for quick response!

HONOURABLE MENTION

CARLETON PLACE/ALMONTE CANADIAN GAZETTE – This is a good clean image. Tara Gesner was able to get in fairly close to the action and capture the moment with a well executed and well timed photograph with a subject (suspect wrapped in towel) element that immediately captures the reader's attention.

THE INDEPENDENT SERVING PETROLIA AND CENTRAL LAMBTON – Snapped on the fly, Heather Wright's photo is a bit fuzzy but still captures a peak moment of interest with the suspect's expression as he's surrounded by police and being led off to jail. (Notice the different colour shoe laces on the suspect's runners. It's little captured details that keep the reader studying the shot and wanting to read the story behind it.)

GENERAL COMMENT

Once again there are some outstanding photos produced by Ontario papers in 2020. Make no mistake, spot news photo coverage isn't easy. It's hard. So many factors have to come together to capture a great image that brings the reader to the event - and in spot news those events are often tragic and difficult, both technically and emotionally, to shoot. So many elements are brought into spot news photography to capture an image. Photographers must be quick thinking, have good technical and composition skills and the ability to quickly survey a scene, pick the most advantageous shooting position and be instantly ready to capture a shot that may or may not present itself. With more emergency services communications becoming digitally encoded, it's becoming ever harder to even become aware of and get to an incident to cover it. Spot news photographers do well to maintain good working relationships with police, fire and rescue services and municipal authorities who they often must rely on to help them onto scenes as well. Those of us who have done it for many years also know a big dose of just plain luck goes a long way too. To this year's category winners - I congratulate you. The images presented demonstrate the wide range of skills and talent you bring to your work. Well done.

Judge



Chris Bush

Photographer
Nanaimo News Bulletin
Nanaimo, BC

Chris Bush has been with the Nanaimo News Bulletin since 1998. He is the News Bulletin's lead photographer and has photographed and reported on spot news, business, technology, features, advertising, sports and just about anything else that gets tossed on his desk. Bush holds several provincial and national awards for spot and feature photography.

Sponsored by: Listowel Banner

BEST NEWS PHOTO

32 ENTRIES



1

LISTOWEL BANNER

WOW! That is a very good catch Dan McNee! Her emotion is captured so well and after an hour of that kind of exercise no wonder Alison Brown was reacting.



2

MANITOULIN EXPOSITOR

Very topical in that place and at that time. Strong photos on the page and that last one says so much. Congratulations Warren Schlot!



3

UXBRIDGE COSMOS

Beautifully shot comet photo by John Cavers, and it is truly not easy to capture. Lots of interest in that comet.

HONOURABLE MENTION

BRADFORD WEST GWILLIMBURY TOPIC – Quietly powerful mother daughter portrait from a BLM protest – quite moving on a restrained level. Well done Steve Somerville.

BURLINGTON POST – Very strong image by Graham Paine – very poignant in this pandemic situation. Rather too bad about the ad placement underneath.

EGANVILLE LEADER – This photo from Terry Fleurie just makes me smile. Lovely farming family with new life in their arms. Charming.

GENERAL COMMENT

What a fascinating category this one was to judge for 2020. The pandemic affected everything, including the visuals in newspapers, but so did national trending issues like Black Lives Matter and how our First Nations are treated. There certainly was some impressive work tackled by the photographers. Truly first rate news photos require knowledge, talent and staying power - especially hanging in to get that perfectly representative shot. That means going beyond the minimum expectations and hanging in. It helps if editors can feature a fabulous photo even if it doesn't have the strongest story to go with. Kudos to all though.

Judge



Wendy Elliott

Columnist
Valley Journal Advertiser
Annapolis Valley, NS

An OCNA judge for several years, Wendy Elliott was a reporter and editor in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia for 40 years. She won some regional and national newspaper awards and is currently a columnist with the Valley Journal Advertiser.

MOST CREATIVE GRIP & GRIN PHOTO

8 ENTRIES



MILTON CANADIAN CHAMPION

Great photo. It's fun and action-filled and tells a great story on its own. Graham Paine could have had a traditional certificate presentation but isn't this so much better! It's also a photo that the family will definitely be keeping for future generations.



THE HALDIMAND PRESS

This is a unique angle and viewpoint for this article. Most photographers would have done the usual photo of someone holding the masks. Melanie Steeves took a different viewpoint. Good job. The photo really catches the reader's eye.



PERTH COURIER

Good positioning for the photo. It's an unusual way to do a grand opening presentation, and that's exactly what will catch the reader's attention! Well done Desmond Devoy.

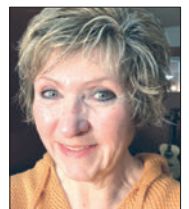
GENERAL COMMENT

This has been such a fun category to judge. There are some great innovative ideas – obviously, there's some thought and some creativity going into the photography. We want to grab the reader's attention - that's going to draw them into reading that newspaper! These are some great examples of ways to do that. Make your photos about community and community building, and that's what each of these did. Grip and Grabs are generally a stationary photo, and the irony here is the one that won shows great action. The only thing that I would suggest for overall improvement is to work on your cutlines and captions. Make sure they have as much energy as your photos do. Good job everyone!

Judge

Sheena Read

Freelance Journalist
AB



Sheena Read has lived in southern Alberta for most of her career, writing about the issues of her communities and connecting with as many people as possible. She continues that work with contract communications and promotions.

PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

3 ENTRIES



1



HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO DARREN LUM

Well done, Darren. You exhibit skills as a photographer by covering events well in a variety of challenging situations. I understand basketball is one of the most difficult sports to photograph and make look interesting, yet you managed to do so. Photographing an empty church during an online stream is a great way to colourfully convey the message behind a story that is hard to visualize in your head. The photo of the girl jumping through the sprinkler screams summer; it's a classic summer scene, photographed well. Great choice shooting vertical to complement the water stream and compress your shot. You also captured a great moment during the Christmas concert. You manage to capture lots of emotion in your photos, which I appreciate. It's evident, as your editor points out, that you go above and beyond to convey a story as creatively as possible. Overall, great job, keep it up.



2



RICHMOND HILL/THORNHILL LIBERAL STEVE SOMERVILLE

Well done, Steve. You manage to capture good moments at the things you cover. The photo of the friends reflected in the window, and the mourning individual in Vaughan are examples of this. Not only do you have the ability to see and capture emotion, but your timing is also great. The photo of the individual jumping into the lake is a good example of this. I have no doubt, as your editor says, you cover many different kinds of assignments on a daily basis. Overall, well done, keep it up.



3



THE INDEPENDENT SERVING PETROLIA AND CENTRAL LAMPTON HEATHER WRIGHT

Heather, first of all well done, and congratulations to you for taking on the responsibility of running an entire newspaper by yourself. That's no small task, and you should be proud. It's evident you're in touch with your community. The spot news photo of the man being arrested is an example of this. Your ability to anticipate, plan, and be there to see this is quite remarkable.

GENERAL COMMENT

I'd like to congratulate each person who entered this year's Photographer Of The Year competition. I was very impressed with submissions, and it was a pleasure to judge. It's evident each entrant strives to not only tell the story they're assigned, but also do so in a way that makes it fun and exciting for the reader. In a world overrun by information, being able to capture interesting imagery, and make your story stand out, is an invaluable skill which all three finalists possess. In addition, their ability to be versatile and cover a wide range of topics is incredibly valuable to a community newspaper. That being said, I had a hard time choosing a winner. All three finalists are talented photojournalists who evidently serve their communities well. I'd like to thank everyone who submitted their work for critique, it's not an easy thing to do! Congratulations everyone, well done.

Judge

Phil McLachlan

Senior Reporter
Kelowna Capital News
Kelowna, BC



Philip McLachlan works as senior reporter at the Kelowna Capital News, covering breaking news, human interest features, and social issues around the Okanagan region. Prior to this he served as editor of the Penticton Western News, and of The Free Press in Fernie. Since graduating from Loyalist College's Photojournalism Program in 2016, he has been nominated for and won several provincial and national newspaper and photography awards. His work has been featured in community newspapers across Western Canada. He possesses a passion for storytelling, an appreciation of community news, and a love for photography. He has become known by locals as 'the man on the street with a camera'. I can be reached any time via my Instagram, at phil_mclachlan. My DM's are open, and I'm always up to chat about photography. My recent work can also be found at Instagram.com/phil_mclachlan, or at the Kelownacapnews.com.

CARTOONIST OF THE YEAR

6 ENTRIES



1



OSHAWA EXPRESS GEORGE LONGLEY

Simple, clear, local, humorous - all the things a good local cartoonist should be.



2



DUNDALK HERALD JEFF WILSON

Easy to understand, clear message and folk drawings that everyone can relate to. Well done.



3



ELMIRA-WOOLWICH OBSERVER SCOTT ARNOLD

Clear, relevant, and thought provoking. The readers are well served by this cartoonist. How lucky and great to have someone exclusive to your paper.

HONOURABLE MENTION

HAMILTON MOUNTAIN NEWS | MIKE VUKOVICH – The cartoons frustrated and even angered me, as they should. They are well drawn and relevant.

GENERAL COMMENT

Cartoonists are so important, especially this year when the world is topsy-turvy. It was inspiring to see the range of talent in these submissions. It was truly hard to pick the winners. Here's hoping our community papers continue to have political cartoonists as they can say things that often no one else can while bringing a much needed smile to the faces of our readers.

Judge

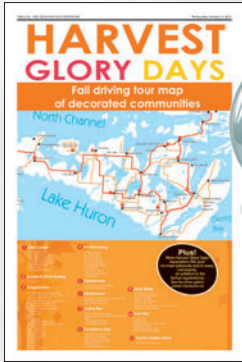
Jennifer Thuncher
Editor
The Squamish Chief
Squamish, BC



Jennifer Thuncher is the editor and a roving reporter at The Squamish Chief. She can be found chasing down the paper's other journalists, local politicians, or wildlife, depending on the day. She is a Simon Fraser University and Langara journalism grad. She had careers as an English instructor, administrative assistant, and ice-cream scooper in her life before journalism.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

4 ENTRIES



1

MANITOULIN EXPOSITOR HARVEST GLORY DAYS

What a wonderful way to engage the entire community in a feel-good exercise during a year of upheaval. The fact that the program has grown every year since its inception is a testament to the value readers place on it. There is not a person, business or organization that does not have access to participating and this inclusivity is admirable, particularly during a worldwide health pandemic. It clearly takes a lot of work photographing and judging the event and that work stands out! The dedication to the print paper as well as the social media sites is commendable. Congratulations on a job executed wonderfully!



2

RICHMOND HILL/THORNHILL LIBERAL YORK REGION SANTA FUND

Serving the community's need at Christmastime and helping the most vulnerable is commendable on the part of York Region – especially since the program has been going for more than two decades. That alone is testament to the program's need and reception. Staff participation is heart warming. Love the graphic with the stockings! Would love to be a fly in the wall when the gifts are received! Well done!



3

EGANVILLE LEADER SAVE OUR LEGION

A perfect example of what can happen when the community works together. To raise \$83,000 in just six weeks is amazing! Congratulations to the publisher for seeing a need and acting quickly, to the Rotary Club, and the campaign team and the newspaper for jumping on board and turning a news story about a dire situation into a good news story!

GENERAL COMMENT

It was a pure delight seeing the quality submissions in the Community Service category. To see such involvement in and dedication to community from a newspaper perspective – especially during what has been a difficult year for everyone – is absolutely heartening. I can only hope your communities care as much about their newspaper as the newspapers so obviously care about the communities they serve. Overall, I found all of the community service projects were shining examples of true community newspapers!

Judge

Jackie Jardine

Editor
Pictou Advocate
Pictou, NS



Silver Quill Award recipient Jackie Jardine has been a journalist for more than 30 years, working in both daily and weekly newspapers. For the past 10 years she has been editor of The Advocate, Pictou County's weekly newspaper since 1893. When she's not working, she enjoys reading, writing, and travelling.

BEST FRONT PAGE circ. 10,000+

20 ENTRIES



1

FERGUS WELLINGTON ADVERTISER

The Wellington Advertiser makes the most of its front page here: big, bold headline, lots of COVID-19 coverage. It has huge impact.



2

ELMIRA-WOOLWICH OBSERVER

A really impactful front page. Great sizing and use of a strong photo. I like the typography and the writing is solid.



3

GEORGETOWN/ACTON INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

The front page photo is excellent: tightly cropped and well used. It captures a moment of raw emotion. But it is fighting the overly busy front page layout of the paper – which I know is out of the hands of the editor. Still, that photo is powerful and it's an impactful front.

GENERAL COMMENT

There were some strong front pages in this category from a graphic/impact perspective, but the writing wasn't always up to the challenge. Speaking of challenges, my sympathies to those editors who have to deal with the challenge of putting their paper's best face forward when their fronts are packed with small ads. Still, kudos to those who went big with their front page art – great impact for your readers.

Judge

Richard Dal Monte

Freelance Editor and Writer
former Editor
The Tri-City News
Port Coquitlam, BC



Richard Dal Monte worked in community newspapers in B.C. for 34 years – the last 19 years as editor of The Tri-City News – before his layoff and eventual termination during the early days of the pandemic in 2020. He has won more than 20 corporate, provincial, national, and international journalism awards individually and as a team leader. Most recently, amongst its six honours in the 2020 BCYCNA Ma Murray Awards, The Tri-City News was named best paper in its circulation category while Dal Monte won a silver award for editorial writing. He is also the recipient of a News Media Canada Silver Quill Award.

BEST FRONT PAGE circ. -9,999

24 ENTRIES



1

PARRY SOUND NORTH STAR

I like the variety on this broadsheet page, which employs a clean, logical design that guides the reader. The lead photo is strong, though, given the format, could be larger for greater impact.



2

FORT FRANCES TIMES

This front, which features strong lead and secondary photos, is so close to being excellent with a few small tweaks. Use the generous broadsheet real estate to insert more white space and more clearly delineate divisions between stories and photos using that space and, perhaps, rules/lines.



3

DEEP RIVER NORTH RENFREW TIMES

Given the limited space on a tabloid front page, this one has plenty of impact: a strong photo even absent people, a solid lead story and a simple, powerful headline.

GENERAL COMMENT

This is not a category blessed with strong entries. The broadsheets don't make the best use of the real estate. The tabloids are often too packed with ads to give editorial any room to breathe. The writing and photography are inconsistent. I understand the challenges of producing a community paper with limited resources, but the front page is a paper's face to its readers and extra attention should be paid to every element on it.

Judge

Richard Dal Monte

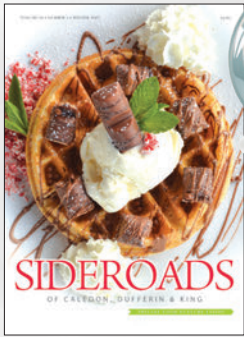
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BEST VERTICAL PRODUCT

19 ENTRIES



1

ORANGEVILLE BANNER SIDEROADS OF CALEDON, DUFFERIN & KING

A beautiful and clearly successful product (with proof provided - thank you for reading the criteria!). Some slight inconsistencies in design don't detract from the overall impact. Amazing work!



2

CORNWALL SEAWAY NEWS TASTE MAGAZINE 2019

Absolutely gorgeous presentation (amazing cover). The ads don't all seem relevant to content but it's apparently profitable which excuses that incongruity. Well done!



3

HALIBURTON, THE HIGHLANDER HOME IN THE HIGHLANDS

Very unique idea to partner the publication with local personalities! No biz info but looks profitable. Very nice clean design – a magazine look on newsprint!

HONOURABLE MENTION

BRACEBRIDGE EXAMINER | MUSKOKA LIFE – Beautiful book (perfect binding), beautiful and plentiful ads. No info on business fit/profitability provided but it's clearly successful.

GENERAL COMMENT

Many products in this category had great concepts, beautiful formats, and amazing ad design - all of which was marred by editorial design that could have been taken right off the weekly newspaper's template. Special products are a chance to stretch your design legs in editorial and need to be seized - if for no other reason than to keep up with the ad department. The business fit/profitability criteria was hard to apply as few entrants actually provided their revenue total and only one disclosed total contribution.

Judge

Tim Shoults

Operations Manager,
Aberdeen Publishing
Kamloops, BC



Tim Shoults is Operations Manager of Aberdeen Publishing, which publishes Kamloops This Week and several other community newspapers across B.C. He has worked as a reporter, editor, publisher, regional manager and vice-president content with community and daily newspapers across Western Canada over the past 22 years. He serves his industry on the boards of the National News Media Council of Canada and the B.C. and Yukon Community News Media Association.

BEST SPORTS SECTION

11 ENTRIES



1

LISTOWEL BANNER

Enjoyed the photography. Was some of the best in this category. Good reading as well that makes for a nice sports section.



2

HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

Excellent local sports coverage and good photography. Could maybe do a refresh of the layout but overall impressive content.



3

THE INDEPENDENT SERVING PETROLIA AND CENTRAL LAMBTON

Another good example of lots of great content and a full sports section. Good writing and excellent all around.

GENERAL COMMENT

A really good mix of sports coverage from those who submitted. When the dust settled, I just really felt Listowel was very well done and deserving of the title of best sports section. I enjoyed seeing what others in the industry do and am happy I saw some great ideas we can use at our publications – which is a compliment to the submitters of this category. Well done everyone.

Judge

Brian Gilroy

General Manager
Swan Valley Star & Times
Swan River, MB



I am a second-generation newspaper publisher who, along with my siblings, currently own and operate 5 community newspapers in Manitoba. Growing up in the industry, and delivering papers from a young age, put ink in my veins. I have been working full time in the industry for close to 30 years now and, despite the challenges that come around frequently these days, still love it as much as ever. I live in Swan River, MB and wear many hats – publisher, general manager, advertising coordinator, columnist, and feature writer for the Swan Valley Star & Times. I'm an idea guy and love to grow and evolve what we do here and have every reason to believe there will continue to be a place for community newspapers for generations to come.

SPECIAL SECTION circ. 10,000+

14 ENTRIES



1

LISTOWEL INDEPENDENT PLUS BETWEEN THE LINES

Nice section! Great opportunity to showcase the new facility while generating some revenue. Great layout in the editorial portions of the pages.



2

FERGUS WELLINGTON ADVERTISER WELCOME TO THE NEW GROVES

Great way to create revenue. Nice advertising support and editorial content.



3

SARNIA JOURNAL SARNIA REMEMBERS: A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO OUR LOCAL HEROES

Great section, really well written stories, and great ads. I feel like the front cover would benefit from adding a poppy element somewhere. Having a bit of fun with layout would bring marks up. Everything is very squared.

GENERAL COMMENT

Excellent work shown in this category. Some great revenue generating ideas, and well planned sections.

Judge

Amanda Zimmer
General Manager
Claresholm Local Press
Claresholm, AB



Amanda Zimmer is the General Manager of the Claresholm Local Press. She gained her first experience working in a print shop as her after school job in high school. After completing her Printing Management Technologies diploma at SAIT, Amanda joined the staff of the Local Press full time and has been there since 1999!! Amanda loves living in a small community and being a part of the connection people have to each other through their paper. She believes the newspaper is the hub of their community and loves to see people reading and sharing it. Amanda enjoys judging for newspaper competitions! It helps to generate ideas for her own paper and keeps them in check with their publishing standards. Seeing what else is out there helps to step up their own game! Thank you for the opportunity to judge for the OCNA!

SPECIAL SECTION circ. -9,999

11 ENTRIES



1

EGANVILLE LEADER 9TH ANNUAL IRISH EDITION

How many communities in Canada can do 32 pages for St. Patrick's Day? Eganville can – and can do an amazing job with it. Compelling local copy, strongly presented and overwhelmingly supported with ads (though they might need some new Irish ad mats from Metro...)



2

BLYTH/BRUSSELS CITIZEN HURON PIONEER THRESHER & HOBBY ASSOCIATION REUNION

Taking a COVID cancelled event and putting out a special piece focusing on the 60th anniversary next year was an original and successful way to keep the event (and the paper's revenue stream) alive in a troubled time. Good job!



3

THE HALDIMAND PRESS FARMS HARVEST 2020

The best looking section in the category – very clean, modern design with good, strong local content and beautifully designed and plentiful advertising. Well done!

HONOURABLE MENTION

BARRY'S BAY, THE VALLEY GAZETTE | CHRISTMAS WISHES 2019 – The classic Christmas Greetings section is a community staple. This one has very strong ad support but could use a slightly cleaner editorial design to stand out more.

GENERAL COMMENT

Special sections are often about special events, and COVID knocked a hole in many of these. Some took the crisis in stride and carried on with their special sections in spite of the event's cancellation; others saluted front-line workers. Good presentation and strong community support were evident. It's important to keep presentation fresh and modern, even with traditional events, to maintain reader engagement and deliver value to advertisers.

Judge

Tim Shoults

Operations Manager,
Aberdeen Publishing
Kamloops, BC



Tim Shoults is Operations Manager of Aberdeen Publishing, which publishes Kamloops This Week and several other community newspapers across B.C. He has worked as a reporter, editor, publisher, regional manager and vice-president content with community and daily newspapers across Western Canada over the past 22 years. He serves his industry on the boards of the National News Media Council of Canada and the B.C. and Yukon Community News Media Association.

BEST FEATURE/UNIT PAGES

15 ENTRIES



1

FERGUS WELLINGTON ADVERTISER VICTORY IN EUROPE DAY

An excellent look at VE Day and selling advertising around it. And there was some good editorial to read.



2

WALKERTON HERALD TIMES WALKERTON WATER CRISIS – 20 YEARS LATER

Not much in the way of advertising support to this special 20th anniversary feature, but well done on the editorial side. Going back and retelling the story so that the story is not forgotten.



3

LISTOWEL BANNER ROTARY CLUB OF LISTOWEL 1946 - 2019

A good read on a historical organization being part of the community for more than seven decades. Nice mixture of old photos, to fill the space along with words. A changing of the times as a younger generation is not interested in service clubs in the community, like many Legions and curling clubs across Canada.

GENERAL COMMENT

Let's try to be innovative when we do feature/unit pages, and make sure there's editorial content, as that is a portion of the judging criteria. The top three stood out for good reason – because of the content and layout. It was not always about making money on the advertisements wrapped around the content.

Judge

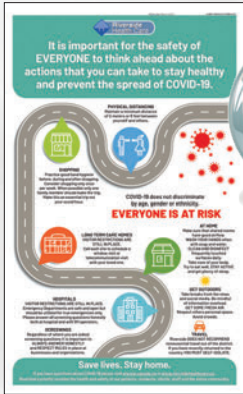
Jules Xavier
Editor
Shilo Stag
CFB Shilo, MB



It has been 37 years since editor Lorne Drury (now retired) offered him his first reporter job at the Brampton Guardian, and he is still going like the Energizer Bunny. A '59 baby, Xavier is still having fun at 62, so there's no thought of retirement just yet. Perhaps after the Stag celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2023. Currently in Manitoba looking after the award-winning army newspaper Shilo Stag, which published its first edition in July 1947, he's kept busy in a two-person newsroom which focuses on army life, including infantry 2PPCLI and artillery 1RCHA soldiers. Xavier has been with the Stag for nine years, relocating from Vancouver Island following newspaper and radio jobs in Ontario, B.C., and Alberta. Being embedded among soldiers who are honing their fighting skills for deployment to Ukraine or Latvia is a lot more fun than covering school board or city council meetings.

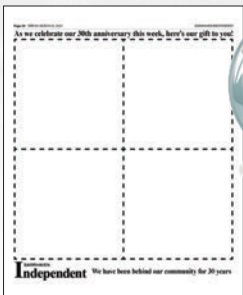
BEST CREATIVE AD

21 ENTRIES



FORT FRANCES TIMES

I can see why the client was pleased with this ad.



BARRHAVEN INDEPENDENT

That was hilarious.



HALIBURTON, THE HIGHLANDER

Great series of ads...and a client that trusts their newspaper's ad department!

GENERAL COMMENT

Beer, horse racing, staying safe with COVID, and using your newspaper as toilet paper...there was a wide range of themes this year in the category. Be the creative partner to your advertiser.

Judge

Wayne Aubert
Professor
Mohawk College
Hamilton, ON



After many years working in the Advertising industry (agency side, client side, supplier side) Wayne Aubert is a Professor in the Advertising and Marketing Communications Management program at Mohawk College, now in his nineteenth year. He enjoys reading his local community newspaper, Mountain News, when he can find it on his front lawn, or in a bush, or on his driveway.

IN HOUSE PROMOTION

19 ENTRIES



1

BARRHAVEN INDEPENDENT

Congratulations! This entry got high marks for originality! Excellent! And then creative did a great job of making it simple. I'm sure everyone was talking about the Barrhaven Independent the week this promotion hit the streets! Congratulations.



2

CORNWALL SEAWAY NEWS

Very thorough newspaper promotion. Excellent photos and precise message. Great job.



3

ELMIRA-WOOLWICH OBSERVER

Excellent idea in promoting donations for the newspaper and straight forward layout. Congratulations.

GENERAL COMMENT

In House Promotion must include a promotion of some aspect of the community newspaper and must contain the newspaper name/brand. First place left every reader, and I'm sure many non-readers, knowing about the Barrhaven Independent. Second place was a very extensive promotion but a very effective simple layout with precise newspaper information and good photos. Third place was chosen for the idea of how to promote support for the newspaper while at the same time, tie it in with the support of community. Great job and congratulations to all involved.

Judge

Joyce Webster

Publisher/Owner
East Central Alberta Review
Coronation, AB



Joyce Webster is the 40-year publisher/owner of the East Central Alberta community newspaper in Alberta and throughout those 40 years has attended many photography sessions at newspaper symposiums.

LOCAL RETAIL LAYOUT

20 ENTRIES



1

HALIBURTON, THE HIGHLANDER

You demonstrate exactly what you described in the submission description. You took a simple idea to the next level with great design, eye catching images and simple, clean text. Great way to think outside the box!



2

NORTH WELLINGTON COMMUNITY NEWS

At first glance I thought this was an ad for a sports bar! Great way to create attention. My suggestion – would change the image at the bottom to be more food focused, maybe showing a football spread or something, rather than just the tv.



3

ELMIRA-WOOLWICH OBSERVER

Love this ad! Great use of colour, making the photo stand out really well. My only critique would be to keep thoughts together in the headline - Storewide Sale then new line: On Now! Keeping the on now together.

GENERAL COMMENT

Excellent entries overall. Watch grammar, punctuation, and spelling! Remember, logos don't have to go at the top of the ad, it's not the headline.

Judge

Amanda Zimmer
General Manager
Claresholm Local Press
Claresholm, AB



Amanda Zimmer is the General Manager of the Claresholm Local Press. She gained her first experience working in a print shop as her after school job in high school. After completing her Printing Management Technologies diploma at SAIT, Amanda joined the staff of the Local Press full time and has been there since 1999!! Amanda loves living in a small community and being a part of the connection people have to each other through their paper. She believes the newspaper is the hub of their community and loves to see people reading and sharing it. Amanda enjoys judging for newspaper competitions! It helps to generate ideas for her own paper and keeps them in check with their publishing standards. Seeing what else is out there helps to step up their own game! Thank you for the opportunity to judge for the OCNA!

Sponsored by: Metro Creative Graphics

ORIGINAL AD IDEA

13 ENTRIES



1

MANITOULIN EXPOSITOR

Very nice. A great idea. Very clean layout. Appealing to the hunter target group. Contains all of the information that I need while making it easy to read. First Place for me.



2

HALIBURTON, THE HIGHLANDER

Nice executions. Simple and easy, yet fun.

3



LISTOWEL BANNER

Really nice idea. Great community builder. Seems like an idea where everyone wins, the paper, the retailers, the winners, and the community at large. Lots going on in the ads. Would have tightened up the copy and a few things to give it some more breathing room.

GENERAL COMMENT

1. Think of your ad from the consumer's perspective.
 - a. Is it worth their time and effort?
 - b. Is the information easy to understand?
 - c. Are you providing value equal to their time to read and engage with your ad?
2. Start, and stick with, a single thought or concept. Your ad will work harder for you.
3. Keep things clean and don't feel like you need to fill up the ad space.
4. Don't use too many fonts, makes it tough to read and you will lose the reader's attention.
5. Develop a consistent look and feel. Brand guidelines will build equity over time. Use the same colours, fonts, imagery so your ads become easily recognizable and more engaging.
6. If you have a call to action, make it simple and clear. Consumers want to take the fewest steps and use the least amount of energy required.

Some great work submitted in this category. Congratulations to the winners!

Judge

Tim Welsh

VP, Management Director
Fuelcontent Canada
Toronto, ON



After becoming intrigued with the world of advertising at Queen's, Tim moved to Toronto in 1995 and started pumping out print ads for Sporting Life and Telco giant Rogers. Tim moved from a locally owned shop to a multinational network for some new experiences, moving from Account Supervisor to VP, Group Account Director in the Account Service Department, eventually running the entire PepsiCo Canada portfolio for seven years. Tim's work has been recognized in business building and creative award shows around the world. Tim joined FCB in 2017 as Managing Director and currently works on the New Business team as well as leading accounts, our internal PR, and our award show program.

BEST USE OF COLOUR

23 ENTRIES



1

MARKHAM ECONOMIST & SUN

This ad has a dynamic and exciting use of colour that is on theme. The multi-coloured illustrated fireworks draw attention and movement to the ad. Leaving the trees white (without colour) acts as a perfect foreground to focus on the explosions in the background. The choice of blue text supports the winter time of the event. Possibly the URL box could have been in a dark blue, however the choice of black grounds the ad well. This ad and its colour use would have made a bold and impressive statement.



2

FERGUS WELLINGTON ADVERTISER

This ad and its happy, celebratory message are demonstrated through colour. The prism bold multi-coloured 2020 helps give the feeling that the future is bright, multi-faceted and filled with options for local graduates. Elements and colours lead the eye from top to bottom of the ad. Gold and copper coloured streamers and confetti shine and play nicely against a graduated background. A slanted string of banners leads the eye and each colour gives attention individually to schools. The use of whitespace allows each element to pop. Overall, the theme of this ad is well served through colour.



3

HALIBURTON, THE HIGHLANDER

This ad blooms off the page even in a smaller ad format. Pleasing coloured bands of text blocks gives a sense of layered flower beds. The field of multi-coloured flowers in the middle separate the visual and informative sections. However, treating the colour 'Bloom' in a red burst feels like a bud rising out of a field and leads the eye down towards the bottom. The bottom right purple flower connects the bands by breaking through. Even the use of yellow to guide the eye to important information works within the bouquet of colours.

HONOURABLE MENTION

NORTH WELLINGTON COMMUNITY NEWS – Strong use of colour to separate out content and stand out. Yellow choice of top and bottom ripped construction tape borders adds interest and is on brand. Choice of backgrounds and font colours aid in readability.

GENERAL COMMENT

Colour in advertising can set a mood, aid in understanding, and help in readability. Submissions this year strategically and creatively used colour to tell unique stories and solve problems. Some used colour to evoke emotion while drawing the eye in and through the dimensions of the space. Others helped in the organization and clarity of large amounts of information and to stand out from the printed page itself. No matter the goal I was impressed by the quality of submissions from OCNA members.

Judge

Karen Kavanagh

Coordinator, Advertising
Algonquin College
Ottawa, ON



Karen Kavanagh is the coordinator and a professor for the Advertising and Marketing Communications Management advanced diploma at Algonquin College. She is also program developer for the Bachelor of Digital Marketing Communication (Honours) degree set to launch in Fall 2021. Since joining the College full-time in 2011, she has taught the students media planning and buying across all mediums, including newspaper and digital, as well as acting as advertising professor mentor for the students on the award winning Algonquin Times. Prior to joining Algonquin College, Karen worked in the advertising and marketing industry in both Toronto and Ottawa. She specialized in media planning, account strategy and digital marketing communications.

BEST COMMUNITY WEBSITE/WEBPORTAL circ. 10,000+

12 ENTRIES



1

ELMIRA-WOOLWICH OBSERVER OBSERVERXTRA.COM

Thoughtful layout. Easy to navigate, smart tabs and well labeled. Plenty of images. Easy access to report a typo as well as access for readers to submit events, problems with delivery and more. Congratulations on your 25th anniversary.



2

FERGUS WELLINGTON ADVERTISER WELLINGTONADVERTISER.COM

Easy to navigate. Poll question provides a quick way to provide interaction. Large photos highlighting featured stories.



3

CORNWALL SEAWAY NEWS CORNWALLSEAWAYNEWS.COM

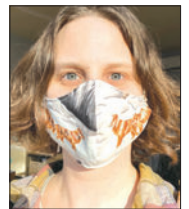
Nice to see quick access to the e-edition. Tricky to navigate out of the e-edition back to the website. The banner ads extend into the ads on the right hand column.

GENERAL COMMENT

Websites for publications have many masters to serve. They provide news and information, opinion, obituaries, breaking news, classifieds, and searchable archives to the reader, as well as providing interactive features and offering online ways for the reader to connect to the newspaper. The website also has needs. They must serve and highlight the advertiser. The website also has to promote the newspaper's own business. These entries recognize these needs and beyond, serving the readers in their community well.

Judge

Sarah Holmes
Publisher
Gabriola Sounder
Gabriola Island, BC



Sarah Holmes is a 4th generation newspaper publisher. She, alongside her husband, run the Gabriola Sounder, a weekly community newspaper in BC. She is a director on the BCYCNA and CNMA news media boards, as well as chair of the elementary school Parents Advisory Council. Sarah regularly puts cameras in the hands of the potential 5th generation publishers. She provides photo credit and peanuts as payment for services rendered.

BEST COMMUNITY WEBSITE/WEBPORTAL

circ. -9,999

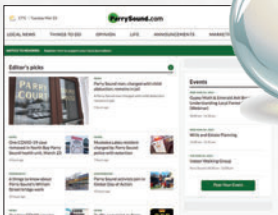
6 ENTRIES



1

BURKS FALLS ALMAGUIN NEWS NORTHBAYNISSING.COM

Local content was really the only difference between first and second place, with Burks Falls edging up just slightly. Both sites were clean and had a wide variety of options to keep one scrolling on the home page. One suggestion – I would like to see the name of the newspaper stand out more.



2

PARRY SOUND NORTH STAR PARRYSOUND.COM

Again, local content was really the only difference for the top two sites. Both were clean and had a wide variety of options to keep one scrolling on the home page. Same suggestion – have the name of the newspaper stand out more.



3

KEMPTVILLE, NORTH GRENVILLE TIMES NGTIMES.CA

Good local site. Home page feels a little cluttered with three similar images at the top and the logo just above it. Simple graphics for the sections might be more visually appealing than reusing the logo. Overall a wonderful site!

GENERAL COMMENT

This was a tough class to judge, especially with some newspapers having the same templates and components. I looked for unique features, something beyond the ordinary experience and found all to be nice looking, easy to navigate and well done overall. Judging was based on the content that happened to be online the day they were viewed.

Judge

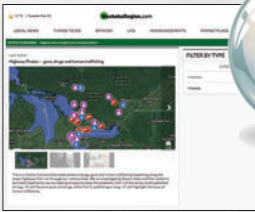
Shannon Robison
Publisher
Shootin' the Breeze
Pincher Creek, AB



Shannon Robison is owner and publisher of Shootin' the Breeze, a weekly community newspaper in southwestern Alberta. She is passionate about the power of words and about her community and its people. Shannon believes community papers will continue to have value for many years to come.

ONLINE SPECIAL INITIATIVE

2 ENTRIES



MUSKOKAREGION.COM

This project showed great incentive and initiative to bring to light a problem that many did not realize was a local issue. I love the variety of pieces - from those penned by the victims of crime to carefully sculpted pieces with experts. Well written and engaging.



WATERDOWN FLAMBOROUGH REVIEW

Great efforts to make a political election engaging and interesting for all. I like the initiative taken to create interactive items like the quiz and the bingo cards. Articles are well written and informational.

GENERAL COMMENT

Very interesting and innovative ideas on two very different subjects.

Judge

Danielle Gordon-Broome

Editor
Swan Valley Star and Times
Swan River, MB



Danielle Gordon-Broome is the editor for the Swan Valley Star and Times in Swan River, Manitoba - a position she has held for the past seven years. On top of her editorial duties, she is also head of the company's social media and video management department, handles the newspaper's layout and design, and frequently acts as a graphic designer.

ONLINE BREAKING NEWS COVERAGE

7 ENTRIES



1

VOICE OF PELHAM

Detailed and quick reporting on a matter of immense public interest, accompanied by relevant photos. The legwork that went into this piece is admirable.



2

MILTON CANADIAN CHAMPION

On scene video and photos show a lot of initiative on a difficult subject. The follow ups made this coverage very comprehensive.



3

SMITHS FALLS RECORD NEWS

Excellent breaking news coverage with solid video and photo components, interviews, and follow ups.

HONOURABLE MENTION

CALEDON ENTERPRISE – Thorough coverage of a tragic situation and its impact on the community.

GENERAL COMMENT

This was a great cross section of well handled breaking news coverage. I was pleased to see the amount of legwork many of these community reporters put into their articles. The top entry set itself apart in this regard.

Judge

April Hudson
Editor
St. Albert Gazette
St. Albert, AB



April Hudson has been a journalist for a decade and is the editor of the St. Albert Gazette, an award-winning community paper that routinely ranks among the best in Canada.

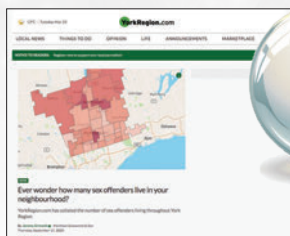
MULTIMEDIA ONLINE/ BEST ONLINE EXPERIENCE FOR A STORY

10 ENTRIES



PETERBOROUGH THIS WEEK

This video was raw and captivating. The addition of music was a great touch and was balanced well with the audio tracks of the speakers. I wish the presentation of the small bit of written content and the video had not been separated by ads.



MARKHAM ECONOMIST & SUN

I'm sure many have never thought about the number of sex offenders living in their neighbourhoods. The interactive map was easy to use and much more effective than a chart or text inclusion in the story would have been.



GEORGETOWN/ACTION INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

Teaser photos to go with map locations was just enough to entice people to go for a look. The use of arrows to move from one display to another on the map made it easy to use.

GENERAL COMMENT

Placement of interactive visual elements is important on your website. It is easy for them to be lost in a clutter of ads and not be noticed if not well placed.

Judge

Shannon Robison
 Publisher
 Shootin' the Breeze
 Pincher Creek, AB



Shannon Robison is owner and publisher of Shootin' the Breeze, a weekly community newspaper in southwestern Alberta. She is passionate about the power of words and about her community and its people. Shannon believes community papers will continue to have value for many years to come.

BREAKING NEWS VIDEO

3 ENTRIES



KAWARTHA LAKES THIS WEEK

I really enjoyed this. I liked how there was a story told in the images used and in the interviews. I liked not only the incorporation of still but the way that they were incorporated (with the noise of the parade playing in the background). I like how there was a clear conclusion to the video. Well done.



MUSKOKAREGION.COM

The camera was a bit shaky at times but, otherwise, the videographer captured some impactful shots and really showed the damage that was experienced. The video lacked a bit of storytelling in that it was just consistent shots throughout that didn't really take me anywhere.



PETERBOROUGH THIS WEEK

Was interesting to see the interaction between the protesters and the people they met along the street. The video was sometimes quite shaky and the way it was put together didn't really tell or further the story.

GENERAL COMMENT

Would have liked to see a bit more storytelling with a couple of the entries but I feel like all parties are likely still learning and growing with each video they produce.

Judge

Danielle Gordon-Broome

Editor
Swan Valley Star and Times
Swan River, MB



Danielle Gordon-Broome is the editor for the Swan Valley Star and Times in Swan River, Manitoba - a position she has held for the past seven years. On top of her editorial duties, she is also head of the company's social media and video management department, handles the newspaper's layout and design, and frequently acts as a graphic designer.

Powering community spirit

From all of us at OPG, we would like to extend our congratulations to the 2021 OCNA award nominees and recipients.

OPG is a proud partner of many community activities, initiatives and events across Ontario. As the province's largest clean energy generator and a climate change leader, we're dedicated to making Ontario the best place to live, work and play.



College & University Awards



STUDENT FEATURE WRITING

19 ENTRIES



LOYALIST COLLEGE | ALEX FILIPE

Great photo that captured the essence of the story that followed. The theme never wandered from the issue of how challenging this situation can be for everyone involved.



UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO | VARUN VENKATARAMANAN

A very nice article with a great deal of information. Well organized.



CENTENNIAL COLLEGE | AKRIT MICHAEL

Very informative and easy to read story backed up by useful video.

Judge

Linda Vogel
General Manager
Etcetera Publications
Chesterville, ON



Linda Vogel is the business manager and shareholder of Etcetera Publications (Chesterville) Inc., publishing the Chesterville Record and the Eastern Ontario AgriNews. Linda's background is in finance and agriculture, having graduated from Algonquin College with the Bookkeeping Certificate, Olds College with the Ag Finance Certificate, and now a Certified Professional Bookkeeper. Linda not only is involved in the day to day finances of the paper but is also hands on with the staff for writing and production. These newspapers have been a new passion found. Linda and her husband also own and operate a hog and cash crop farm and she is an active volunteer in many organizations including 4-H.

STUDENT NEWS WRITING

17 ENTRIES



1

LOYALIST COLLEGE | OLIVIA WALDRIF, SARAH COOKE, MAX REID & LIAM RADFORD

A great job putting together a lengthy and complex story. The article had good flow, including on the ground reporting analysis and background. The infographic at the end provides great insight too.



2

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE | VICTORIA REDDEN

Well written and interesting, with several voices.



3

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE | CHESKA LIM

Great job getting several voices in, especially Brower's story, which helped personalize the issue.

HONOURABLE MENTION

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO | VAANI RAJPAL – An incredibly difficult subject to tackle, I applaud the writer for having the courage to cover it. As difficult as the story was, a second named voice on the record would have helped. I would also like to hear what the school was doing about the situation.

GENERAL COMMENT

It's always an enjoyable experience reading what the next generation of journalists are writing about and this year was no different. Submissions took on a wide range of important subjects with tact and solid reporting. Based on what I read there are plenty of journalists with promising careers on the horizon.

Judge

Luke Edwards

Reporter, Niagara This Week,
Editor, Niagara Farmers' Monthly
Niagara Falls, ON



Luke Edwards is a veteran reporter with Niagara This Week, covering general news for several communities in the region. He is also editor for Niagara Farmers' Monthly.

Sponsored by: Ontario Journalism Educators Association

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHY

14 ENTRIES



1

LOYALIST COLLEGE | DEEPAK SHARMA

A good photo is one that elicits emotion from the observer. This can be achieved either through expression, impact, or other visceral reaction. In this case the expression on the young girl's face says it all. Out of all the entries, this is the one to which I responded to on an emotional level the most.



2

ALGONQUIN COLLEGE | EMILY HSUEH

Excellent environmental portrait. Excellent composition, excellent lighting, and excellent editorial treatment. A very strong second place entry.



3

HUMBER COLLEGE | DONNA AKBARI

Very good arts feature photo. Exceptional use of light and well composed. Layout is also top shelf. Was a very close call between second and third. In the end it came down to first impressions.

HONOURABLE MENTION

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE | KAJ LARSEN – This was a very difficult entry to judge. Strong points for composition and forethought. If the category were Editorial Photography it would be in the top three, but unfortunately it was up against some very strong feature photos, an excellent environmental portrait, and a very good arts feature. Still worthy of an honourable mention.

LOYALIST COLLEGE | CALEB SEGUIN – I had a tough time judging this entry. On one level it is a very interesting take on an environmental portrait of Manasie Akapaliapi, except that it is not an environmental portrait. It is an arts feature of a Documentary Festival. What stood out for me in judging the photo was the excellent use of lighting, depth of field and choice of image on the screen.

GENERAL COMMENT

Overall, the entries in this division were diverse and technically very strong. If I were to offer any advice to the entrants, it would be to try to convey more emotion in their images.

Judge

Fred Sherwin
Publisher
Orléans Star
Orléans, ON



Fred Sherwin is the owner and publisher of the Orléans Star. In a previous life he was a photojournalist having worked for the Ottawa Citizen, the Toronto Star, the Montreal Daily News, and the Ottawa Sun. He was twice a finalist for the National Newspaper Award in Spot News Photography and won the award in 1999. He purchased the Orléans Star from Transcontinental Media in October 2016, fulfilling a dream to own the newspaper he worked for as a columnist and editor from 1989 to 1999.

BEST COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY NEWSPAPER WEBSITE

6 ENTRIES



1

LOYALIST COLLEGE | QNETNEWS.CA

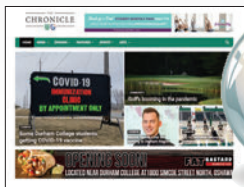
The team behind Loyalist College's QNetnews made excellent use of the technology available to them through the use of embedded audio clips within the stories that didn't just allow the reader to hear the source speak a quote already on the page, but to add extra information and colour. The mapping and video work also added to the user experience. Great work.



2

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE | TORONTOOBSERVER.CA

The Toronto Observer featured many good local stories and made good use of Facebook and was the only site that included TikTok among its social offerings. It also made good use of embedded audio and video. Some of the writing on the site could have been tighter.



3

DURHAM COLLEGE | CHRONICLE.DURHAMCOLLEGE.CA

The Durham College Chronicle site had a good local focus on the educational institutions as well as the community around it. The use of maps and extra photos in the stories complemented the stories very well and helped to engage the reader. The site's Instagram posts were excellent, essentially creating a house ad for each story.

GENERAL COMMENT

It was great to see many sites experimenting with online storytelling through the use of audio, videos, maps, and new forms of social media. Many professional websites could learn from your examples.

Judge

Gordon Cameron

Group Managing Editor
Hamilton Community News, Glanbrook
Gazette and The Sachem
Torstar Corporation Community Brands,
Hamilton, ON



Gordon Cameron is an award-winning editor and columnist and is currently the Group Managing Editor for Hamilton Community News, The Sachem and Glanbrook Gazette. He is also chair of OCNA's awards committee.

GENERAL EXCELLENCE

CLASS 1 (CIRC. 1,999 & UNDER)													
NEWSPAPER													
	Front Page	Community News	Ed. & Op. Ed Pages	Presentation	Photography	Advertising Content	Advertising Design	Classified Advertising	Local Features	Sports	Arts Coverage	TOTAL	RANK
	150	150	100	100	100	100	100	25	50	25	25	975	
The Independant Serving Petrolia & Central Lambton	131	135	89	90	87	83	83	22	33	22	19	794	1
Deep River North Renfrew Times	126	118	83	86	86	88	87	20	31	20	20	765	2
Haliburton County Echo	118	130	75	75	88	84	84	21	35	20	22	752	3
Parry Sound North Star	126	127	86	85	83	85	86	17	25	17	13	750	4
Listowel Banner	110	128	76	76	79	91	85	22	34	20	21	742	5
Blyth/Brussels Citizen	117	121	86	81	81	80	79	20	41	20	14	740	6
Wingham Advance Times	114	127	80	83	87	81	78	19	31	21	11	732	7
Minden Times	116	97	69	78	89	89	86	21	40	21	18	724	8
Kincardine Independent	113	120	70	66	79	86	87	21	41	15	18	716	9
Walkerton Herald Times	106	126	81	76	74	79	79	19	28	18	16	702	10
Burks Falls Almaguin News	124	118	80	81	63	81	82	19	33	6	13	700	11
Barry's Bay, The Valley Gazette	107	113	60	74	84	87	86	20	29	17	16	693	12

CLASS 2 - 3 (CIRC. 2,000-6,499)													
NEWSPAPER													
	Front Page	Community News	Ed. & Op. Ed Pages	Presentation	Photography	Advertising Content	Advertising Design	Classified Advertising	Local Features	Sports	Arts Coverage	TOTAL	RANK
	150	150	100	100	100	100	100	25	50	25	25	975	
Eganville Leader	125	135	82	81	87	85	81	19	44	19	18	776	1
Niagara This Week, Niagara-on-the-Lake Advance	118	133	81	90	84	89	88	21	43	7	20	773	2
Midland/Penetanguishene Mirror	125	128	72	89	84	82	85	21	44	5	20	755	3
Gravenhurst Banner	113	123	72	76	73	74	77	19	41	9	12	689	4
Ayr News	115	120	65	68	70	72	73	18	37	16	15	669	5
Bruce Peninsula Press	118	112	65	66	72	77	69	16	37	5	9	646	6
The Haldimand Press	111	112	56	72	67	75	75	19	31	3	11	632	7

CLASS 4 (CIRC. 6,500-12,499)													
NEWSPAPER													
	Front Page	Community News	Ed. & Op. Ed Pages	Presentation	Photography	Advertising Content	Advertising Design	Classified Advertising	Local Features	Sports	Arts Coverage	TOTAL	RANK
	150	150	100	100	100	100	100	25	50	25	25	975	
Haliburton, The Highlander	137	128	85	85	83	87	87	21	37	19	19	788	1
Niagara-on-the-Lake Local	133	128	79	81	82	82	82	16	43	11	18	755	2
Niagara This Week, Fort Erie Post	121	130	84	79	79	86	84	22	40	6	17	748	3
Ottawa Community Voice, West Carleton	124	126	84	80	82	81	80	17	38	18	15	745	4
Niagara This Week, The Leader	129	128	76	81	81	83	81	19	37	5	13	733	5
Huntsville Forester	129	126	78	79	78	77	78	19	35	5	9	713	6
East Gwillimbury Express	122	125	76	79	79	76	75	20	37	10	11	710	7
Port Perry Star	125	123	71	82	82	79	79	19	36	6	7	709	8
Collingwood Connection	126	123	78	79	77	79	79	20	34	5	7	707	9
Uxbridge TimesJournal	125	124	71	79	80	79	79	19	34	6	7	703	10
Bracebridge Examiner	129	123	78	76	75	76	76	19	38	6	8	704	11
Innisfil Journal	123	125	71	79	77	79	77	21	32	6	7	697	12
Voice of Pelham	120	122	70	72	73	76	77	17	39	16	11	693	13
Glanbrook Gazette	126	123	76	75	76	75	75	19	34	5	7	691	14
North Grenville Times	116	117	63	69	74	73	69	14	34	14	11	654	15

JUDGE SCORESHEETS

CLASS 5 (CIRC. 12,500 - 22,499)													
NEWSPAPER													
	Front Page	Community News	Ed. & Op. Ed Pages	Presentation	Photography	Advertising Content	Advertising Design	Classified Advertising	Local Features	Sports	Arts Coverage	TOTAL	RANK
	150	150	100	100	100	100	100	25	50	25	25	975	
Elmira-Woolwich Observer	129	134	88	93	69	81	85	22	43	23	20	787	1
Ottawa Community Voice, Stittsville & Richmond	122	130	81	84	80	90	92	13	40	13	13	758	2
Ancaster News	118	117	86	85	82	90	65	21	27	10	15	716	3
Waterdown Flamborough Review	114	127	74	84	75	90	78	20	37	0	12	711	4
Stouffville Sun-Tribune	119	120	74	78	73	88	88	20	36	3	7	706	5
Haldimand County, The Sachem	99	130	76	67	77	83	77	23	41	0	16	689	6
Dundas Star News	103	115	73	70	73	90	81	19	32	8	18	682	7
Orangeville Banner	98	122	75	73	72	89	89	21	32	0	8	679	8
Wasaga/Stayner Sun	91	122	62	72	74	89	89	22	38	0	8	667	9
Georgina Advocate	99	105	57	67	72	79	78	21	32	3	8	621	10

CLASS 6 (CIRC. 22,500 - 44,999)													
NEWSPAPER													
	Front Page	Community News	Ed. & Op. Ed Pages	Presentation	Photography	Advertising Content	Advertising Design	Classified Advertising	Local Features	Sports	Arts Coverage	TOTAL	RANK
	150	150	100	100	100	100	100	25	50	25	25	975	
Fergus Wellington Advertiser	112	132	83	78	83	89	92	23	32	15	18	757	1
Whitby This Week	114	128	79	85	75	92	89	20	36	19	15	752	2
Niagara This Week, Niagara Falls	112	126	88	86	75	92	88	18	40	10	15	750	3
Guelph Mercury Tribune	122	126	72	89	79	89	87	18	39	17	8	746	4
Oshawa This Week	110	127	70	82	81	92	88	20	41	12	18	741	5
Orillia Today	125	117	73	85	86	93	88	20	27	8	12	734	6
Grimsby Lincoln News	110	110	79	87	73	92	88	17	38	12	18	724	7
Niagara This Week, Welland	98	115	80	83	67	92	88	18	42	19	20	722	8
Newmarket Era/Aurora Banner	122	98	70	85	84	92	89	19	26	8	19	712	9
Milton Canadian Champion	117	115	77	85	78	88	88	18	30	5	10	711	10
Stoney Creek News	113	115	83	82	67	92	88	15	32	10	12	709	11
Ottawa Community Voice, Kanata	112	123	81	74	77	83	85	10	27	15	17	704	12
Alliston Herald	108	115	75	83	77	90	88	20	28	7	12	703	13
Georgetown/Acton Independent & Free Press	109	107	80	84	72	90	90	18	27	7	13	697	14
Cambridge Times	117	115	73	83	57	87	88	20	37	8	7	692	15
Listowel Independent Plus	98	117	75	68	77	87	87	20	31	18	10	688	16
Waterloo Chronicle	107	85	80	82	72	85	88	18	28	8	10	663	17
Cornwall Seaway News	98	98	72	68	70	87	90	17	27	12	13	652	18

CLASS 7 (CIRC. 45,000 & OVER)													
NEWSPAPER													
	Front Page	Community News	Ed. & Op. Ed Pages	Presentation	Photography	Advertising Content	Advertising Design	Classified Advertising	Local Features	Sports	Arts Coverage	TOTAL	RANK
	150	150	100	100	100	100	100	25	50	25	25	975	
Ajax Pickering News Advertiser	110	127	70	79	60	80	80	16	24	0	1	647	1
Oakville Beaver	115	118	67	79	77	74	76	18	19	0	1	644	2
Burlington Post	106	123	68	74	57	77	75	18	17	0	7	622	3
Richmond Hill/Thornhill Liberal	108	114	66	77	64	75	76	17	21	0	1	619	4
Scarborough Mirror	99	125	66	75	57	76	76	17	17	0	3	611	5
Barrie Advance	100	128	68	74	56	75	73	17	17	0	0	608	6
Niagara This Week, St. Catharines	89	117	67	73	60	75	77	16	19	3	8	604	7
Markham Economist & Sun	100	122	66	74	56	77	73	17	13	0	4	602	8
Vaughan Citizen	109	123	66	72	56	75	76	16	8	0	0	601	9
Hamilton Mountain News	92	122	68	70	58	73	77	14	18	0	4	596	10
North York Mirror	96	107	66	75	58	75	75	16	18	0	4	590	11
Etobicoke Guardian	90	112	42	75	57	80	77	18	25	0	3	579	12

CLASS 8 (COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY)												
NEWSPAPER												
	Front Page	Community News	Ed. & Op. Ed Pages	Presentation	Photography	Advertising	Local Features	Sports	TOTAL	RANK		
	150	150	100	100	100	25	100	50	775			
Durham College - The Chronicle	100	100	90	90	90	20	75	45	610	1		
Fanshawe College - Interobang	125	100	90	80	65	20	75	40	595	2		
Algonquin College - Algonquin Times	100	125	0	75	50	20	75	40	485	3		
University of Waterloo - Imprint	100	90	75	75	40	20	50	20	470	4		
Humber College - Et Cetera	75	75	0	60	60	10	75	40	395	5		
Loyalist College - Pioneer	75	75	0	40	40	0	40	0	270	6		

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