

## **CLASS 01 - GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Forest Park Review, Staff. Oct. 12 and Dec. 14 issues. "Far and away, the best entry scored high for scope of coverage, writing and photography, community and solid display advertising. Design and opinion also scored high for this paper, as did bright, bold fronts."

**2nd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. Woodstock Independent, General Excellence. "Outstanding community coverage boosted this entry, along with thorough scope of coverage and writing and photography. Distracting lines and poor headline hierarchy hurt the design component of the entry."

**3rd Place:** Mahomet Citizen, Staff. General Excellence. "Excellent community coverage and strong display advertising were this entries best strengths. Writing and photography and editorial vigor helped, but weaker scope of coverage and enterprise kept it from placing higher."

**Honorable Mention:** Peoria County Chronicle, Staff. Peoria County Chronicle General Excellence. "Impressive scope of coverage was this entry's strongest asset, promotion of community and design helped, but weak opinion and enterprise kept paper from placing higher."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Staff. General excellence. "Interestingly, I found this paper just as striking as the photos in the photo contest, which I chose as 1st place as well. It is exceptional in my opinion all around."

**2nd Place:** Republic-Times, Waterloo, Staff. General Excellence for Republic-Times.

**3rd Place:** Effingham & Teutopolis News Report, Staff.  
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**Honorable Mention:** The Enterprise, Plainfield, Staff. Enterprise 4-28-16; Entertprise 10-13-16.

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** The MidWeek, DeKalb, Staff. The MidWeek, DeKalb. "Nice mix of news. Clean design and good use of tab structure. Gives a strong sense of the community."

**2nd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Dan Haley, Dawn Ferencak, Michael Romain, Claire Innis, William Camargo. Austin Weekly News General Excellence.

**3rd Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Staff. Jersey County Journal

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Journal-Standard, Freeport, Staff. General Excellence. "Fantastic design, photos, ads and editorial content. I would subscribe to this paper."

**2nd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Staff. The Register-Mail General Excellence. "Excellent photos and design that make the reader want to go beyond the headline."

**3rd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. Daily Chronicle. "Wonderful designs and photos that add to the strong editorial content."

**Honorable Mention:** Morris Herald-News, Staff. Morris Herald-News. "Strong design and eye-catching photos that make the reader want to actually read the story. Good mix of syndicated and local content."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Staff . Oct. 2, 2016 and Oct. 14, 2016 editions. "Wow, excellent! Great photos, great design, engaging stories and very informative. Your community is very lucky to have you."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Jim Rossow and Staff. The News-Gazette. "Good photos. Great timely subject matter."

**3rd Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Staff. The Herald-News (Joliet). "The Star Wars Day story and photos were great!"

**Honorable Mention:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Staff. The Southern Illinoisan. "Good story on gun violence."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Staff. Chicago Tribune General Excellence. "Well thought out, well written, well designed and well photographed. In an era of scarcity for our business, this was great to see."

**2nd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Staff. Journal Star - General Excellence. "A thoroughly enjoyable paper that's clearly in touch with its community and purpose. Thanks."

**3rd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Staff. The Daily Herald. "The great photographers pull this paper into contention."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times, Staff. Chicago Sun-Times, general excellence, 2 days papers. "A great job all around, but it falls down a bit in visual presentation. The words are enough to earn it a place on the podium."

## **CLASS 02 - COMMUNITY SERVICE**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Oakland Independent, Janice Hunt. Saving history. "This was an excellent example of community service by a newspaper. It collaborated with a nonprofit and played a large role in getting sponsors. Writing was very good."

**2nd Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Staff. 25 Days of Kindness/Operation Secret Santa. "The newspaper went beyond covering the news to encouraging acts of kindness by procuring gift certificates. The video was an excellent touch. Writing was excellent."

**3rd Place:** The Vienna Times, Staff. Vienna Times poll results. "The newspaper's role was more than coverage of events. Setting up the poll and providing graphics and an explanation was a community service."

**Honorable Mention:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. Farmer City Police Secrecy. "The newspaper's community service went beyond covering the news. Asking for records and editorializing took this entry above others. Writing was excellent."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Staff. Heroin series.

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Staff. Veterans coverage.

**3rd Place:** The Hinsdalean, Pamela Lannom. Mental health coverage.

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Terri Simon. Conquering the great divide.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. Fairdale endures. "This entry shows why local papers are important. All too often news stories stop shortly after the event and fail to follow up. This

series of continued coverage has excellent writing and photos along with good graphics and videos."

**2nd Place:** The Journal-Standard, Freeport, Jillian Duchnowski. Freeport Fish Tank. "The paper saw a need to revitalize the community and took the issue into their own hands. Coverage of the contest was informative, entertaining, and interesting."

**3rd Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. DOPESICK: THE HEROIN EPIDEMIC. "This six-part series does a wonderful job explaining the heroin. It is well-researched and paints a complete picture by having each part use a different source and point of view."

**Honorable Mention:** Effingham Daily News, Staff. Pitches to Stitches.

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Rockford Register Star, Staff. Race in the Rock River Valley. "Kudos to the staff of Register Star! Excellent presentation, use of photos, statistics and profiles. Well done keep up the excellent work!"

**2nd Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Angie Muhs . Enough. "Sometimes the media has to take the lead! Well done for creating an awareness throughout the state."

**3rd Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Staff . Dopesick. "Great series and presentation! You have addressed a problem that is not only local, but one that is a national one. Well done!"

**Honorable Mention:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Staff. Small towns, big issues. "Article provides great insight in to what many small/rural towns across America are facing. Well done!"

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Staff. Chicago Violence: A City Wounded. "In-depth, wide-ranging, fantastic journalism that made a herculean effort to examine the causes and toll of gun violence. The first story in the series contained some of the best, most compelling writing I've read. Powerful prose matched by equally powerful images."

**2nd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Staff. City of Disparity. "Love how the newspaper used this ranking as an opportunity to closely examine the validity of the ranking, the reason behind it and what can be done to reverse it. They covered a lot of bases."

**3rd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Jake Griffin. 300 Miles from Flint, Michigan / How Safe Is Our Water? "An authentic effort at public service: shining a light on an important

matter and revealing facts that government agencies charged with protecting public health came up short on."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Marie Wilson. Mental Health Struggles In The Suburbs. "Exhaustive effort here. Not quite as well put together as the others. But I love how hyperlocal such a large newspaper is."

## **CLASS 03 - LOCAL EDITORIAL**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Nothing Routine About D-200 Deal. "Concise, clear writing. Good choice of subject matter and local appeal. Bringing in open meetings law and the role of the newspaper elevates this editorial."

**2nd Place:** Arcola Record-Herald, David Porter. Online Not the Answer. "Good description of the public notices issue. Good defense of status quo. Concise, to the point writing."

**3rd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Do You Care, Springfield? "Concise editorial. Excellent calling out and call to action. Good choice of subject matter and local appeal, but that was common to all the top entries. Final judgment made on effectiveness of writing."

**Honorable Mention:** Arcola Record-Herald, David Porter. State Wasting City's Money. "Clever ending. Gets point across well. Local appeal evident."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Bob Uphues. Transparency, on its head.

**2nd Place:** The Hinsdalean, Pamela Lannom. (Adjective) school board meeting warrants its own wacky Mad Libs.

**3rd Place:** Metropolis Planet, Michele Longworth. Let's hope the board comes to its senses.

**Honorable Mention:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson, Carter Newton. It's time to vote yes.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Eric Olson. Officials must confront 911 issue. "This was an important issue in this community and the blasé attitude expressed by the people in charge needed to be called out. Well done."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Eric Olson. Time for Moeller and Albano to go. "Wow. Who knew local school affairs could be so interesting? Good job of explaining why this was important."

**3rd Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. JG-TC editorial. "Tough questions that needed to be posed in the wake of what appears to be business as usual in Illinois."

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Tom Martin. Spotlight on city water unwarranted

## **CLASS 03 - LOCAL EDITORIAL**

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, The Southern Editorial Board. Illinois budget impasse. "Love the strong, decisive language and firm calls for action."

**2nd Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Angie Muhs, Kate Schott. State budget crisis. "These editorials do a superb job of holding leaders accountable and demonstrate a firm grasp on a nuanced issue."

**3rd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Jim Dunn. Full-time lawmaker, part-time effort. "Love the watchdog-like devotion to the public interest and the plainspoken language."

**Honorable Mention:** Rockford Register Star, Wally Haas, Chuck Sweeny. County Board Power Grab. "A prime example of how a media organization can hold public officials accountable and enact change."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, John Lampinen, Jim Slusher, Editorial Board. The Presidential Campaign. "Terrific writing. Thoughtful, persuasive without being preachy. Far and away the best of the class, a superb entry."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tom McNamee, Tom Frisbie, Marlen Garcia. Chicago Housing Authority troubles. "Strong writing and persuasive editorials backed up this terrific watchdog reporting project. The editorials offered real solutions to an issue that has plagued Chicago for two decades."

**3rd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Mike Bailey. State Budget. "Very strong writing. Persuasive. I want to take off a shoe and pound it on the table."

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Mike Bailey. Need Safer, Not Sadder, Roads. "Well done. If there had been other entries on this topic, this entry might have contended for top 3."

## **CLASS 04 - EDITORIAL PAGE**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Lebanon Advertiser, David Porter. Lebanon Advertiser Editorial Page.

**2nd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. Woodstock Independent, Editorial Page.

**3rd Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki and staff. LeRoy Farmer City Press Editorial Page.

**Honorable Mention:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Ford County Record editorial page.

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Galena Gazette, Carter Newton, Hillary Dickerson. Editorial pages.

**2nd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Ken Trainor. Editorial pages from April 20 and September 21.

**3rd Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Staff. April 21 and June 16 editorial pages.

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Staff. Editorial page.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. Opinions. "Bright and compelling pages draw readers into a host of issues and discussions. Pages leave the reader with much to consider."

**2nd Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Staff. Jersey County Journal Edit Page.

**3rd Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Marylee Rasar. Editorial Pages.

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. JG-TC Opinions page.

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Angie Muhs, Kate Schott. State Journal-Register Editorial Page. "Solid pages. Smart, strong staff editorials. Good presence of local voices."

**2nd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Jim Dunn. Sauk Valley Media Opinion Pages. "Robust editorial pages. I like the standing element tracking the state's budget stalemate."

**3rd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Don Crim, Ken Jones, Doug Wilson. Herald-Whig editorial pages. "Robust, hyper-local editorial pages. The historical column seems like an odd fit for the pages, but otherwise I like the content."

**Honorable Mention:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Staff. Editorial page. "Like the thumbs-up/thumbs-down feature."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tom McNamee, Tom Frisbie, Marlen Garcia. Chicago Sun-Times editorial / op-ed pages, 2 full sections. "Two strong editorials. Forceful and persuasive on important topics. Strongest layout/design of the class. There is a lot here for readers to digest and debate."

**2nd Place:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Kenda Burrows. Viewpoints. "Terrific local content, sharp design. Terrific content for readers. Editorials were solid but not quite as strong as the winning entry."

**3rd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Editorial Board. The Daily Herald. "Loved the page with Clinton endorsement. Smartly written and planned. Great approach to a presidential endorsement. The other day was decent but would have preferred more local content."

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Mike Bailey. Journal Star Editorial Page. "Strong editorials; decent design. Except for Cepeda column the rest of the content wasn't local."

## **CLASS 05 - NEWS REPORTING - SINGLE STORY**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Bear the dog. "Upsetting story, told well. Good job."

**2nd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Homebuyers' first question: 'What are the taxes?' "Strong writing turns what could be a dry topic into a story that people can relate to their own lives."

**3rd Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Staff. Rescue turns to recovery effort. "Strong, comprehensive story about a local tragedy and the conditions that caused it."

**Honorable Mention:** The Navigator & Journal-Register, Albion, Duane Crays. Soldier's journey home ends after 46 years. "Moving story."

## **Division B**

**1st Place:** Cook County Chronicle, Chicago, Jean Lotus. Frustrated Hines veterans give up on Melrose Park housing plan. "Great investigative reporting. What was quite impressive was the way the writer blended the different sources comments together logically, offering a fair and easy-to-follow portrait of a complex situation."

**2nd Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Tim Inklebarger and Bob Uphues. Heroin use rising in the public sphere. "A random drug overdose happens on a reporter's beat, and a week later the newsroom turns out this exhaustive look at how a national problem is directly affecting the local community. Great journalism at work."

**3rd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Michael Romain. In Oak Park teen's death, a tale of two cities. "Capturing the community dialogue surrounding major events can be tough, especially when that dialogue deals with topics like economic segregation, poverty, racism, gun violence, ect. This article manages to feel grounded in spite of taking all that on."

**Honorable Mention:** Mason County Democrat, Havana, Wendy Martin. Oh my, Mayflies; Mayfly Mayhem. "Wonderful details in this nightmarish bug tale. The accompanying explainer article was a welcome addition."

## **Division C**

**1st Place:** Illinois Times, Springfield, Bruce Rushton. Faces of Jennifer Watkins. "A fascinating tale on which the reporter is clearly well-versed. This is a gripping portrait of an odd case. While all of Mr. Rushton's entries were superb, the detail about the jury deliberating for 90 minutes AND managing to eat lunch put this one over the top. Well done."

**2nd Place:** Illinois Times, Springfield, Bruce Rushton. Shipwreck. "The breadth of research that went into this story is truly impressive. Those must have been some burly affidavits and email chains. Another strong portrayal of a zany case from Mr. Rushton."

**3rd Place:** Illinois Times, Springfield, Bruce Rushton. Lawyers behaving badly. "A very well-executed story. All of the judge's comments are teeming with flavor and really add to the piece. A stellar example of local media's watchdog role."

**Honorable Mention:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Michael Romain. After fire, Austin Station tenants smoking mad. "This is great community reporting. Strong work."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Commercial-News, Danville, Carol Roehm. Head of the class? "This story included the national context as well as details about the local problem facing districts."

**2nd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Robert Connelly. Health Impact of Screens. "This has a mature writing style and it explored an important question about how screens affect children."

**3rd Place:** Effingham Daily News, Dawn Schabbing, Bill Grimes. Ammonia leak.

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Eric Olson, Brett Rowland. Principal alleges sexual harassment. "The story reflects the initiative that the reporter and the paper took to get the documents needed for this story."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Doug Wilson, Edward Husar. Global Impact. "Really impressive piece. Excellent research, well-written and the use of graphics is amazing."

**2nd Place:** Rockford Register Star, Jeff Kolkey. Born Addicted. "Well-written and researched. Really appreciate the reporter speaking with the mother. Excellent use of graphics. Photos were stirring."

**3rd Place:** Rockford Register Star, Corina Curry. Sub Nation. "Excellent! Nicely written, comprehensive look at an issue that I didn't realize existed. Very good use of graphics, fact boxes, etc."

**Honorable Mention:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, John Dykstra. Suicide breaks the silence. "Very well written, moving story. The lead was excellent, and the quotes moved the story along nicely. Good use of sidebars."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Christy Gutowski, Jeff Coen and Jason Meisner. 4 Accuse Hastert of Sexual Abuse. "The Tribune's expose of the true depth of Denny Hastert's previous sexual deviancy — and the obvious dogged determination of reporters and dedication of resources to the story by the Trib — make it the clear choice for excellence in the category this year. This is an example of the finest work that journalists do, when given the latitude and support to chase all angles on a story. This is 'Spotlight'-like stuff. Expertly crafted, and deftly

handled, considering the crimes and victims involved. What a tremendous public service was done, in painting a historically accurate picture of such a public figure."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Frank Main. Cops turned blind eye to rapes. "Frank Main guides us through the truly shocking story expertly. His reliance on the grandmother's plea that the Robbins PD just 'didn't' care, was the perfect human touch that simply encapsulates an amazing lack of human connection by police."

**3rd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Joe Mahr, Matthew Walberg, Angie Leventis Lourgou. Games tout big prizes, payouts not as grand. "Impressive topic to tackle, requiring some amazing data mining and tons of man-hours, clearly."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times, Dan Mihalopoulos. UNO's secret spending spree.

## **CLASS 06 - NEWS REPORTING - SERIES**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Charges in Drug Bust Dropped. "Good work asking and continuing to ask why something happened. That's the way stories like this get reported and written."

**2nd Place:** The Navigator & Journal-Register, Albion, Duane Crays. Memorial bracelet; Flagman's mission; Soldier's journey. "Great piece(s). This no doubt was an emotional event for the community."

**3rd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Home Rule Census Dispute Series. "Good series of stories that took a local protest and gave the readers both sides while the community considered something often seen as boring and dry."

**Honorable Mention:** Randolph County Herald Tribune, Chester, Pete Spitler, managing editor. Chester Open Meetings Act violations. "Good job continuing to follow this story to ensure the paper and the reader's right to know about public body doings."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Mike Plunkett and John M. Galer. Referendum For A New High School. "Solid reporting, good graphics. You covered all the important topics and didn't leave me with any questions."

**2nd Place:** Cook County Chronicle, Chicago, Jean Lotus and Kelli Duncan. Undocumented immigrants in Cook County. "Solid coverage of an emotional, hot topic."

**3rd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. Galena schools: What isn't working? "Really in-depth coverage of your schools. The photos really added to the coverage."

**Honorable Mention:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Michael Romain. St. Edmund School closes.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. DOPESICK: THE HEROIN EPIDEMIC. "Day 1 basic story was well-written for being more of an essay on heroin history, but nice mix of quotes. I learned a few things about the drug's past and new influx reasons from Mexico. Narcan story was solid and well reported. Day 2 is a well-written story and looks at local level of how to deal with pain killers after CDC report. Nice explanation of how it came to be pushed in medical field and now their backpedaling. Day 3. Good setup using the family's house to set the scene. Good storytelling of the family's pain and honesty and getting the family to open up. Good raw emotions from the mother and her mission going forward. Day 4 not as strong but had good local information. Wpould have liked to see more on the cops working as medical professionals angle that was mentioned. Day 5 had some interesting info on other drugs. A good mix of how to help or options they're trying. Day 6. Nice ending story of hope, and good look at a personal story and letting it stand on its own, in her own words."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, David Thomas, Lauraann Wood. Judge lets clerk hear cases: The fallout, the election, the lawsuits. "Very clean and concise writing. Explained the topic well as the story developed and what it meant for the coming elections and the process. Answered all the questions of what next and advanced the story with each article. The final story was able to capture all of the past issues and help explain the final ruling with good context."

**3rd Place:** Morris Herald-News, Heidi Litchfield. Great Lakes Basin. "This is a well-reported and well-written series, but only got 2 of the 3 days? Where is third day? Day 1 story did a good job of setting scene and letting me know the people on the ground level who would be affected the most. I think it was a balanced story and hit from all angles. I would like to know more background on the man who is pitching the line and what is interest is in an \$8 billion project. What's his motivation in staying on this so long? An interesting large-scale story that was brought to a local level. Would like to see day 3."

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Staff. Our Towns. "Really, really nice story-telling. Getting to the heart of the town and the issues and not making it a rah-rah story. The stories were all compelling, and what a smart idea. Good details in the series with the numbers, maps, photos, pull quotes. Able to get over the repetition of the small-town life with really nice overall package and presentation. The wrapup story was very informative and put the local spin in context with the national picture."

## **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Times, Ottawa, David Giuliani. Two-day series. "Fascinating! I've never heard of this type of thing happening with large amounts of cash being seized because they're simply suspected of being connected with crimes - and then no charges being filed. And then the local governments who seized the funds can just use it as they please in 'special accounts?' Wow. Thorough use of open-records laws to dig up the data and compelling personal accounts. Strong writing and good selection of quotes helps make this a compelling series."

**2nd Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Lauren Leone-Cross. When Heroin Hits Home. "The story of the Moore family, of Ali and Dale is powerful and inspiring. It's amazing that they were willing to talk with you for the series. I'm sure this made an impact on families who have personal experience with this problem as well as serving as a cautionary tale for others."

**3rd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Mary Schenk and Johnathan Hettinger. Matt Rush saga. "Wow. Great job using sources, open-records laws and old-fashioned digging to follow the true cost of an officer who has apparently abused his position for years in an example of police brutality."

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Angel Sierra, Kathleen Schultz, and Pam Eggemeier. Heroin in the Sauk Valley. "Nice angles on this problem's cost to the community and possible solutions - learned a lot about naloxone from your coverage. Nice job."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak, Chris Fusco, Mick Dumke, Brett Chase, Darnell Little. Beyond the rubble: Life after the CHA upheaval. "Anyone who recalls the immense islands of public housing that used to be so remarkable along the Chicago skyline will find this series fascinating. What a great idea to look at the fallout — and the Sun-Times' expertly crafted series unearths some amazing gems, from incredible corruption and abuse of the system, to those folks caught between the cracks of one of the greatest civil upheavals ever undertaken."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Staff. Chicago's Cop Crisis.

**3rd Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Beth Hundsdorfer, George Pawlaczyk. Oliver Hamilton series. "The BND series that exposed Oliver Hamilton is an example of the best work that newspapers can do. The complexity of FOIA and public records made reporters' efforts that much more remarkable."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Michael J. Berens and Patricia Callahan. Suffering in Secret.

## **CLASS 07 - GOVERNMENT BEAT REPORTING**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Woodstock IL City Council Government Beat. "Solid beat reporting with photos and graphics. Excellent work."

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Police beat (The case of Bear the dog). "Great job following this story. Very engaging work."

**3rd Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. City of Farmer City. "Good job staying with this story and giving readers pertinent information."

**Honorable Mention:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Illinois Human Rights Commission. "Strong commitment to telling this story as it unfolded through various venues."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. Galena city government. "Love the checkmark section at the end of articles. I also like the use of the shaded boxes."

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. Galena schools: What isn't working? "Solid coverage, but I was left wanting to know more about the controversy surrounding Herbst's suspension."

**3rd Place:** The Niles Bugle, Igor Studenkov. Park Ridge in The Niles Bugle.

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Goldie Rapp. Bureau Valley School Board.

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Illinois Times, Springfield, Bruce Rushton. New auditor general kept campaign fund active. "Rushton's coverage of the Mautino campaign spending story is impressive in its thoroughness, determination and attention to detail."

**2nd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Igor Studenkov. COPA slowly taking shape.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Brett Rowland. Court beat coverage. "Excellent and clear coverage of a complex court case. Felt like I was in the courtroom."

**2nd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Ben Zigterman. Galesburg School District 205. "Rare coverage of school board that goes outside of the meetings. Thorough explanation of the budget. Well researched and shows the impact of board decisions."

**3rd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Rhonda Gillespie. Northern Illinois University coverage. "Good coverage on diverse stories at NIU. Would have liked more focus on the budget and its effects."

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Michael Smothers. Public Safety Beat Reporting. "Good use of statistics and explaining what they mean."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Johnathan Hettinger. Champaign, Urbana government. "Covering police and the courts is a demanding beat and this reporter demonstrated enterprise and in-depth reporting in these entries."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Julie Wurth. University of Illinois. "College reporting doesn't often have the drama of court, police or other beats. The reporter showed enterprise in getting out and covering the beat, fleshing-out budget cuts and talking to students."

**3rd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Mary Schenk. Champaign County courts. "Strong entries. Reporter clearly has her beat well-covered."

**Honorable Mention:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Bob Okon. Joliet beat. "Solid, professional work. This entry was simply edged out by others that involved more enterprise or impact."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak. A selection of reporting on Chicago city property taxes. "Mr. Novak's mastery of the property tax beat is the foundation of these high-impact stories. Thoroughly reported and well-told."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Diane Rado. Diane Rado --- education. "Rado has a broad reach in describing problems in Illinois and Chicago schools. Strong stories. Only criticism is they were too dense at times and might have been made easier to read."

**3rd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Lauren FitzPatrick. Education reporting. "Solid reporting on a beat that doesn't often lend itself to drama --except perhaps in Chicago Public Schools."

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Beth Hundsdorfer. Beth Hundsdorfer beat. "Honorable mention. Good court reporting."

## **CLASS 08 - BUSINESS/ECONOMIC REPORTING**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Peoria County Chronicle, Mary M. Flory. Can historic districts and residential co-exist. "Interesting local take on a subject that affects communities nationwide."

**2nd Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. I want to be the best chef in the world.' "I can't count the number of restaurant stories I have written over the years, but this feature takes a fresh look at the subject and conveys the enthusiasm of the owners. Good work."

**3rd Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Pam Monson. Full steam ahead - railroad proposal ready for comment. "Informative work on a topic that is unique to your community. Strong entry."

**Honorable Mention:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Pam Monson. Paraphernalia celebrating 50 years. "Strong writing resulted in an entertaining read. Good job."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Hinsdalean, Pamela Lannom & Ken Knutson. Holiday gift guide. "This story series and each individual story was fun to read, and had great writing, tons of local interest and showed real community spirit and innovative reporting by highlighting nonprofits and their leaders."

**2nd Place:** The Hinsdalean, Pamela Lannom. Ask an expert: How can parents raise children who are not spoiled? "This article was just plain, good writing that was easy to read. The columnist did a great job of reporting on a presentation, without being too wordy."

**3rd Place:** Cook County Chronicle, Chicago, Jean Lotus. Lollapalooza food vendor pay wristband problems. "The reporter did a great job of interviewing a variety of sources and reporting on a significant local economic activity that is being impacted by new technology."

**Honorable Mention:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Bob Uphues. Burlington Street project puts on the squeeze. "Good writing on a topic that impacts many business owners, so it was great to read diverse comments from many in the business community."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Igor Studenkov. Business incubator planned for Garfield Park.

**2nd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Michael Romain. Austin positions for funding wave.

**3rd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Igor Studenkov. West Side area voted a 'thrive' zone.

**Honorable Mention:** Illinois Times, Springfield, Bruce Rushton. Sounds good.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Robert Connelly, Ben Zigterman, Kiannah Sepeda-Miller. Sandburg Mall. "Excellent and thorough coverage. It doesn't just report on the buying and selling but shows what it means in a broader context."

**2nd Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Owen Lasswell. Handcrafted and perfected by phone. "A great feature that gives readers a personal look into the candy business."

**3rd Place:** The Journal-Standard, Freeport, Jillian Duchnowski. The Monmouth business competition. "A smart article that provides context and humanizes the contest."

**Honorable Mention:** Effingham Daily News, Dawn Schabbing, Stan Polanski. Medical Marijuana. "Good coverage of a national issue that utilizes multiple sources and stories. However, the quality of articles were inconsistent."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Rockford Register Star, Isaac Guerrero, Brittany Keeperman. Airborne: \$40 million jet repair hub readies for takeoff. "Clear winner in a crowded field. Fantastic effort on a major business coming to town. This special section does an excellent job of taking apart every aspect of this business, how it came to be, and what it means for the community. From the by-the-numbers, to the list of local contractors, to even the coordinated and targeted advertisements, this section shines in its service to the community in a deep look into a business that will have an immense impact on readers."

**2nd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Doug Wilson, Edward Husar. Global Impact. "Really fantastic look at this port project 20 years in the making. Good explainer piece on how this project could not only transform trade on the Mississippi, but affect 11 counties in a three-state region. The added elements of graphics and a timeline really help bring readers into this piece more."

**3rd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Deborah Gertz Husar. Farm & Field agriculture coverage. "This was a really good section, helping readers understand how farming and agriculture affects their daily lives, as low prices, for example, trickle down to equipment dealers and the like. This section was good in that it touched so many aspects from what's new (in the cover crops) to what kind of markets farmers will face, to an understanding of their role in international trade. Writing was clear and concise, and fantastic use of quotes to let the farmers tell their stories."

**Honorable Mention:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Molly Parker. Frackonomics.

"Interesting look at a community that is counting on fracking to revitalize a community, yet is still waiting it out. The story had good background, and good explanations on how the oil and gas industry could help."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak, Chris Fusco. Playing the property-tax game.

"Fantastic and comprehensive look into Chicago's property tax structure, how a massive tax hike affects different property owners differently, and some major inequities in the system that seems to be rife with abuse -- one lawyer at a time. I loved every bit of this series, and I'm sure readers were thankful for this steroidal dose of transparency. The only missing piece? Was there any change as a result of these pieces shining a spotlight into a clearly troubled system?"

**2nd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Alexia Elejalde-Ruiz. Chicago's youth unemployment crisis. "This is a stunning example of using a trend, coupled with personal stories and statistics to tell a story of 'human disinvestment.' Comprehensive, exhaustive, look into this growing problem of youth unemployment in Chicago. Great visuals of one homeless young man struggling to turn his internship into a regular paycheck. My only regret is the jump to this story was not included and I really would have liked to read the end of his tale. The good thing there is you had me hooked, wanting more."

**3rd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak, Chris Fusco, Mick Dumke and Brett Chase.

Beyond the rubble: Life after the CHA upheaval. "Impressive look into Chicago's housing authority disparities after the Great Transformation, a bureaucratic solution to a social problem of public housing. While much of the series shed some serious light onto slumlords using and abusing the system, and a bureaucracy blindly allowing it, there were other entries that seemed a bit melodramatic, sort of overblowing the story, such as people continuing to live in crime-ridden areas after the projects were removed; and the landlord who was jailed for operating a drug ring, in addition to his landlord duties --was that really CHA lining pockets, or was it a case of criminal doing what he does best and deceiving people around him? Still, a really intense look into this program, that one would hope resulted in changes to the system."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Samantha Bomkamp, Alexia Elejalde-Ruiz, Lauren Zumbach. The Gentrification of Fulton Market. "One of the three stories is missing; however, the two that are there provide a compelling look at how Fulton Market has changed through the years, as more white collar jobs move in. Of the two stories I was able to look at, I thought they were a really good examination of this change; great writing and great use of quotes. I especially loved the visual created by the quote that this neighborhood 'was polluted with Uber drivers.'"

## **CLASS 09 - SPORTS NEWS**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. Panthers make program history. "Good summary .. the writer painted a good historical picture with his words .. "

**2nd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. As Cubs Crack Curse, Woodstock Celebrates. "Good work .. the writer painted a vivid scene where the fans gathered for a piece of baseball history. The picture helped a lot."

**3rd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Whitney Rupp. Lady 'Canes Take Second in State. "Good work."

**Honorable Mention:** Piatt County Journal-Republican, Monticello, Andrew Helregel. Sages act of kindness overshadows game. "Nice story that was set up well .."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Hinsdalean, Pamela Lannom. Rugby makes its debut at Hinsdale Central. "Good lede that gets reader into story. Good quotes, too, but loses flow halfway through when it turns into transition, quote, transition, quote ... setup."

**2nd Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Kevin Hieronymus. Finishing with a flourish. "Good job of working match details into the story, but would have been better with more emotion in story and what emotion there was higher up. It was a state championship, after all."

**3rd Place:** Rantoul Press, Zack Carpenter. Williams' key third quarter run sparks Eagles' comeback. "Good idea for lede but too wordy. Quotes were good but needed too much help. Should have gone with more paraphrasing or partial quotes."

**Honorable Mention:** Effingham & Teutopolis News Report, Steve Raymond. Raymond Girls Sectional. "Stories are solid but nothing special. Would have been nice to hear more from players and less from coaches. Also, 'admitted,' 'noted' references bothered me. Stick with 'said' when quoting people."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Eddie Carifio. Triumphant return. "Great story, great quotes about an emotional night for a senior."

**2nd Place:** The Commercial-News, Danville, Chad Dare. Mission accomplished. "Good use of quotes to further story. Good track story that sums up careers of participants."

**3rd Place:** Pekin Daily Times, Joey Wagner. Berg blocks her way to history. "Strong story on a side of basketball that is often forgotten. Good quotes that show the understanding of history and the importance of defense."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Jesse Severson. Hiawatha snaps playoff drought. "Solid game story with quotes backing up the emotion mentioned in the lead."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Times, Ottawa, J.T. Pedelty, William Linn. On to Indy! Streator 12-Year-Old All-Stars win State. "The set up for this Little League gamer is great. Quotes, which can be tough when talking with kids this age, are very good. And this was reported on deadline!"

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Bob Asmussen. Behind the scenes with the new athletic director. "This was a complete package. It included engaging breakout material and great detail, including the photo of mom taking photos with her cellphone. While the news was not necessarily new, the reporter did well to walk readers back into this story and keep them interested."

**3rd Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Joe Stevenson. Huntley's Cole Raines gets hit by line drive. "There was great suspense at the outset. Sourced tweets are a nice touch. Kudos to the reporter for recognizing it wasn't about the game but about the hit to the head, and running with it. Bonus points for video!"

**Honorable Mention:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Jim Benson. Kerner, defense carry Chiefs 'to the top.' "This story provides context in the form of good background in the 2A championship from a year ago. Well done."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Neil Steinberg. King of the world' dies at 74. "Beautiful writing. Easy to follow. Neil Steinberg takes his readers way back in time and does so in a way that makes one feel as if it's a true journey. Good use of archives. Love that for this piece political participation is as important and pugilistic success."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Staff. What a wonderful world — Cubs win first World Series in 108 years. "It's not easy to make 'godforsakenness' work. Morrissey does in this piece. 'The last great American sports story, the story of the team that couldn't and seemingly never would,

is gone for good now.' Beautiful writing, with layers of detail lower in the piece. This one gave judges 'all the feels.'"

**3rd Place:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Marc Nesseler. Guess who missed Frakes' miracle game-winning shot? "Love this story. It surprises readers by using an unorthodox storytelling technique in sports (and elsewhere): go to mom. The headline, lede and photo all work together to share a delightful piece about a last-second shot that made ESPN's plays of the day."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times, Staff. Chapman saves Cubs' hopes, sends Series back to Cleveland. "Morrissey writes with a lyrical touch in this piece. Cleveland has never looked so good. Blue lips and mirror analogy is great fun."

## **CLASS 10 - SPORTS FEATURE**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Mahomet Citizen, Jason Brown. Front-Row Seat to History. "Easy to tell from reading that the scout found his perfect job. The reporter did a great job drawing him out."

**2nd Place:** Oakland Independent, Janice Hunt. Smithson still coaching at 80. "Great story .. the final quote was perfect."

**3rd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Andrew Rosten. Play for him.' "I love third-person stories like this. One suggestion for the future is to eliminate any references to the writer .. 'someone and the sports editor noticed' -- the joy of a third-person story like this is the only way anyone sees these things is to be the author."

**Honorable Mention:** The Braidwood Journal, Brent Sumner. Earl Folkstead: Just a fan in the stands. "Loved the story. He's quite the devoted fan, no question."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Hinsdalean, Pamela Lannom. Game day a scramble for Central's AD. "Very well written. I like the approach. it tells me a lot about who the AD is and how he operates. One-source stories usually don't work for me, but this one did."

**2nd Place:** Rantoul Press, Zack Carpenter. Turning point. "Good lede, good emotion. Really made me feel how strong the player felt about redeeming himself and his team."

**3rd Place:** The Bolingbrook Bugle, Mark Gregory. Tuck Helps UCONN. "Well written, good information, and nice to have so much from Auriemma."

**Honorable Mention:** The Joliet Bugle, Mark Gregory. Ferguson. "Nice story and well-sourced with comments from Colts head coach and assistant."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Claire Jacobi. Cougars host families. "Good lede that draws readers into the story, good information and quotes throughout."

**2nd Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Jason Rossi. Summer football SLM. "Solid story with good information, background and sourcing. Story is organized well to keep readers' interest throughout."

**3rd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Michael Romain. Everywhere is Wrigleyville now. "Story idea is a good one, talking to folks who couldn't be at victory parade about Cubs' historic World Series win."

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban Life Core Group, Jason Rossi. Benson MVP. "Nice approach in the lede to get readers into the story with player's understanding of program's history and his place in it. Good information, selection of quotes and sourcing."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Owen Lasswell. Punching Out Parkinson's. "Great lead, great story, great quotes. Lead made me want to read more. Quotes furthered the story and information about Rock Steady Boxing was interesting."

**2nd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Matthew Wheaton. Nobody's pitching in anymore. "Great story about something not everyone understands. A dying sport that people used to do in droves and what the park can do with the courts and what it means to the people who played/play the sport. Great quotes and package."

**3rd Place:** Effingham Daily News, Ryan Czachorski. Showing Heart. "Great story with an interesting subject. Her determination showed in every quote and word written. Good job."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Jesse Severson. NIU grad meets lifesaver. "Great lead and follow through with quotes. Way to tell the story."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Matt Schuckman. Wanna play. "A great slice of life story that came from the community, not a scheduled game or writer's beat. It's great community journalism."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Anthony Zilis. Sky's the limit. "An outstanding feature that breaks some of the formula on the typical athlete of the year pieces. Extra reporting was apparent."

**3rd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Mat Mikesell. We should have died. "A range of voices brings energy to this story and helps the readers know more about a harrowing incident."

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Patrick Mason. Perfect Push: Work Ethic, Talent a Potent Combination for Dixon Sophomore. "Some thoughtful writing helps convey a difficult journey for a local athlete."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Paul Sullivan. The Weight: Chapters 1,7,9,14 &16. "Ambitious and sprawling, this feature captured a story of a lifetime using access to voices of the present and the past. Great work."

**2nd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, John Dietz. Stan Mikita's Kids Share Memories Of Their Dad. "The best features resonate because they go beyond the narrow confines of a beat. This sports feature has lessons for all readers."

**3rd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Kirk Wessler. Ben Zobrist: True Grit. "This well-sourced feature gives readers insight into the core of a newsmaker on the sports beat."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times, Patrick Finley. How to get over a loss,' Patrick Finley, Chicago Sun-Times. "Sometimes great stories can be found just by taking a closer look at a single detail -- in this case, the strength of a hockey stick."

## **CLASS 11 - FEATURE WRITING**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Braidwood Journal, Brent Sumner. R-C teen ready for barrel racing World Championships. "Amid a lot of good entries, it was the lede: the simplicity but the directness of it, that encompassed and contrasted the amount of time to prepare for this, and the time which it will be decided, that made the difference."

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Hershey the cat. "Everyone loves stories like this. Readers are always looking for 'different' angles like this one. Something of interest and something interesting."

**3rd Place:** Peoria County Chronicle, Elise Zwicky. Carloads of help and hope form Pekin to homeless in Chicago. "A good story about a good cause and good thing this man is doing."

**Honorable Mention:** Coal City Courant, Ann Gill. Forced landing on the Kankakee River.

"Great recount of a historical event that obviously had everyone talking back then, and no doubt talking about it again after the story ran."

## **Division B**

**1st Place:** Effingham & Teutopolis News Report, Steve Raymond. Not typical BAILEY. "This was the clear winner. Slogging through more than 30 entries in this category, this story woke me up and kept me engaged. It's a perfect Valentine's holiday story with a lot of fun for the reader to discover."

**2nd Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Bob Skolnik. The Komarek constant. "What a great way to tie history and contemporary events into a retiree's profile. The story was simple yet strong. Just right for the subject matter."

**3rd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Ken Trainor. Looking through a long lens. "What a fun, thoroughly readable story. The writer really captured the personality and experience of the subject."

**Honorable Mention:** North County News, Red Bud, Mary Koester. Red Bud couple holiday surprise. "This was a great story with a lot of interesting detail about what happens when someone does a good deed. I wanted to keep reading to the end."

## **Division C**

**1st Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Michael Romain. Second chances, smoked and slow-cooked. "Great material, excellent lede and good narrative and structure. A little bummed by the transposing of 'peace' where it was supposed to be 'piece,' but the rest of the story overcame the error."

**2nd Place:** The Downers Grove Bugle, Jonathan Samples. Ben's First Race. "Powerful stuff and good lede-in on the sensitive subject of suicide. My only complaint is a lack of balance in terms of talking maybe to one of Ben's friends or family members for more comment. Some powerful material was probably left on the cutting room floor."

**3rd Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Susan O'Neill. Turkey duck mom. "This story is too cute. I just wish there had been more 'human element' — there's just one quote and you can't of course, quote a turkey. But some expert comment would have been better. Still, great narrative and storytelling. Very fun."

**Honorable Mention:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Michael Romain. After lung transplant, Austin pastor is on his second wind.

## **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Tom Loewy. What have we lost? "I thought this was a powerful package. The piece on the data gave the vignettes important context. The vignette on Josh Yeast was the most touching."

**2nd Place:** The Daily Republican, Marion, Holly Kee. The queen with something extra. "The additional context on down syndrome helped this personal profile stand apart."

**3rd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Tom Loewy. Serenity Outside Walls. "The fact that the reporter spent time with the subject right after leaving prison, set this narrative apart."

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Nick McMillion. Goofy Ridge residents dispel myths about reputation. "This piece captured the place well and it had colorful quotes."

## **Division E**

**1st Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Julie Wurth. A voice that carries. "Captures the spirit of the subject well with unique details and colorful quotes."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Noelle McGee. A lovely tradition. "A simple story that tugs at the heart strings with vivid details and a sophisticated writing style."

**3rd Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Jason Nevel. An officer's anguish, a happy ending. "Love the writer's dedication to following this man's story as it develops."

**Honorable Mention:** Rockford Register Star, Sarah Wolf. Ballerina Man. "A well-done piece that moves beyond obvious cliches and stereotypes about the American homeless."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Phil Luciano. Train death remains a mystery. "From the lede on, this piece is heart breaking, gut wrenching and infinitely compelling. I wanted to know more about the strange case of Charles Isaac Wood and will be looking forward to updates if and when they emerge. Bravo!"

**2nd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Dann Gire. A Life Interrupted. "From the lede forward, this story compels. I was left craving justice for Barbara, despite the lack of opportunity to prosecute Urlacher."

**3rd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Rosemary Regina Sobol and Mary Schmich. Speck Nurses.

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Elizabeth Donald. In Edwardsville, a homely little tree is spot for secret Santas.

## **CLASS 12 - ORIGINAL COLUMN**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Oakland Independent, Janice Hunt. Janice Hunt columns. "What I love about these columns beyond the wonderful writing and creative use of language is a sense that the writer's voice truly captures the character and charm of her community."

**2nd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, John Daab. On the Town. "Well written columns with enough information to make them interesting and enough humor to make them fun. Great job!"

**3rd Place:** Arcola Record-Herald, David Porter. Ramblin' Man. "Columns cover plenty of life's lessons without coming off preachy. Good clean writing."

**Honorable Mention:** Cass County Star-Gazette, Beardstown, Roy Roberts. Trivia Too. "Warm and personal columns, but certainly not self absorbed. This man obviously feels what he writes and is able to draw the reader into each and every emotion."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Ken Trainor. Three columns by Ken Trainor. "Your columns demonstrate how strong story telling can be used effectively to deliver a message. Well done!"

**2nd Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Shannon Serpette. Columns. "I liked your thoughtful approach to a variety of timely topics."

**3rd Place:** Effingham & Teutopolis News Report, Herb Meeker. Meeker. "I found a great deal of substance in your columns - just the stuff to get readers thinking!"

**Honorable Mention:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Mary (Galer) Herschelman. A Grace-Filled Journey. "I admire your positive approach to life! I hope your readers take your words to heart."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Jennifer DuBose. DuBose column. "These were tales of motherly love, national politics and community life, told in vivid detail and with genuine emotion, which are, after all, the secrets of good writing. Well done."

**2nd Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Rick Holinger. Holinger column.

"Conversational, if a bit curmudgeonly, River Town Chronicles serves up an entertaining view of local life with some sharp commentary on the side. Good reads all."

**3rd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Arlene Jones. Arlene Jones commentary. "Arlene Jones shows us that powerful voices don't reside exclusively in powerful media. Her take on Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel and proposed recall legislation was superb."

**Honorable Mention:** The Downers Grove Bugle, Daniel Smrokowski. Special Voices.

"Honorable mention to Daniel Smrokowski and especially to his newspaper for providing this well articulated voice for a community that is too often silent."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Tom Loewy. Tom Loewy Columns. "Tom Loewy is the clear winner in this category. His columns reach deep into the reader's head, and in crystal clear plain language, unravel complex human emotions that put the reader into the story in an intimate, poignant way."

**2nd Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Penny Weaver. Penny Weaver columns. "I doubt readers are ever confused about where Penny Weaver stands. Direct, forceful writing about community issues that matter, with clear calls to action."

**3rd Place:** Benton Evening News, Geoff Ritter. Geoff Ritter columns. "Expect big things in the future from Geoff Ritter, who's new to Benton, Illinois if these three columns are any indication. Nice clear writing about city issues."

**Honorable Mention:** The Daily Republican, Marion, John Homan. John Homan columns.

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Julie Wurth. Are we there yet? "Smart and unique, Wurth's columns put a fresh spin on the issues they cover."

**2nd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Christopher Heimerman. Learn And Live. "These columns are clever and fun to read."

**3rd Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Mike Penkava. Mike Penkava columns. "Mike has a real way with words and a unique perspective that kept me reading."

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Christopher Heimerman. The People's Voice. "Enjoyed the approachable and often-touching stories of locals."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Dahleen Glanton. Dahleen Glanton. "Powerful pieces! Her columns on the need for blacks in Chicago to fight violence, and her column on how sad it is that the city has become numb to homicides were compelling and courageous. And her column stating that Clinton is no Obama spoke to the party loyalty issues in our political structure. All well-written and thoughtful."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Mark Brown. 3 columns by Mark Brown, Chicago Sun-Times. "The column about the widower following through and adopting the young boy was moving without being sappy. The angle he took on the Parkway Gardens housing complex -- that school would be out soon and that the youngsters who live there would be idle and in danger -- was good and I liked that he went there to see it firsthand. And an amazing tale of the family from Burma and what it took for them to get to America."

**3rd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Burt Constable. Burt Constable's Suburban Stories. "What an interesting angle, to see how Muslim parents tell their children about 9/11 as they grow up. Well done! And a nice piece on the boy who nearly died. Terrific detail!"

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Jim Slusher. Letter To Readers. "Good pieces on the media and how the relationship between us and citizens has flipped this past year. I especially liked the Trump free Zone column. Clever!"

## **CLASS 13 - SPORTS COLUMN**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Normalite, Normal, Steve Robinson. High School Highlights by Steve Robinson. "Nice job on balancing the role of sports and things that happen beyond the field."

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Andrew Rosten. Drew's View: A good win for Hudson; This is unfair; Really unfair. "Good to take on an issue .. Colorado has the same problem with public/private schools. Before getting to the point of the column, you dropped in what seemed to be an unrelated thought about the choice of music at a high-school game. Overall, a good pair of columns."

**3rd Place:** Hancock County Journal-Pilot, Carthage, Ethan Lillard. From the eye of the Sports Guy. "Good supportive columns dealing with issues in the community."

**Honorable Mention:** Mahomet Citizen, Fred Kroner. Mahomet-Seymour Notes.

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Reporter, Hickory Hills, Jeff Vorva. Three inspiring columns. "The writing is mature and comfortable. Three excellent stories paint a vivid picture of the personality of a community. Best in the class by far."

**2nd Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Kevin Hieronymus. Sports columns. "A strong point of view combined with a local focus makes for an interesting read. Well polished columns."

**3rd Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Kyle Herschelman. Center and Guard. "The writer's connection to the community is evident."

**Honorable Mention:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Eric Becker. Sports Extra columns. "Best column of the three is the one that doesn't start with the pronoun 'I.'"

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Jesse Severson. Views. "Good, solid journalism – irrespective of sports."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Eddie Carifio. Views. "Behind the scenes view. Nice."

**3rd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Mike Trueblood. Mike Trueblood columns. "Homespun. Folksy. Small town(ish), and good at that."

**Honorable Mention:** Morris Herald-News, Rob Oesterle. Rob Oesterle columns. "Homey and charming. Loves elisions a bit too much, even for a sports writer."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Times, Ottawa, Scott T. Holland. Infield Chatter. "Really a different but interesting spin on the Colin Kaepernick controversy. Good take; well written. The piece on umpiring and how difficult it is was interesting. And a good case was made for better wages for minor leaguers."

**2nd Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Joe Stevenson. Joe Stevenson columns. "Nice piece on the super fan; fun angle. And the column on the cross country kid who stopped to help a teammate was really good."

**3rd Place:** Rockford Register Star, Matt Trowbridge. Matt Trowbridge. "Good pieces, especially the nice take on the state championship team and its practice of pairing up with teammates, coaches, etc., after wins and losses. Well written."

**Honorable Mention:** The Times, Ottawa, J.T. Pedelty. The Pedelty Box. "Good columns, especially the one on the team that got screwed in the semifinal game. Thoughtful discussion of the consequences and the reality that there are human errors."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Phil Luciano. Phil Luciano columns. "Luciano really had something to say, and that constitutes a sports column more than just doing a feature story. He took a courageous stand in saying that maybe the school district should dump sports. And his piece on the coach missing a great life lesson opportunity was outstanding."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, David Haugh. 1. Out of ring 2. Greatest story we'll ever see 3. Cubs trade for star closer. "Nice pieces. I really liked the stance he took on Chapman and the fact that the Cubs sold a bit of their soul to get the troubled flamethrower."

**3rd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Steve Rosenbloom. 1. Almora uses his feet, head 2. Blame Bulls vets 3. A moment with Ali. "Vicious column on the Bulls' and Wade's lousy effort. Way to get after them! And the approach taken on Ali? Good stuff!"

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times, Rick Telander. 3 sports columns by Rick Telander, Chicago Sun-Times. "Nice level of detail in the Series preview and the column on the Cubs actually winning was fun. But pretty obvious topics."

## **CLASS 14 - PHOTO SERIES**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Forest Park Review, Staff. Clowns in the Cemetery. "The content of these photos is what makes this a great series. That above all else is what makes this series stand out. However, it's also the quality of the photos that sets it apart as well. Subjects are in focus. Good bokeh and depth of field. Composition is spectacular. As well, there is a variety of wide-angle and narrow photos which is appealing in a series. Well done."

**2nd Place:** Arcola Record-Herald, Nancy Rairden, Pam Kutz. Moving Day. "The subject of this series is what makes it stand out and makes the readers want to know more about what exactly is going on. Then, the series details the story. The photos are good quality and composition. Well done."

**3rd Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. Memorial Day 2016. "Great series capturing an annual event that gets good coverage each year. The photographer did a good job capturing what makes this event unique. The content of the photos is relevant but it's the composition of several of the photos that makes the package great."

**Honorable Mention:** The Navigator & Journal-Register, Albion, Duane Crays. Soldier's journey home. Memorial Day 2016. "Great series capturing an annual event that gets good coverage each year. The photographer did a good job capturing what makes this event unique. The content of the photos is relevant but it's the composition of several of the photos that makes the package great."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Mike Vaughn. Blue and Gray. "Great composition, incredibly striking photos."

**2nd Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, William Camargo. Monsters on Main Street. "Great artistic compositions. Very fun photos."

**3rd Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Kyle Herschelman. Big Dawg Dare. "The emotions of the participants here are evident in these photos."

**Honorable Mention:** Kendall County Record, Yorkville, Steven Buyansky. Yorkville Hometown Days festival. "I think this photographer is able to capture the moment and make you almost feel the excitement."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. Elmhurst Cycling Classic. "Crisp photos with pleasing framing and tons of action. Nice job getting clear shots of these fast-moving athletes."

**2nd Place:** Wednesday Journal Group, Oak Park, William Camargo. Lucha Libre. "Nice action shots and creative angles."

**3rd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Vigil for Elijah Wood.

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. Elmhurst School's Out Party.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Matthew Apgar. Hiawatha football returns to playoffs. "Nice use of composition to illicit emotion. Crisp, clear and well executed."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Danielle Guerra. Ethan Menges' wedding. "The contrast of unusual against usual is well done. Giving the fake limbs greater prominence in the photos would have been too much; I appreciate the understated approach."

**3rd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steven Davis. Good Hope Tornado. "Good composition and lighting."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Matt Apgar. Rifkin acquitted. "Very nice capture of emotion. It's a difficult thing to illicit empathy for an accused rapist, but this photographer has managed it."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Jim Bowling. An inspired life. "I love the variety moments, and emotion in this story. Each photo shows a different aspect of the subject's life."

**2nd Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Eric Ginnard. Photo Series. "A poignant story with good photos. I wish the edit was tighter. Three cemetery photos and 2 sticker photos are redundant. But overall good framing and handling of light."

**3rd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Michael Krabbenhoeft. Five Tenets of Taekwando. "Great lighting and color. The concept is a fresh approach and well-executed."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times, Lou Foglia. Greg Fusco: Face of cancer and strength. "Great access and a good variety of images in what appears to be a short timespan. I would've loved to see some other situations and what daily life is like for Greg."

## **CLASS 15 - SPOT NEWS PHOTO**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Sidell Reporter, Suzanne Lukehart Woodard. Cash Johnson. "Very sharp photo closeup. Everyone's going to look at this one because its a great picture and they want to see what's happening at their new water facility."

**2nd Place:** Scott County Times, Winchester, Justin A. Cobb. Bell-ringin' boogie. "Well, there's the boogie woogie Santa Claus. Nice sharp photo that turns a years ho hum into oh yeah!"

**3rd Place:** Cass County Star-Gazette, Beardstown, Brian DeLoche. House fire. "Nice sharp night photo. Just wondering why it's blue and purple - not normal colors for a nighttime fire. I like that you can read the name of the department on the extended ladder."

**Honorable Mention:** Nokomis Free Press-Progress, John Broux. Worried parents. "It's hard to turn away from a fire to get the parents on the sidelines. Lots of emotion."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Mason County Democrat, Havana, Bob Martin. Fly fishing Redneck-style. "One-of-a-kind photo! Captures the emotions of the people and tells the story."

**2nd Place:** Mason County Democrat, Havana, Bob Martin. Emergency Responders. "Great use of existing light to capture the somber mood of the car accident."

**3rd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, William Camargo. In Memory of Elijah. "I love that you caught the expressions on some faces. This tells an amazing story."

**Honorable Mention:** Mason County Democrat, Havana, Bob Martin. The Music Thursday.

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. The Roomplace fire. "Photo tells a tale without the need for a separate story."

**2nd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Fathers Matter. "Powerful depiction of father's who just want the best for their kids. No faces in the photo, but the holding of the hands illustrates best what is happening."

**3rd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Freedom Square. "Showcases that kids can enjoy themselves no matter the circumstances."

**Honorable Mention:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Water for Flint. "A good depiction of the heart of people who want to help, no matter what."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steven Davis. Fully Engulfed. "This photo is mesmerizing on a number of levels. What separated it from other fire photos is the use of the water coming into frame top left. That combined with the action of the firefighter on the left and the movement of the two on the right makes the photo really tell a story. Great frame."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Danielle Guerra. Saved from drowning. "A compelling photo made even more so with the hidden officer wading through the weeds. The mix of color is impressive as well."

**3rd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steven Davis. Watching Their House Burn. "I love the emotion of this photo, but without the caption I'm not sure what's going on. I like the photo, but it depends on the caption to tell the full story."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Matthew Apgar. Split in two. "The mere impact of the collision is really relayed in this photo, I just wish there was more reaction or motion with the two men in the frame investigating the wreck."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Rick Danzl. Emotional Rescue. "Lots of emotion here. Good job capturing the extent of the losses and this man's angst."

**2nd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Phil Carlson. Antioch Church fire. "Fantastic shot with the backlighting of the fire on the steeple of the church. Good timing."

**3rd Place:** The Telegraph, Alton, John Badman. Awkward rescue. "Good job capturing an unusual angle to this awkward rescue."

**Honorable Mention:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Eric Ginnard. Nine Lives. "Clearly a lot of emotion from this pet owner - good job capturing this reaction with the damage in the background."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Joe Lewnard. Smoky Crash. "Good photo on the scene."

**2nd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, David Zalaznik. Downtown Geysers. "Nice shot."

**3rd Place:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Todd Mizener. Fatal fire. "The dog is an added bonus to the photo and story. Nice job."

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Derik Holtmann. Hot spots. "Good capture."

## **CLASS 16 - GENERAL NEWS PHOTO**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Ryan Minion. Super Moon over Gibson City. "Super shot. Way to be there to record a rare happening."

**2nd Place:** Nokomis Free Press-Progress, John Broux. Gunner girls. "Cute and fun. The photographer was on guard and ready when the shot came."

**3rd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Ken Farver. Arm Wrestling. "Photographer clicked with subject on this one. Great catch on emotion."

**Honorable Mention:** Oregon Republican Reporter, Chris Johnson. Veteran's Day Salute. "Good example of the photographer seeing the entire picture."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Hinsdalean, Jim Slonoff. Red Devil Nation packs the place with spirit. "This is a well-composed group photo that shows emotion and tells a story."

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. Building frustration. "A great visual that expresses the tone of the topic. The emotion is evident in the body language and facial expression."

**3rd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, William Camargo. Memorial Day in River Forest. "A good angle that makes for an interesting and compelling photo."

**Honorable Mention:** The Hinsdalean, Jim Slonoff. Book party captures all the spirits of Telgemeir's newest release. "Can almost hear the laughter. Well-composed shot."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Bettie Jones. "Great shot, it really captures the moment. Framing works well."

**2nd Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. Reptile photo. "Expression is priceless. Tight framing keeps the focus where it should be."

**3rd Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. Protest 2. "I like that the photographer got into the middle of it. Well done!"

**Honorable Mention:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Sandy Bressner. Kaneland students. "Shows two generations. I like the angle and action. Well done."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steven Davis. Saluting the Flag. "Excellent composition. This is an engaging photo and makes me want to know more about Mr. Swanson and why he's at the parade."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Matthew Apgar. Rifkin acquitted. "This photo provokes a visceral reaction. There are so many emotions in his face and he looks so overwhelmed, something that can be difficult to convey through text but is done perfectly here. I can tell this elevated the story as well as told one all by itself."

**3rd Place:** The Courier-News, Elgin, Brian O'Mahoney. Jager Wins Silver. "I love her facial expression and anxiously clasped hands - I can feel that sense of anxious expectation in my own gut when I look at her."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Danielle Guerra. Grief for Orlando. "An unforgettable expression of grief. This would have been even better if it was cropped to include the photo she is holding."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Richard Sitler. Graduation celebration. "The joy and composition of this photo made it my top choice."

**2nd Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Justin L. Fowler. Session time snack. "I love this moment so much!"

**3rd Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ted Schurter. Wedding Day. "A nice moment in a heartbreaking story."

**Honorable Mention:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Byron Hetzler. Never too late to remember. "Beautiful composition."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Steve Nagy. Winter eagle. "Very nice photo. Simple, patriotic and timeless."

**2nd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, David Zalaznik. Annual checkup. "Tells the story just by looking at the photo."

**3rd Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Zia Nizami. Football memorial. "Captures the emotions well."

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Steve Nagy. Slain officer's widow. "Good tribute."

## **CLASS 17 - FEATURE PHOTO**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Forest Park Review, William Camargo. Blasting into Scouts. "Great content and color as well as great composition. I love everything about this photo as it places the reader in the kids' position and we automatically relate to their experience and can imagine their fun."

**2nd Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. Salute to Service. "Great, creative shot of an event that happens every year and is photographed hundreds of times. Finding a fresh and creative way to tell the same story is getting more difficult but the photographer did a good job here. Well done."

**3rd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Ken Farver. Cow at Fair. "Great capture of an emotional time. It's not an entirely original photo in terms of content; these photos come around every year. But this photo also is very good technically, with great bokeh and the subject is in focus."

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Ken Farver. Mustache. "Great candid capture. Good depth of field and good content."

## **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Doings - Hinsdale, Brian O'Mahoney. Cardboard Boat Race. "In a category with a lot of terrific entries, this photo stands out. Amazing action shot that really tells a story by itself."

**2nd Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, William Camargo. Back to School. "The photo has good depth, and the photographer did a good job of capturing an awkward situation."

**3rd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, William Camargo. Go Cubbies Go! "This photo perfectly captures the exuberance and innocence of the moment, without looking staged."

**Honorable Mention:** Effingham & Teutopolis News Report, Alyssa Long. DamRun Long. "The photographer did a good job of being in the right place to get this well-balanced photo. The expression captured on the dad's face is priceless."

## **Division C**

**1st Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Gardening on the West Side. "A technically well-done photo. Clean, unaffected, with clear depth of field. Not blurry or out-of-focus, and gives the reader an idea of what the subject is doing with his day. His expression is also interesting: as if to say he's bored but he's going to do the work anyway."

**2nd Place:** Wednesday Journal Group, Oak Park, William Camargo. Lucha Libre. "A bit grainy, but the action is very palpable, and the reader feels immersed in the scene. Good use of focus on the wrestler's heads, even if the hand is somewhat blurry."

**3rd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Prom in the West Side of Chicago. "A very clean and technically sound photo. Demonstrates clear depth of field. The

subject has a powerful expression, but the distance from her is appropriate, as it allows the reader to see all the details of her outfit. Also a good example of framing."

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. Ballroom dancing. "The kid's expression is amusing and draws the reader in."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Bill Nice. Rodeo Cowboy. "Great action shot."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Matthew Apgar. Raccoon chase. "This photo probably got readers attention about raccoon disease more than a story alone would have."

**3rd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Matthew Apgar. Winter wonderland. "Nice composition."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Matthew Apgar. Fur trapper. "Nice composition of photo in what was probably not an easy story to illustrate."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Michael Kiple. Globetrotter selfie. "Great reaction, moment, and context. Nice exposure, composition, and contrast. This photo shares a fun moment between athlete and fans."

**2nd Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Eric Ginnard. Swinging. "Wonderful perspective and fun exposure. The first-person perspective of this photo is strong and creates an interesting layer. The motion and movement brings depth and contrast to the photograph. The reaction captured of the riders tells the story of emotion felt at the fair. Nice capture."

**3rd Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Sarah Nader. Puppy Love. "Wonderful moment in this photograph. Nice clean background and great contrast in colors. The image is sharp and depicts and captures emotion."

**Honorable Mention:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, Mike Voss. We lost everything in the fire. "Heartbreaking moment. This photo tells the story in one photograph. The composition is compelling and allows your eye to move across the frame learning more about the event. From her teary eyes to the burnt house to the car parked in the drive way, this photo speaks endless emotion and gives the viewer information without the need of a caption. Nice job."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Gary Krambeck. Spinning wheel. "Not often does a photo capture an in the moment experience, creating the impression of an event on fire. It speaks of passion, celebration, patriotism and that independent spark that led to the idea of freedom and liberty for us all."

**2nd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, John Starks. Night Fishing. "Tranquil and surreal, an in the moment photo that reels us in and keeps us hooked."

**3rd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Ashlee Rezin. Spring Awakening. "A thousand hands can become a thousand flowers in field, as the photographer as so adeptly shown us. A Human Spring from which many good things may come."

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Ron Johnson. Donkey Stage Fright. "If you know donkeys, they do not pose for photos. Again, this is a great in the moment experience captured on film filled with faith, humor and good old donkey attitude."

## **CLASS 18 - PERSONALITY PORTRAIT**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Mundelein Review, Brian O'Mahoney. Trophy Licker. "Excellent capture of personality. Difficult image to get with such clarity while being so tight on a subject. The photo tells a story without a cutline."

**2nd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Whitney Rupp. Marian Volleyball Team. "Great shot. Creative composition illustrating teamwork. The photographer took a new angle on an activity that gets photographed hundreds of times during the athletic season. Well done."

**3rd Place:** The Nashville News, Alex Haglund. Farmers Market. "Great set-up. Good field of depth. Creatively includes the wind chimes and Ms. Smith while not making it an obvious portrait."

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Whitney Rupp. Secret Gentlemen. "Intriguing photo that leaves readers wanting to know more about what exactly is going on. Good composition."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, William Camargo. Hamburger Mary's. "A nice close-up that shows plenty of glamour and drama."

**2nd Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, William Camargo. Monsters on Main Street. "A good choice for the background of the photo, providing context while maintaining focus on the primary subject."

**3rd Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Mary (Galer) Herschelman. Visitors Go Back In Time At West Fork Encampment. "Visually interesting, shows the man's dedication to his craft."

**Honorable Mention:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. Happy painter. "A snapshot that is full of bubbly, young personality."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Wednesday Journal Group, Oak Park, William Camargo. Lucha Libre. "Love the focus on the wrestler's eyes and face, even underneath the mask. The details on the mask are clean, but really, it's the eyes and expression that draws the reader in. A strong choice of focus and clean from a technical level."

**2nd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Alma gets her street sign. "An interesting choice to do a portrait from a wider perspective, rather than an up-close one. Nice to see all the details in the fence, yard and house behind her. Based on the caption, it immerses her more in the neighborhood, which sounds like an important element to the story. This is a woman on the streets, from the streets and of the streets. Well done."

**3rd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, William Camargo. Chris Crack West Side rapper. "Clean photo on a technical level. Appreciate the focus on his face, with the smoke floating through the air. Would have been stronger with more visible detail of his tattoos, or from a unique angle."

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. Wheaton dancer then/now. "Love the subject's expression and the intimate distance of the camera. However, it would have been stronger if the photo he's pointing at had been in focus."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steven Davis. Stately Beard. "Love the shadows this angle created."

**2nd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steven Davis. Knox When To Hold 'Em.

**3rd Place:** The Courier-News, Elgin, Brian O'Mahoney. Zombie Bride. "Good shot. Interesting angle. I like the look in her eyes. Would have ranked higher for me if not so posed."

**Honorable Mention:** Morris Herald-News, Heidi Litchfield. Planting for Winter.

## **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Steve Smedley. Dancing Queen. "This picture makes me laugh! I think it truly shows her personality."

**2nd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Alex Paschal. Houston Shlouff, Wood Artist. "Great lighting on the subject and the sawdust, but little personality shines through."

**3rd Place:** NewsTribune, La Salle, Chris Yucus. McCabe Bowling Portrait. "She looks like she's having a blast!"

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Sarah Nader. Ballerina. "I love the mood of this photo."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Todd Mizener. Cost of addiction. "A starkly realized portrait of a woman who fully understands that she is legal guardian of her great grandchild, after the heroin overdose death of the child's father. You feel this woman's pain, as well as see it. The impossibility of the future she faces is written on her face."

**2nd Place:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Todd Mizener. A mother's grief. "Nice composition framed by a dramatic sky makes this a compelling photo which works perfectly with Gina Young's story."

**3rd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Dan White. Bugler. "This elegiac photo is all about mood and lighting. It is perfectly evocative of long ago fighting and death, memorialized by a lone bugler."

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Ron Johnson. Bzzzzzzz. "I like the photographer's decision to focus on the mouth and bee rather than the entire face. You can almost feel that bee sitting there, stinger or not."

## **CLASS 19 - SPORTS PHOTO**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Oakland Independent, Janice Hunt. Joy for jumping. "The picture says it all .. great work in staying with the athlete beyond the event."

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Andrew Rosten. An emotional goodbye. "Another picture where a caption helps but perhaps isn't necessary."

**3rd Place:** Arlington Heights Journal, Dion Martorano. Hit By Pitch. "Ouch! .. great shot!!"

**Honorable Mention:** The Sidell Reporter, Ed Sudlow. Team captain still in the game. "Great picture .. it says most of what we need to know without a caption."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Reporter, Hickory Hills, Jeff Vorva. Getting an earful. "Excellent composed photo that is emotionally and visually gripping. Best in the class."

**2nd Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Mike Vaughn. Wipeout. "Excellent timed photograph that displays the photographers technical skill."

**3rd Place:** Republic-Times, Waterloo, Corey Saathoff. Tensions boil on the diamond. "An arresting photo that proves sometimes the best photo is after the action. A tighter crop would have improved the composition."

**Honorable Mention:** Lake Forester, Lake Forest, Brian O'Mahoney. Bike Race Leader. "I enjoy the use of motion blur for this subject. The set-up and panning show the photographers technical skill."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Sandy Bresser. STCN soccer. "Love the expression on the center player's face. Photo is clean, bright and well-focused."

**2nd Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. Elmhurst Cycling Classic sports photo. "Photo could have been improved, slightly, by capturing the front rider's entire helmet and shadow. But, this is nitpicking. The photo is incredibly dynamic, and there is so much to take in. Excellent work."

**3rd Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Mark Busch. Downers Grove South diving catch. "A very clean photo. Expression on the player's face is clear and the details on the grass and uniform are vivid. The ball is a tad blurry, but, on the whole, a very strong entry."

**Honorable Mention:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Sandy Bressner. Geneva volleyball loss. "Good job capturing the expression of the subject(s). Would've been better had the background been less blurry, and if we got to see the little girl's face instead of the volleyball player's. Still a strong photo."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Courier-News, Elgin, Brian O'Mahoney. Collision At Third. "Following the game through the long lens and having the instinct to know when to push the button."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Matthew Apgar. Pass rejected. "Capturing a moment in the ballet of competition. Making use of selected field position in anticipation of a notable play on its way."

**3rd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steven Davis. All-American Spike. "Knowing when to push the button, the difference between a great and mediocre photo."

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steven Davis. Surrounded.

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ted Schurter. Four on the floor. "Wow. This is an angle not seen often. Not only is the composition intriguing, the reaction from the players on the ground is fantastic. The image is sharp, nice exposure, timing and contrast. Also the color balance is wonderful, this can be hard when shooting in gyms. This image also took time and thought during setup. Not easy. Great Job!"

**2nd Place:** Daily Southown, Tinley Park, Brian O'Mahoney. Winning Goal Keeper. "Wonderful moment and captivating facial reaction. Nice composition and exposure. This photo makes you feel the emotion the goal keeper was feeling."

**3rd Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ted Schurter. The art of sport. "Way to go on shooting something different and taking a risk. I love the contrast in colors and fluidity of this image. The pan compliments the long exposure perfectly. This image is interesting to look at, it is not a one glance photo. You caught my eyes attention. Photographing runners can sometimes be the same photo over and over, but you decided to capture the runner in a way our eyes could never see and that is the power of photography. Great Job!"

**Honorable Mention:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Jake Shane. Flip for it. "Love the height of action in this shot. Wonderful composition and moment in football. You can just hear the thoughts running through the player's head as he flips through the air. Great capture."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Brian O'Mahoney. Safe At Home. "Sharp and well composed, this image sticks with the action a split second longer shows the emotion of moment and gives readers context of the game being covered."

**2nd Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Derik Holtmann. Catcher collision. "This action shot captures not only a key moment of competition but also creates reader interest beyond those with a rooting interest in the outcome."

**3rd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Paul Valade. Goalie Stretch. "From a considerable distance, the photographer freezes a key moment in a context and helps convey the determination of the keeper."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, John Starks. Victory Leap. "Everyone around the world may have seen a variant of this image in video, but the frozen moment will be framed in people's memories for a lifetime."

## **CLASS 20 - EDITORIAL CARTOON**

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Pike Press, Pittsfield, Bill Beard. State of Illinois pleads insanity. "I like the local angle and the pun."

**2nd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Marc Stopeck. Full-time salary.

**3rd Place:** Pike Press, Pittsfield, Bill Beard. Onion-dome Donald.

**Honorable Mention:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Marc Stopeck. Trumpty Dumpty.

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Glenn McCoy. Marching in the wrong direction. "Clear, concise visual representing the artist's conviction on Barack Obama's legacy in a distinctive drawing style."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Lyncoln Delporte, Dan Corkery. Hand, foot and mouth. "Clever comment on the unconventional Trump campaign of 2016."

**3rd Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Glenn McCoy. How the Kroenke stole football. "Well-executed analogy on the Los Angeles Rams owner."

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Glenn McCoy. Madigan/Mad Again.

## **CLASS 21 - ILLUSTRATION**

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Joliet Bugle, Shelley Holgrem. Fresh Start. "An excellent design that is loud, yet not messy, or distracting. The work that went into this is evident, but it's not over wrought. Visually interesting and still clean."

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Jay Dickerson. Addiction & Abuse. "A stark illustration that serves it's purpose extremely well. Reserved in a good way. Shows good restraint."

**3rd Place:** The Joliet Bugle, Shelley Holgrem. Narrow Margin. "A clean, well composed illustration. Would have like to see the headline and idea of a 'narrow margin' played up more in the illustration."

**Honorable Mention:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. LeRoy's athletic legend. "A good illustration that serves the rest of the page well. An excellent keepsake piece for readers, I'm sure."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jay Redfern. Tainted Reputation. "Strong visual leads the story as well as helps tells it."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Scott Helmchen. Transgender students in DeKalb County.

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, R. Scott Helmchen. Data-driven. "Well executed photo illustration and color with complementary typography."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Lyncoln Delporte. We bought an ice cream shop. "Clever photo illustration using ice cream flavors. Nice use of typography and cutouts."

**3rd Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, R. Scott Helmchen. Pot or not? "Clever illustrative typographic solution on the issue of marijuana decriminalization."

**Honorable Mention:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Mike Goebel. Tipping the scales. "Photo illustration incorporating several components to create a visually interesting composition."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Scott Stantis. Scott Stantis Cubs illustration. "Fun illustration in a distinctive style with a nice visual solution on the Chicago Cub's history and climb to capture the National League pennant."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Mike Miner. Mike Miner Netflix illustration. "Nice graphic solution and well executed with clever use of the Netflix logo."

**3rd Place:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Meg McLaughlin. Fireballer. "Nicely executed photo illustration."

## **CLASS 22 - INFORMATIONAL GRAPHIC**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Calhoun News-Herald, Hardin, Annette Marshall. Michael Dean Timeline. "A clean well presented map/timeline that assists the complimenting story very well, both in providing context to locations and time. The best of the class, for me, due to the importance of the story."

**2nd Place:** Forest Park Review, Jacquinete Baldwin, Jill Wagner. French Fried Forest Park infographic. "This is the best designed graphic of the class. Fun imaging and well presented information make this entry a page stopper. My favorite artwork of the class."

**3rd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Property Tax Changes. "A clear and well done chart that compliments the story exceedingly well. Easily accessible and understandable."

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Budget Breakdown. "A clean, well done graphic. My only issue is I've come to expect this graphic with budget stories. Doesn't stand out in the class."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Mike Plunkett. A New High School - What's My Share?

**2nd Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Jacquinete Baldwin. Brookfield Zoo featured births infographic.

**3rd Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Claire Innes, Javier Govea . RB Landmark maps.

**Honorable Mention:** The Galena Gazette, Jay Dickerson . Addiction & Abuse.

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Wednesday Journal Group, Oak Park, Javier Govea. Bataan Death March. "Great mix of maps, pix and numbers. Meaningful addition to the story and not just a way to break up type."

**2nd Place:** Wednesday Journal Group, Oak Park, Javier Govea. By the numbers: Berwyn.

**3rd Place:** The Downers Grove Bugle, Shelley Holgrem. Where Does Your Drinking Water Come From?

**Honorable Mention:** Shorewood Sentinel, Shelley Holgrem. The Chase is On

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Staff. Small towns getting smaller. "Illustration sets a striking image that works well with telling the story."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. Suicide cases.

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Cody Bozarth. In fact it's a gas. "Turning a not-so-pleasant subject into a visually interesting graphic using good use of illustration, typography and design."

**2nd Place:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, Dave Dressler. PACKING TIPS. "Nicely executed graphic illustration filled with interesting and useful information."

**3rd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Cody Bozarth. Counterfeit cash. "Well executed graphic on spotting counterfeit bills. Good use of spot icons and presented in a concise manner."

**Honorable Mention:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, Dave Dressler, Mary Hall. GUIDE TO BEER GLASSWARE. "Clean graphic, visually appealing, packed with information for the beer lover."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Tim Broderick. Election Analysis in the Suburbs. "Excellent detailed data analysis with extensive, labor intensive graphics on county primary races in suburban counties. Easy to comprehend and well executed."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Chad Yoder. How Theo Epstein built Cubs. "Unique graphic on the timeline of roster construction of the Chicago Cubs, involving signings, trades and departures of players. Well done."

**3rd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Kyle Bentle, Jonathon Berlin, Ryan Marx. Illinois, a blue island in a red sea. "Nicely done breakdown of demographics of Illinois compared to other midwest states in the general election. Packed with interesting information."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, By Nick Kindelsperger, Kyle Bentle and Ryan Marx. The best and worst chain burger. "Fun, interactive and informative graphic on rating the best chain burgers. Larger burgers!"

## **CLASS 23 - SINGLE PAGE DESIGN**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Close to Home. "Good flow across the two pages. Graphic element, type highlight, focus counter space. Bold photo adds a solid to left as page 2 anchor."

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Andrew Rosten. A historic leap. "Outstanding use of typography and contorted photo element. Copy in lower right hand corner is a distraction. Short pullout quote or other entry point reference inside would work better, be less cluttered."

**3rd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Front page for June 22, 2016. "Distracting lines around centerpiece kept this entry from placing higher. Let the dominant art and typography define stories. Your readers will understand the hierarchy of headlines."

**Honorable Mention:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Andrew Rosten. PBL's turn to brag. "Bold type compliments celebratory photos. Nice easy-to-scan game summary breaks down the action."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield, Shelley Holgrem. Fresh Ideas. "Very contemporary! It definitely lends a magazine feel to the newspaper."

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Jay Dickerson. Remembering. "Good use of multiple photos without making the page look cluttered. I like the way the honor roll is laid out. The headline, subhead and dog tags all work to unify the content."

**3rd Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield, Shelley Holgrem. New Year New Laws. "Good job of presenting a lot of information in a concise, well-thought-out format."

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban Chronicle, Geneva, Jack McCarthy. After inaugural football game. "Clean, inviting layout. Large photos deliver impact."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Jes Spivak. Paramount single-page design.

**2nd Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Jes Spivak. Magic page design.

**3rd Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Jes Spivak. Shucks page design.

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban Life Core Group, Joe Zenkel. Heroes page design.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Mike Solley. Well tailored. "An inviting page. Lots of photos helps, of course, and they're being of varied sizes makes it more interesting. Nice use of white space at the top. The writeups on the costume designers is very tidy without each being identical."

**2nd Place:** The Daily Register, Harrisburg, Michael Dann. Harrisburg/EldoradoSports 12/26/16. "This page is fun to look at and easy to navigate. Lots going on but not confusing in the least. Nice use of white space all around. The serif font above makes a nice contrast with the sans font for the stories. Nitpicks? 'Handing Out Hardware' is smaller than the others; two of the 'Rest of' have periods; caption too close to photo up top."

**3rd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Staff. Small towns getting smaller. "Nice package. All of the elements are distinct, making it not confusing. Tons of info in the graphic but I just want to study it for a while. Nitpick? In the graph the 1980 population is 7296 but in the story it's 7286."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Mike Solley. Women in craft. The photo as a backdrop works very well (being mostly white). I like the shadow and framing on the inset pics. Even like the caption style. And using just one color shows admirable restraint. Only complaint would be the text is all in one big block.

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, Dave Dressler, Rachael Reynolds-Soucie. Mason Jar Meals. "Just love this page. Excellent use of white space. Reasonable amount of text. Font choices and sizes are perfect. Cutouts look great, spacing between them works great, too."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Niko Dugan. Follow the bouncing ball. "A really fun page that really draws the reader in. Airy text at top provides a little breathing space. Text chunks are a reasonable length. Even the photo credits look good with the shadow."

**3rd Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Valerie Katzenstein. Twisted Limits Design. "What a lot of work! A fun page about a fun activity. Makes me want to go give it a try. If there's something I don't like it's that the page has too much black. But of course it makes the yellow pop."

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Rusty Schrader. Front Page: Gait Keeper. "A lot going on but each piece stands alone and is seemingly unbothered by the others. Lead story has huge head (only three words but says all it needs to) that grabs the reader's attention as it should, but then 'Gait keeper' lures the reader away because it's more fun. Good white space, good hammer head, too. The photo of Cousin It at the bottom is eye-catching, too. The reverse works really well as a contrast, and the sidesaddle deckhead and line also add variety. The other news story is a bit drab in comparison, which maybe it should be, but a mugshot would have helped it. But how about a sans headline font to add some variety?"

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Staff. Chicago Tribune World Series victory page. "Outstanding image. Perfect headline. And well done by designer to recognize that no additional ornamentation was needed to honor a historic moment."

**2nd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Shannon Countryman. Delivering Results. "A nice job of art direction to find a clean, simple image that perfectly reflects the subject of the story."

**3rd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Staff. Cubs and baseball intertwined. "Clean and smart presentation and execution."

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Katie Gaston. Canton Explosion. "Nice decision to let the dramatic photo lead the page."

## **CLASS 24 - NEWSPAPER DESIGN**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Peoria County Chronicle, Jack McCarthy. Peoria County Chronicle newspaper design. "Nice clean overall look. Pages are bright and crisp. Good use of headlines."

**2nd Place:** Winnebago Chronicle, Rockford, Jack McCarthy. Winnebago Chronicle Newspaper design. "Another clean look to bright pages. Less reliance on boxed content would improve pages."

**3rd Place:** Forest Park Review, Jacquinete Baldwin. Forest Park Review March 16 and August 10. "Nice clean layout. Lines clutter some pages, more attention needs to be paid to hierarchy of headlines. Photos are good selections, but could use tighter cropping."

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. The Woodstock Independent. "Overuse of italic headlines are hard on the eyes. Too many typefaces clutter, confuse headlines. Photos are in dire need of cropping inside paper. Pages have a good flow to them otherwise."

## **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield, Shelley Holgrem. Enterprise 3-17-16; Enterprise 9-22-16. "Great original design. Stood out as different than the other good papers in this class and digging deeper found it to be a well put together paper. I do wonder though why the mast for sports is different."

**2nd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Claire Innes. Newspaper Design. "A nice, clean, easy to follow newspaper. The simplicity is refreshing. There's other really good newspapers in this class that follow this same format, but this one does it best."

**3rd Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Javier Govea. Riverside-Brookfield Landmark. "An engaging design that is very inviting. I'd pick this paper up."

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban Chronicle, Geneva, Jack McCarthy. Suburban Chronicle Newspaper design. "This is a very well done newspaper. All the elements are there and it's right in there for the best of the class. The heads were just a little heavy for me. "

## **Division C**

**1st Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Claire Innes. Newspaper Design - March 16.

**2nd Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Staff. Jersey County Journal.

## **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Staff. The Register-Mail Newspaper Design. "Your graphics and photos set you apart from others in the category."

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. Daily Chronicle. "Nice, newsy paper with good use of photos."

**3rd Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. JG-TC newspaper design. "Easy to read design."

**Honorable Mention:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Marylee Rasar. Newspaper Design. "Nice, clean design."

## **Division E**

**1st Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Jim Rossow, Mike Goebel and staff. The News-Gazette. "Holy cow! is right. I love the exuberance in The News-Gazette's Nov. 3 edition, in

what appears to be a Cubs wrap. Hard to look at that and not smile. Very nice execution on a topic that many tried to replicate. Solid in the news pages, good blend of photo and display type. But also not hesitant to use some length to stories when required. Editorial page clean and efficient. The March 13 edition didn't have a Cubs celebration, but A1 still had an inviting energy. Good staff Bernie pix, two interesting story starts and a lot of other information out there. Liked the Sunday Special display on Volition. Liked editor Jim Rossow's Top of the morning on A2, and also the Big 10 concept on the local cover. Great high school basketball photo on sports. This Sunday edition is substantial, strong content packaged well. Well done."

**2nd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Staff. Sauk Valley Media. "The SV weekend edition offers a clean and inviting front page, with good modular story design and what appears to be exceptional reproduction. Very nice presentation on the All Area Boys Basketball team, which I'm guessing sold a lot of papers. The Sept. 3-4 weekend edition also was handsome to look at, the A1 illustration ... worked. An important topic tackled. Sports section looks great throughout, and a beautiful Travel cover."

**3rd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Staff. The Herald-Whig. "A clean design and an impressive Election Day A1. Bold use of photo pops right off the page. Election results page totally without clutter. Sports pages very nice. Like the big use of the soccer photo. The Jan. 24 Herald-Whig also a bold cover, anchored by a strong photo and a strong graphic setting up an important local trial. The jump of the trial story on pages 4 and 5 are dramatic and informative. Just a very nice presentation of an important story. Timeline was totally useful in capturing the long-term nature of this particular case. Nice work."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Staff. BND Newspaper Design. "Among the newspapers for purchase in the stands, I would choose yours over the others for my morning Starbucks Pike Roast with cream and a good read."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Staff. Chicago Sun-Times newspaper design. "Great integration of front page news, advertising and features. Enjoyed the read."

**3rd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Staff. Journal Star Newspaper Design. "Eye catching, informative, provocative. You would be my alternative read. Your advertising layouts are amazing and they integrate well on the page between the features."

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Staff. Overall design of the Chicago Tribune. "Great layout, but typical. I would encourage a loosening of format."

## **CLASS 25 - HEADLINE WRITING**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Sandy Kucharski. Woodstock Independent Headlines.

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Ford County Record headlines.

**3rd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Andrew Rosten. Joining forces; Legend-ary sweep; A Royal pain; Crabb-ing a victory; Six-cessful start.

**Honorable Mention:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Andrew Rosten. Shining Momence; Nifty sixty; Third is the word; Mr. 100; Worth the wait.

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Bob Uphues. Nation went red, but local voters blue all over. "Informative and witty, these headlines all help give the reader both a reason to read these articles, but also some key information right off the bat. The double meanings of the first two entries are witty, but won't sail over anyone's head. "

**2nd Place:** The Reporter, Hickory Hills, Jeff Vorva. Five Headlines From Jeff Vorva. "Great sports headlines! They show great thought, and help highlight truly wonderful stories. I especially like '42,' letting the stat rightfully take the spotlight, all on its own."

**3rd Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Kyle Herschelman. Headline Writing. "Every single entry shows wit, but not at the expense of telling the reader what they are getting."

**Honorable Mention:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. Headline writing. "Pitch perfect headlines for the stories they depict - not overdone one bit."

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Joe Zenkel. Joe headlines. "Funny. Clever. Succinct. Draws the reader in. Works well with both page design and photos. But, don't be afraid to make the main one longer on occasion. You don't need only two words every time."

**2nd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Michael Romain. Headline writing. "Colorful. Inviting. Invokes a sense of curiosity in the reader."

**3rd Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Jes Spivak. Jes headlines. "A perfect balance of brief yet descriptive headlines. Draws the reader in. Works well with the page design."

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban Life Core Group, Joe Zenkel. Joe headlines. "Lots of puns, which are clever, but don't be afraid to branch out."

## **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Rob Buck. Rob Buck Headlines. "Easily the best entries. Headlines 1) tell what the story is about and 2) are clever."

**2nd Place:** Effingham Daily News, Jeff Long, Cathy Griffith. Effingham Daily News headlines. "Not crazy about hammers. They don't tell the story, so they should be clever. But I'm not sure why cannabis is at a crossroads. Like 'Angel,' though."

**3rd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Jim Wilson. Headlines. "Not a big fan of hammers, which all of these are. 'Free to go' works really well, and 'Peace ...' is OK, too. The others don't do much for the reader."

**Honorable Mention:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Kim Paisley. Headline Writing. "'Rock solid' is on the right track, but 'Bell Tolls' doesn't tell the reader what the story is about. The others are unexceptional."

## **Division E**

**1st Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Rusty Schrader. Comb all ye faithful. "'Whodunit on first?' and 'Comb all ye faithful' alone earn Rusty first place. And then 'Everyone plays a roll' and 'You gotta give the airport its props' just solidify things. 'Comb' parts the head sea, in particular, with its tip of the hat to Catholic schools. Further, I love the conversational tone in 'You gotta give the airport its props' and 'Whodunit on first?'"

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, George Dobrik. Gourd grief. "'Data with destiny,' 'Fall aboard' and 'Gourd grief' make this entry worthy of second place. 'Deep desires' is the weakest of the strong collection, and if 'A gulf about golf' is referencing the chasm between sides, I would have chosen the preposition 'over' instead of 'about.'"

**3rd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Rusty Schrader. How great thou arts. "'Gait keeper' is OK, but it feels forced, whereas the other four nail the content and tone of their respective stories, especially 'How great thou arts' and 'Taking spatters into his own hands.' 'Fields of dreams' is almost a must -- perhaps too easy? -- given the subject's name and the sports involved. But, at least, Rusty was wise enough to NOT avoid it."

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Jeff Rogers. New kids on the bloc in sync. "'Room and boarded at Sauk' and the one-of-a-kind 'New kids on the bloc in sync' help to net Jeff fourth place. The 'ready to roll' is OK but, for the number of times it has been written, cliché."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Dean Muellerleile. Dean Muellerleile Headlines. "While some other entrants had a stellar head or two, Dean Muellerleile's five easily stood, yes, heads and shoulders above the competition. Indeed, Muellerleile stuck, appropriately, his neck out with 'Pitter-pattern of not-so-tiny feet.' 'The lease they can do' was poignant and spot-on for the tone of the column. And even the borderline cliché of the photo overline 'Prospect's growing brighter' is strengthened, given the street's name, by the head's literalness. 'Won for the ages' and 'Thyme is almost right' are solid, as well. Nicely done."

**2nd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Don Friske. Don Friske Headlines. "Don Friske deserves a solid second -- just on 'His swing is amiss' and 'Wait lifted' alone. However, while I love how the compelling 'Wait lifted' also plays off the photo, I am disappointed a tad that the photo accompanying 'His swing is amiss' shows a swing that is making contact with the baseball. A better photo would be of a strikeout, no? 'Blank stares,' on the other hand, captures the shutout idea and the looks on the faces in the photo."

**3rd Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Jason Koch. Jason Koch headlines. "'Bummer Sooners' and the Twain-reference gem of a headline earn Jason Koch third place. Points are lost with the reliance on a colon head for the Tim Hortons story and for using the American 'Oh' instead of the Canadian 'O.'"

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Kathleen Danes. Kathleen Danes Headlines. "Kathleen Danes' 'All hail Szczur,' 'Going down swinging' and 'Celebration Central' are very good. 'Demand disparity' is noteworthy for its alliteration but little else. And the 'Reunited' headline is trite."

## **CLASS 26 - SPORTS SECTION**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki and Staff. LeRoy Farmer City Press Sports. "I would prefer fewer lined up and more action shots but you have plenty of both and (for the most part) photos are sharp. Makeup is modern and clean. Writing makes me want to read the stories."

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Andrew Rosten. Sept. 21, 2016; May 25, 2016. "Clean modern makeup and you cover a lot of sports with mostly sharp photos. I especially like the water dousing picture but found the lineup photos on Page 9 of Sept. 21 disturbing and scary. Please, please find a way to put your pdfs in one file and/or only enter one section - 26 pdfs are too many to go through."

**3rd Place:** Hancock County Journal-Pilot, Carthage, Ethan Lillard. Sports around Hancock County. "All local news - some photos are not as sharp as they should be but overall pages are clean and writing is good."

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. Woodstock Independent, Sports Section. "You have lots of good local photos."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Rantoul Press, Zack Carpenter. Sports Section 9/18-24 and 11/16. "Nice layout, good use of photos and strong content and writing."

**2nd Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Kevin Hieronymus. Sports section. "Good layout, solid content, nice use of photos. May 31 edition would have been stronger with the hurdler action shot as main art and the three athletes with their medals secondary, especially since there's a photo of another athlete with his medal right beside it."

**3rd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Staff. WJ sports sections. "Good use of photos in general and strong writing."

**Honorable Mention:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Staff. LMK sports sections. "Good design, especially on football section, and good use of art in general. Stories are solid, too."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Commercial-News, Danville, Staff. Sports section for May 29 and Sept. 22, 2016. "Very attractive. Layout, photos and writing a notch above."

**2nd Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. JG-TC sports section. "Nice clean layout. Lines clutter some pages, more attention needs to be paid to hierarchy of headlines. Photos are good selections, but could use tighter cropping."

**3rd Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Mike Trueblood, Matthew Wheaton, Jackson White. Best Sports Section. "Good looking. Good photos. Good editorials."

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Joey Wagner, Shannon Sanders. Pekin Daily Times sports section. "Handicapped by mediocre photos."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Matt Daniels and staff. The News-Gazette. "In addition to a wide variety of offerings for readers, the section gives insights into what's going on behind the scenes. Well done."

**2nd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Ty Reynolds, Eric Ingles, Brian Weidman. Sauk Valley Media Sports. "The section offers a crisp design while giving entry points to fans across many different sporting endeavors."

**3rd Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Staff. JHN sports. "The strong local focus gives many readers plenty of reasons to engage with the section."

**Honorable Mention:** Quincy Herald-Whig, David Adam, Matt Schuckman, Mat Mikesell. Herald-Whig sports section. "Strong treatment of photos gives readers many entry points to the pages."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Sports staff. Daily sports section: Sept. 18 and November 3, 2016. "Sept. 18 section — lead story and photo are very captivating. Rosenbloom's column on page 2 captures how the Cubs are approaching the playoffs and the weight of the curse. Like the capture the flag header. The Cy Young breakout box provides lots of information that is easily digestible. Like the full page giving the fans a chance to choose the greatest Chicago team of all time. Bears historic moment is a good idea and way to educate readers on history of club. Nice illustration on Josh Sitton story. Great story on Eagles' snapper. College football top 25 rail — once again easily digestible and good for readers. Fantastic photo and layout for Tony Stewart story. Cubs win section — great photos on page 2 show emotion of players and fans as Game 7 goes on. Great headlines on both P1 and sports cover. Cleveland viewpoint a good inclusion. Banner on page 3 giving brief description of all games is good information. Photos throughout show great emotion. Like the play-by-play and extended boxscore on page 6. Good use of a page to make page more appealing. Like the radio call on page 10 to lead the page. Good way to get another voice in paper."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Staff. Chicago Sun-Times sports section. "Sept. 18 section — Great lead photo and story. Section gives lots of information and content about the Cubs leading up to their World Series win. Like the college football Big Ten grid, gives lots of information in a small space. Great for readers. Headers above all the beats let readers know what's there. Lead story gives a good history lesson on why the Bears are where they are today. Cubs special section — good use of photos to tell the story of the Cubs' 108-year curse finally being lifted. Stories and photos bring to life the World Series that was."

**3rd Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Staff. BND Sports Sections. "Sept. 22 section — good placement of local prep stories. Centerpiece has good photos that make you want to read story. I

like the calendar and history on page 3. Tracking the local players on baseball page is a good idea. Preps page has a lot of information that is useful to readers. Cubs page — Good celebration shot and shot of the key hit. Column adds local perspective to game. Use of quickreads a good way to break up the gray or preview upcoming national and/or local events."

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Staff. Journal Star sports section.

## **CLASS 27 - LIFESTYLE SECTION**

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Hinsdalean, Staff. Pulse. "I liked that you have a good, interesting feature and column and loved the briefs."

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Staff. Lifestyle section. "One edition blew me away - Dec. 14 and the other was sort of so-so but I liked the first birthdays. In Dec. 14 - Lots of pictures, lots of color, Lots of stories about lots of thing. Great section but somethings in it weren't society - Mexican Consul visiting, Man not guilty of pushing wife down stairs. Public notices and classifieds are not really society. But, its a great section and looked like it probably made money, which is a good thing too."

**3rd Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Rita Roberts. Lifestyle.

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. Woodstock Independent, Lifestyle Section.

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Staff. Kane Weekend section.

**2nd Place:** Suburban Life Core Group, Staff. SLM weekend life.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Inger Koch, Mike Solley. Lifestyle. "Nice page. Great mix."

**2nd Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. JG-TC Lifestyles section.

**3rd Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Marylee Rasar. Lifestyle.

**Honorable Mention:** Times-Republic, Watseka, Staff. Iroquois County's Times-Republic Lifestyle page.

## **Division E**

**1st Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Jami Kunzer. Play. "May 23 section very colorful, cohesive design. June 23 section - cover seems very magazine-like, makes you want to dive in. Solid design throughout."

**2nd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Deborah Gertz Husar, Cody Bozarth. Herald-Whig FYI Food pages. "Pretty food pages. Nice use of cutouts and design."

**3rd Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Staff. Life sections. "April 21 GO! section. Solid broadsheet design. Could be more fun. May 22 Life section. Nice play of photos large. Blah rest of section."

**Honorable Mention:** Rockford Register Star, Rebecca Rose. Life&Style section. "May 13 Life & Style section just basic. May 27 GO tab very user friendly. Good design."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Thomas Bruch & Sally McKee. Journal Star Lifestyle section. "May 22 cover is gorgeous and well-executed. Rest of section good. The April 7 cover is a lot of fun and I appreciate the stats rail. Rest of section good."

**2nd Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Staff. BND Lifestyle Sections. "The June 22 cover is clean - I may have swapped the local story and main photo to the top. The May 22 section also cleanly laid out. No design innovation, though I did appreciate the pops of green in the locators, quotes and stats."

## **CLASS 28 - SPECIAL SECTION**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. Get Out! "Spectacular photos that show off the community. Well-written, informative stories that made me want to visit. Well-designed, informative ads. Nicely done for both residents and visitors."

**2nd Place:** Forest Park Review, Jacquinete Baldwin. Special Section. "In Our Corner and Flashbacks offer great, quick info. Ads well designed and informative, easily understood fact flash pages entertain and inform. Lot of work went into this well-put-together section."

**3rd Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki and Becky LaMont. Legendary: LeRoy wins state championship. "Obviously, this was an important win for your community. Contains

some excellent sports writing that goes beyond the game to the personalities on the team. Photos show the emotion during and after the game."

**Honorable Mention:** The Sidell Reporter, Rinda Maddox and staff. Fine Arts. "Love to see a newspaper give the arts this deserved attention and you did an excellent job. Good clear writing. Photos fairly ordinary, maybe some close ups of particular students doing their art. Ads well-designed and relevant and good use of color."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Staff. Heroin.

**2nd Place:** Effingham & Teutopolis News Report, Staff. Craig Lindvahl Tribute. "A very unique approach and section."

**3rd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Staff. Home & Garden.

**Honorable Mention:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Claire Innes. WJ Answer Book 2016.

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Claire Innes. Special Section. "Very good photography and design; good mix of local content."

**2nd Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Staff. Everyday Heroes. "Lots of local content. Featuring local people is a good way to engage with the community."

**3rd Place:** Wednesday Journal Group, Oak Park, Claire Innes. Special Section. "Eye-catching design and use of colors. Consistent elements throughout provide continuity."

**Honorable Mention:** Wednesday Journal Group, Oak Park, Jacquinete Baldwin. ACT Career Connect Special Section2. "Good photography and design."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. Farm Focus. "Nice, newsy look at farming."

**2nd Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Mike Frazier. Law Day. "Short, but interesting look at law enforcement in your community."

**3rd Place:** Effingham Daily News, Staff. Farm Fair: The Crops. "A good look at farming in your community."

**Honorable Mention:** Robinson Daily News, Josh Brown. 2016 Spring Sports Guide. "A nice look at community sports teams that was probably well-read in your community."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Staff. Heroin in the Sauk Valley. "This exceptional section puts a local face on a national epidemic through a compelling mix of informative and human interest stories, and opinion content. This commendable effort served the community watchdog and education roles very well."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Matt Daniels, Mike Goebel and staff. IlliniHQ Yearbook. "This 100-page tome certainly did not read like such. The dynamic images, layout and graphics were extremely user friendly for sports readers and non alike, and the fun cover story with its lively writing put a human face on two standout players. An impressive result."

**3rd Place:** Rockford Register Star, Staff. Cheap Trick Register Star. "This fun, interesting and inclusive section took a deep look at the pride of Rockford. The band's induction was deserving of exceptional coverage, and this special section hit the mark, right down to the design choice that emulated the Rick Nielsen's signature checkerboard guitars."

**Honorable Mention:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Staff. Farm & Field. "An interesting idea that humanizes a major industry that is critical to the readership area. It's clear that the reporters understand the issues surrounding agriculture -- going so far as to consider the global marketing of their local product -- and translate its technicalities well for non-agricultural readers."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Staff. Belleville's Champions.

**2nd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Sports Staff. 2016 World Series.

**3rd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Kirk Wessler & Wes Huett. Cubs World Series.

**Honorable Mention:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Staff. QC Works.

## **CLASS 29 - BEST WEBSITE**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Forest Park Review, Staff. Forest Park Review Website. "This website provides more features than the other entries and the mobile and tablet versions are integrated well. The breaking news automatic email feature is excellent."

**2nd Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. TheWoodstockIndependent.com. "The special categories of content make this website useful to more readers. The photo and calendar upload area is a plus."

**3rd Place:** The Nashville News, Alex Haglund. nash-news.com. "An easy to use site but other entries had extra features that made them stand out."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Republic-Times, Waterloo, Andrea Saathoff, Corey Saathoff, Chris Otten. Best Website. "Good use of widgets on the homepage."

**2nd Place:** Cook County Chronicle, Chicago, Staff. Best Website. "Clean layout, easy to use site."

**3rd Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Staff. Wednesday Journal Website.

**Honorable Mention:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Staff. Riverside Brookfield Landmark Website.

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Staff. KCC website. "This is a sharp site. The prominent art above the scroll is notable and eye-catching. Also, the commitment to video with the video player that follows as you scroll is a nice addition."

**2nd Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Staff. Austin Weekly News Website. "The design is a little busy, but the content is strong."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jay Redfern. Galesburg.com. "Very clean, well-designed and easy to read website layout. I like the simplicity and functionality, the website is clearly a tool in the process of telling the news and it doesn't impede it."

**2nd Place:** The Journal-Standard, Freeport, Staff. journalstandard.com. "I like the clean layout here, though some photos appear to be awkwardly cropped on prominent stories. It's easy to

access different sections of the website and to tell what articles are the most important. The actual story layout is also well done and easy to read."

**3rd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. Daily Chronicle website. "Easy to use and navigate and the layout flows well. All of the options on an individual stories are also a plus, such as the related links section and social media sharing that scrolls with the page. "

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. jg-tc.com. "Simple layout and navigation but easy to use. Would like to see more features or links that are easily accessible up high instead of scrolling to the bottom of the page."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Staff. The News-Gazette. "In trying to describe The News-Gazette website in one word, I settled on 'elegant.' The design is crisp, maybe even a bit understated, but, compared to the mayhem of many sites, it is a real pleasure to experience. I like the typeface, the just right balance between display and type, the nicely written headlines. news-gazette.com is exceptionally easy to navigate, and anywhere you might choose to go, you find range and depth. This is just a first class newspaper website, reflective and highly knowledgeable of its community, and I would presume a great and valuable resource."

**2nd Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Staff. SJ-R.com. "Thorough, newsy and entertaining, sj-r.com is a top flight news website. There is great depth on the site for those with time to spend, including videos featuring candidates in the municipal elections, well-produced podcasts and even multi-media packages that are mainly just fun, including the wife of the Wichita State basketball coach going off without decorum at court-side. An important source of news and information, and it looks good, too."

**3rd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Kelly Wilson. whig.com. "Clean, modern and easy to navigate. Good organization of topics, a lot of depth in the click-throughs. Here again, whig.com understands that you don't have to be an assault on the eyes to impart a broad range of news and knowledge of community. Well done."

**Honorable Mention:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Staff. Pantagraph.com. "The Pantagraph is a good website by virtue of being a good read. Bill Flick's story on Brryan Jackson was riveting. I wasn't sure about the photo collage on top of the home page, but after clicking through decided that it works well. I have to admire the initiative that would lead to an opens record request for video footage of a motorcycle-school bus wreck. Ouch!"

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Staff. BND.com. "Clean design, engaging headlines and a clear layout."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Staff. Best website. "Special presentations are incredible and worthwhile. Particularly like the Trending Stories offerings that scroll on below the articles to keep people on your site."

**3rd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Staff. PJStar.com. "Had some issues with login not allowing me access to other sites, unfortunately. Still, what I could see was solid."

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Staff. dailyherald.com.

## **CLASS 30 - BEST WEB PROJECT**

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Staff. The Huddle. "Very comprehensive one-stop-site for local HS football coverage."

**2nd Place:** Times-Republic, Watseka, Staff. Iroquois County Fair photo galleries. "Great idea to get all the photos people know you took, but don't make print, to a place where fair-goers can view them."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Kelly Wilson, Don O'Brien, Jason Lewton. Lovelace murder trial. "Great, thorough coverage of a high-profile case. You used the web and social media to tell this story in the best way possible."

**2nd Place:** Rockford Register Star, Corina Curry. Sub Nation. "Excellent integration of text, graphics, data and video into the online version of the story. I'm impressed by the scope of your investigation as well as the clarity and focus with which it was present online."

**3rd Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Kelly Wilson, Steve Eighinger, Stephanie Oitker. Band of brothers.

**Honorable Mention:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Jim Bowling. From drug dealing to 'Decatur Seven,' Carson transformed to minister, mentor. "Excellent use of photography to tell a powerful redemption story."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Staff. 92 deaths, 2,623 bullets: Tracking every Chicago police shooting over 6 years. "Interesting way to tell such a data-rich story and a perfect example of letting readers see with their own eyes the work that was used to frame the stories. Especially like giving people an opportunity to expand on or fix the data about a shooting victim."

**2nd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Frank Main, Rex Chekal, Paul Saltzman. Life on a ledge. "A heartbreaking story, well told. Strong, clean presentation with elements that add context to a very personal tale."

**3rd Place:** The Dispatch & The Rock Island Argus, Todd Mizener, Stephen Elliott. A grieving mother's marathon. "Main video is well done and heartfelt, and complements the print presentation well. Second video is good at capturing the emotion of the race."

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Michael Noel & Leslie Renken. Interactive Sculpture Walk Map. "Not a fan of the way the locator arrows disappear when you navigate the page -- Makes the user experience confusing. But I like the concept."

## **CLASS 31 - MOST INNOVATIVE PROJECT**

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Staff. Heroin. "Great to see an important issue explored from so many angles. The writing took chances, turning even some of the potentially more staid articles into attention-grabbers. The entire section, from the stories, to even the ad content showed a relentless focus on trying to stop an epidemic from doing more damage."

**2nd Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Kyle Herschelman. MCCA Fundraiser. "A wonderful example of a beat writer truly becoming part of his community. By finding a way to engage the high school student bodies, Herschelman made his community tangibly better."

**3rd Place:** The Hoopston Chronicle, Jordan Crook. Arts Spotlight. "A neat public art project turned into an opportunity to show the faces and personalities behind the artwork. The addition of video helps highlight the student artists all the better. One critique - an introductory article explaining how the project came to be would have helped set the stage better."

**Honorable Mention:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Mary (Galer) Herschelman. A Grace-Filled Journey Column. "Poignant use of a column, that I'm sure resonated with many of your parent-readers. Touching, but also practical."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Journal-Standard, Freeport, Jillian Duchnowski. Freeport Fish Tank. "This entry was far and above the winner in this class. Innovation isn't just about creating a new print product or revenue stream, but about creating an idea that can impact a community, is multi-platform and will engage a specific audience(s). This idea is such a breath of fresh air. Well done."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Jim Rossow. High School Confidential. "I love this new take on a concept that so many newspapers were unsuccessful with in the past. Engaging high school students can be really tough, but using platforms like Twitter to reach out and touch the right audience is brilliant. I love the aggregated content approach, the collaboration this creates between high school students and the newspaper and it's an incredible use of citizen-generated content. I'm most impressed that this is Tweeted to all of the students and I love the push to share on social. This idea still has lots of room to grow and with the use of tools such as Facebook Live, etc., there is still a lot of cool stuff to be done with this."

**3rd Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Allison Petty, Ashley Fenner. Election 2016: Everything You Need to Know. "This is a great start to an idea that still has room to develop. Giving audiences usable information about complex topics through a digital platform is critical to the longterm success of our industry. What the Herald & Review did well was aggregate a ton of important information into an easy-to-use platform. I would have liked to have seen the marketing campaigns that were developed to send audiences to this content online."

**Honorable Mention:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Jeff D'Alessio and staff. For the Record. "I love the concept of taking an old newspaper tradition (FOIA request info) and creating a new approach to reaching audiences based on market data that indicates our audiences need smaller bites of information. For this to be a winning entry, I'd love to see a robust online presence and a social media strategy."

## **CLASS 32 - Illinois Public Policy Institute Award for BEST PROMOTION OF PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. Farmer City Police Secrecy. "This coverage and editorials championed FOI by urging the public to take action. This entry rose to the top because it furthered the cause by exposing a specific case of secrecy and telling the public what they could do about it."

**2nd Place:** Arcola Record-Herald, David Porter. State Wasting City's Money. "A refreshing angle on FOI law."

**3rd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Vehicle seizures paying off. "This entry did not 'further the cause' of FOI as strongly as the other entries did. The story used information obtained in a FOI request."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Mike Plunkett. Hillsboro Pays \$35,000 To Traffic Stop Defendant.

**2nd Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Staff. It's through FOIA we hold elected officials accountable.

**3rd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Dan Burke. Friede autopsy.

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Matt Buedel. Police report unmasked. "Nothing like one hell of a court battle to endear a newspaper to its readers. Bravo!"

**2nd Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Angel Sierra, Kathleen Schultz, and Pam Eggemeier. Heroin in the Sauk Valley. "Timely topic combined with a great eye for a quote makes for solid journalism. Congrats!"

**3rd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Jeff D'Alessio, Tracy Crane. You say their pay. "I hate charts! Except for this one. That's a boatload of data in an easy to use format. Well done."

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Christopher Heimerman and Jim Dunn. Tough Choices for Sterling Schools.

## **CLASS 33 - PUBLIC NOTICE JOURNALISM AWARD**

### **Open Division**

**1st Place:** Cook County Chronicle, Chicago, Jean Lotus. Suit: Tinley Park zoning change improperly noticed.

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Dan Burke. Bipartisan support for constitutional amendment.

**3rd Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Staff. It's through FOIA.

## **CLASS 34 - BEST SCHOOL BOARD COVERAGE**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Paxton-Buckley-Loda school district referendum. "This entry encapsulates what this award is about: outstanding, enterprising coverage of school boards, school governance and policy issues – especially in this case the community dialogue component in particular. News pieces are well-written and explanatory. Writer demonstrates an understanding of both board and district work and the community as a whole."

**2nd Place:** Coal City Courant, Ann Gill. Coal City school board coverage. "Great coverage of local school governance issues, particularly in bringing the strategic plan to the readership, covering the issues surrounding a power plant development, and tackling the audit piece – a detail issue that may districts face and of which the community has a particular stake-- even-handedly. Clear, concise writing."

**3rd Place:** Scott County Times, Winchester, Justin A. Cobb. Bluffs and Winchester school districts. "Good, comprehensive reporting of a variety of local school topics, tackling some unusual issues, taking board work to the community readership with understanding and explanation."

**3rd Place:** The Sidell Reporter, Rinda Maddox. Salt Fork School Board. "Well-done coverage, particularly of the highly-charged issue of lead in drinking water. Nice summaries of board meetings."

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. Galena school coverage. "The stories on Galena school facilities and the accompanying referendum offer great insight to the issue at hand. Perspectives from both community residents and school board members are thoughtfully presented in an easy-to-read, yet in-depth format. Accompanying graphics and photos paint an accurate picture of the school facility needs while at the same time explaining the realistic approach for such upgrades."

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Katie Devereaux, Carter Newton, Dan Burke. East Dubuque schools. "The coverage of East Dubuque administrative changes does a very good job of informing the public of a difficult issue. The articles use of facts and sufficient timelines allow readers to understand the varying perspectives of those involved. The coverage also provides a unique view into the process by which school board governance transitions are carried out at the board and administrative levels."

**3rd Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Goldie Rapp. Bureau Valley School Board. "The articles regarding the Bureau Valley School District "east tower" building problem provide the residents of the district a thorough and prompt account of the issue. The coverage provides the public with the various options at hand, at the same time explaining the differing board member perspectives of how to move forward addressing facility upgrades."

**Honorable Mention:** Pike Press, Pittsfield, Beth Zumwalt. Pikeland versus the One group. "The stories surrounding Pikeland Unit 10 and the associated community group do a very good job of keeping area residents apprised of the potential for involvement with a local school board. The author went out of her way to verify different points of view within each of the accompanying articles, and provide factual information on the board governance process."

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Owen Lasswell. Taylorville School Board. "Well-done reporting, taking board work to the community readership with, depth, understanding of the community, and explanation of the work. Coverage of a district coping with budget cuts, with even-handed treatment of the conflicts involved. Coverage involves not just school board work on the issue, but explanations of that work, of which the community has a particular stake, and references to the bigger picture of state payments."

**2nd Place:** Pekin Daily Times, Sharon Woods Harris. 2017 state aid projections a reverse Robin Hood. "This well-done piece addresses the local impact of a potential state funding system to the local communities it will impact. Lots of enterprise, bringing several voices into the story."

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Deborah Gertz Husar. Quincy School District coverage. "Encapsulates what this award is about: outstanding, enterprising coverage of school boards, school governance and policy issues – especially in this case the transition and boundary issues and the school discipline law changes. Well-written work on important topics, bringing the work of the school board and district to its community."

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Nicole Lafond. Area schools. "This entry tackles big education issues of importance to the community. Impressive depth on each topic sets this entry apart. Coverage is well-rounded and the writing is topnotch, contributing to understanding of the public schools' role in the community and delivering important issues to the readers. Each is accompanied by good photos and helpful callouts, factoids and/or tables to create an inviting package."

**3rd Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Felix Sarver. Fairmont D-86. "Enterprising newswriting, contributing to public understanding of the work of the board, in this case in an ongoing difficult situation. Clear retelling of the events and relating the issues. Writer demonstrates an understanding of the work of the board and relates information to the readership."

**Honorable Mention:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Noelle McGee. Area schools. "Excellent storytelling on school news and people – in particular, the sidebar that brought note of history to the story of the school closing due to flooding. The student mock debate story is a fun read. Great stories for the readers, but less about governance than the contest requires."

**Honorable Mention:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Jason Nevel. Jason Nevel Education Coverage. "The stories in this entry include well-written coverage of many public school issues, demonstration of enterprise through working with many local districts, plus some really nice storytelling on the "Great Grads" piece. Overall, selections are less about governance than the contest calls for."

## **Division F**

**1st Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Jake Griffin, Erin Hegarty, Editorial Board. Palatine District 15 Teachers Contract. "Excellent coverage on the topic, deep and enterprising news writing supported by editorial board opinion pieces. News pieces are well-written, comprehensive of the topic, and explanatory. All of this contributes to the community's understanding of the work of the district and school board, in this case in a difficult governance situation."

**2nd Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Phil Luciano. School board. "These pieces are mostly opinion, with some reporting. This work covers school issues, but necessarily not district/school board governance work or supporting dialogue. Chosen topics make great headlines and the column-writing is expert."

## **CLASS 35 - BEST COVERAGE OF TAXATION**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Property Tax Series.

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Staff. One Earth Energy property tax appeal.

**3rd Place:** Scott County Times, Winchester, Justin A. Cobb. Complexities of taxation in Scott County.

**Honorable Mention:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Paxton-Buckley-Loda school district referendum.

## **Division B**

**1st Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Mike Plunkett. A New High School - What's My Share? "I like your short answer and long answer. It really breaks it down for both the audience that wants all the info, and the audience that wants the gist. Good job!"

**2nd Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. Galena school referendum coverage. "Good graphics and solid reporting."

**3rd Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Eric Becker. School Board to seek; Third times the charm.

**Honorable Mention:** Effingham & Teutopolis News Report, Herb Meeker. Getting property taxes and wrangling.

## **Division D**

**1st Place:** Pekin Daily Times, Sharon Woods Harris. 2017 state aid projections a reverse Robin Hood. "Love the lede. There are some really great quotes here from Danielle Owens that would be more effective higher up in the story."

**2nd Place:** Times-Republic, Watseka, Wendy Davis. Iroquois County Public Safety Tax. "This is a good example of sustained coverage. Each story is packed with useful information to readers, but the stories could benefit from better organization and editing."

**3rd Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Mike Frazier. Lockbox Amendment. "I would have liked to know what local citizens/activists had to say about the amendment instead of state newspapers."

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Sharon Woods Harris. State error will cost towns thousands. "I want to know more about the impact. What are the potential ramifications of this? Good quickread/graphic showing the numbers on the front page."

## **Division E**

**1st Place:** Rockford Register Star, Kevin Haas. Tax Scorecard. "Love the tone and high-utility aspect of this project. Here's what the impact is to YOU, the reader. Piece then goes on to explain what needs to be done to lower the rate."

**2nd Place:** The Times, Ottawa, David Giuliani. Your Tax Bill. "Property tax rates are rising for residents in this community, and at a significant clip. It's likely this package was well read by

subscribers and nonsubscribers alike. Nice school-by-school detail and good accountability work on the homestead exemption violations."

**3rd Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Tim Landis, Mary Hansen. Springfield TIF districts. "This project does a good job in making TIF relevant to readers by telling personal stories of business owners and residents."

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak, Chris Fusco. Playing the property-tax game. "Booming wards are paying a greater share. Trump's tower sees significant tax relief. Big cuts for a movie studio. The breadth and impact of the work Tim and Chris have done in a city that has a history of corruption in this space is impressive."

**2nd Place:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Jake Griffin. Tax Watchdog. "Comprehensive look at where resources are being allocated, from libraries to schools, and what private companies are receiving funds from local government. Good accountability journalism, and often grounded in practicality (what does it mean to the reader?)."

## **CLASS 36 - BEST INVESTIGATIVE/ENTERPRISE REPORTING**

### **Division A**

**1st Place:** LeRoy Farmer City Press, Jerry Nowicki. Farmer City Police Secrecy.

**2nd Place:** Ford County Record, Paxton, Will Brumleve. Heroin epidemic.

### **Division B**

**1st Place:** Cook County Chronicle, Chicago, Jean Lotus. Body Parts Investigation.

**2nd Place:** Mason County Democrat, Havana, Wendy Martin. Outside Interests.

**3rd Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Staff. Heroin.

**Honorable Mention:** The Galena Gazette, Dan Burke. Peters-Friede case.

### **Division C**

**1st Place:** Illinois Times, Springfield, Bruce Rushton. Mautino and campaign spending.

**2nd Place:** Illinois Times, Springfield, Bruce Rushton. Lifestyles of the rich and elected.

**3rd Place:** Illinois Times, Springfield, Bruce Rushton. Jackpot.

### **Division D**

**1st Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Staff. DOPESICK: THE HEROIN EPIDEMIC.

**2nd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Eric Olson. Road to dismissal.

**3rd Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Rhonda Gillespie. High cost of headhunting.

### **Division E**

**1st Place:** The Times, Ottawa, David Giuliani. Freeway Forfeitures.

**2nd Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Julie Wurth. No expenses spared.

**3rd Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Molly Parker. Chaos in Cairo continues.

**Honorable Mention:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Alyse Thompson. Water worries.

### **Division F**

**1st Place:** Chicago Tribune Media Group, Sam Roe, Karisa King, Ray Long. Dangerous Doses.

**2nd Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak, Chris Fusco, Mick Dumke and Brett Chase. "Beyond the rubble: Life after the CHA upheaval," Chicago Sun-Times/BGA.

**3rd Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Beth Hundsdorfer, George Pawlaczyk. Oliver Hamilton investigation.

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Herald Group, Arlington Heights, Marni Pyke. Safer? The Facts On Red Light Cameras.