

## 2012 IPA BEST OF THE PRESS EDITORIAL CONTEST

### CLASS 01 - GENERAL EXCELLENCE

#### Division A

**First Place:** Forest Park Review. Good blend of hard news and community-interest stories. Stories well-crafted and photos are solid and used to good effect. Stories showcase paper's role as government watchdog. Hard-hitting editorial showcases paper's role as community information hub. Press delivers solid reproduction. Ads inviting, especially the color ones.

**Second Place:** Elburn Herald, *March 1, March 22 editions*. Chock full of news and information of all kinds. Stories tackle tough issues/topics. Photos big and bold. Vibrant editorial and op-ed pages including lots of letters to the editor. Solid reproduction. Eye-catching ads.

**Third Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka. Solid weekly newspaper all around. Inclusion of student paper signals strength of community engagement. Sports photos really jump off page. Top-notch print reproduction helps make good use of color ads.

**Honorable Mention:** Suburban News Bulletin, Geneva, Brandon Bressner, publisher. Hard to believe it's a free paper. Editorial and op-ed pages really stand out making it a true marketplace of ideas. Black tones run dark and display ads are few. Overall quality very good.

#### Division B

**First Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Bob Uphues. *March 21; Oct. 24*. Excellent job. You are not afraid of presenting hard news in a straightforward manner. Excellent news judgment on important stories that affect a lot of people. Great breadth of news and features. Useful features laid out nicely.

**Second Place:** The Galena Gazette. Good, fun overall product. Many points of entry for readers. Very good columns; lots of people-oriented features and catch-alls. Great art on the Mississippi River coverage. You promote fun activities; a great service to readers. Varied and comprehensive selection of ads. Love the docket packaging Good covers and lots of local content.

**Third Place:** Ledger-Sentinel, Oswego. Good news stories. Good political coverage and serious treatment of important issues. Nice covers. Attention to detail. Big, big sections dedicated to news and advertising. Nice double truck on school construction.

**Honorable Mention:** The Leader-Union, Vandalia. *March 22, Dec 20*. Significant news stories and a worthy contender to the other winners in this category. Supplements were well done and informative.

#### Division C

**First Place:** The Doings - La Grange. Good mix of local news and features, particularly the feature on the 50-year-old training for Boston Marathon. Local columns fresh and good reads. Ad placement is good, headlines crisp, photos lively. We imagine a reader would spend a long time with this paper. Could use even more sports coverage.

**Second Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Staff. Paper excels in covering topics of local interest. Loved the A1 placement of the historic bell story. Editorials concise and punchy. Found lots of names and faces throughout. Liked promo of community events and sports guide was well designed.

**Third Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest. *March 21 and December 5 issues.* Editorial content on target. Enjoyed Dan Haley's columns and Ken Trainor's piece on Mike Royko.

#### **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb. Strong coverage of murder trial; compelling package of news, reaction and commentary. Impressive writing by Caitlin Mullen. Good mix of local and wire news. We were happy to see a local editorial in both issues. Sports photography is superb. Nicely designed. We liked the three-quarter page of weather in color, and we thought the treatment of the martini glass on the Food page was well done.

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg. Most attractive paper of the bunch. We liked the A1 design. Glad to see all-local content on cover. Use of promo rails throughout is excellent. Drug forfeiture story was a good read. Would have liked to have seen more local content inside the sections.

**Third Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon. Photography is excellent, particularly A1. Good mix of local news and features in all sections. Liked the use of art promo in the over-line on A1. Articles "Campus connection" and "Doughty steps down" particularly well written.

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times. *April 27th & March 23rd.* Strong emphasis on playing local news prominently on cover. Photo coverage of school bus accident was particularly compelling. Picture page on back was a good idea. Good use of color throughout.

#### **Division E**

**First Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale. *March 1 March 18.* Excellent coverage of Harrisburg tornado, good A1 layout, content-heavy local news section. The strongest paper in the group in all categories.

**Second Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig. Strong layout, good headlines; nice tie-in to online content. Ella story was long but displayed well.

**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling. Good package on Dixon in Sunday paper. Overall, good local coverage.

**Honorable Mention:** The News-Gazette, Champaign. Friday, March 23, 2012; Sunday, May 13, 2012. Makes good use of A1 for in-depth local stories.

#### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune. Has the heft and breadth of a world-class newspaper. Loaded with rich, staff-produced content. Elegantly designed.

**Second Place:** The Rock Island Argus. *March 21 and June 10 editions.* Sharp looking product filled with lots of good, local content.

**Third Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington. *March 21, 2012 and May 20, 2012.* Heavy, local coverage. Impressive next-day turn-around on election results. Staff-produced content in all sections.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times. Smart tabloid with plenty of good reading on local news.

## **CLASS 02 - COMMUNITY SERVICE**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka, Jerry McDowell. *IYS.* This series of stories gets at the heart of the issue and brings it home. The first story impresses readers with its frank admission that journalists are often afraid to write about suicide because of the fear of copy-cat. The checklist with warning signs is very useful; it's the kind of list many will want to clip for future reference.

**Second Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka, Jerry McDowell. *Synthetic Drugs.* Very good information for readers. Pairing the news stories with photos and with the editorial makes it clear that this is a real problem. Some additional context about synthetic drug stats in the state and nation would have been useful.

**Third Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. *Woodstock Cares/Breast cancer awareness.* Nicely done package. The interviews with breast cancer survivors bring the story home. The community's commitment to this project is very impressive. Good info, too, on the amount of money raised in the course of time. The story of the mother and two daughters with breast cancer surely helped to encourage donors to give to a worthy cause. Nice use of graphics, too.

**Honorable Mention:** Peoria County News Bulletin, Peoria, Wes Schmidgall. *Crittenton Centers Providing ID Cards for Children.* Good job in addressing a fear that many parents have about what would happen if a child went missing. Some additional sourcing would have been useful about the number of missing children statewide every year and the cause -- are they stranger abductions or family custody cases?

### **Division B**

**First Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. *Honor Flight.* Very good project. Shows readers what Honor Flight means to the community and offers ways for readers to get involved by helping vets to take part and to donate to support the program.

**Second Place:** The Galena Gazette, P. Carter Newton. *Getting to Yes.* Really interesting look at a concept/technique that could be used in many communities. Good job in interviewing participants, in reporting on the writer's experience with the program and in using editorials to support the program, too.

**Third Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro. *The Journal-News Pink Pages.* Good job in using real people to tell the story of how breast cancer affects individuals and families. Finding survivors who have gone through treatment in different eras

adds context. Breaking out info on the support groups would be useful for readers to scan and clip.

**Honorable Mention:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville. *Shop Local First*. There's no doubt about it -- this newspaper has come up with a promotion that its readers should support. Some coverage verges on advertorial instead of journalism, but nevertheless, there is good context from experts on why small businesses, so bandied about by politicians, really rely on local consumers.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Chicago Daily Law Bulletin. *NATO Summit in Chicago Coverage*. Thorough coverage with great use of social media and specialized reporting. Entire package really places the reader at the scene and helps the audience to understand what's at stake in terms of world issues, the city of Chicago, activists and law professionals. The results show that there was a well-crafted plan put into place to cover every possible angle as stories developed -- in advance and during the actual meetings.

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jay Redfern. *Best Customer Service in Galesburg*. "Clever concept is carried out with genuine heart. The overwhelming response to Jay's question made this judge want to visit Galesburg (and to suggest we try the same thing at our newspaper). Great way to use social media and connect with your readers. Featuring the McDonald's window worker in the first installment was a very good idea to put a real face on a fan favorite."

**Third Place:** Times-Republic, Watseka, Carla Waters. *The Workplace*. Good concept; stories could have been a bit more varied, though, in terms of workplaces being profiled.

**Honorable Mention:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville. *Dolph Stanley*. Extensive coverage for a big event for this community. The ongoing coverage needed to also report on what the revamped basketball facilities would mean going forward, instead of just looking back.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Chelsea McDougall, Al Lagattolla, Joan Oliver. *Confronting the Bully*. Excellent example of how a news organization can use its journalistic resources to call attention to a problem and also offer solutions. The design pulls readers into the series and the breakout boxes offer lots of entry points, but ultimately it's the content, with the context, that makes this a journalism winner. The project makes readers care about the overall problem of bullying and about the various people profiled from all ages and stages of life who have experienced this trauma.

**Second Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling. *Concussions: The Hidden Injury*. A great series that informs, educates, motivates. The sports writer's columns give a valuable personal perspective; readers can tell that he cares about the issue of concussion injuries, the kids who sustain them, the world of sports and what's down the road.

**Third Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake. *Everyday Heroes*. What a joy to read this entry! Every element worked -- the explanation of the project, the intro to the special section, the design, headlines, writing and photos in the tab. The project kept its focus on unsung heroes, but served up great stories that could also stand alone. Packaging them together gives this project heft and also shows how valuable unsung heroes are to a community.

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling. *Caught in the Middle; Boomtown, USA*. Very innovative approach to try to solve a problem that is plaguing many towns and cities in the so-called Rust Belt region. Readers were invited to participate -- and were offered the hope their involvement could actually change things make sure they and their families have a future in this community. Nice job!

## **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune, Patricia Callahan, Sam Roe, Michael Hawthorne. *Playing With Fire*. This is the clear-cut winner for public service. The thorough investigation, the clear style of writing, the explanatory graphics all work together to tell a disturbing story about a threat to public health, especially for children. In less skilled hands, the stories could have been bogged down by the scientific explanations. Instead, this work is compelling to read, and the reward comes when the newspaper shows the many different changes being proposed to change the hazards.

**Second Place:** Chicago Tribune, Christy Gutowski, Bill Ruthhart. *"Children at Risk."* Amazing work. Thorough reporting and strong graphics reveal a story that needed to be told. This project is a stellar example of public service -- and a strong reminder about why we need journalists who have the skills to shine a light on government agencies. The vignettes about the children who died were difficult to read but truly put human faces (so young and innocent) on this bureaucratic nightmare. As a judge, I say, "Great work." As a mother and grandmother, I say, "Thank you."

**Third Place:** Belleville News-Democrat. *We the people*. Tremendous project from start to finish. In-depth reporting on the issues, from the candidates themselves and as the voters see the issues, gives readers valuable insights. The informative graphics add context. If I were a voter in Belleville, I would have felt prepared to make a choice on election day in all of the featured races. This is a model project for other news organizations to follow.

**Honorable Mention:** The Rock Island Argus. *Schilling- Bustos congressional race*. "Good planning and strong front-page promotion of what readers need to know to follow this race make this a true public service offering."

## **CLASS 03 - LOCAL EDITORIAL**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Mike Neumann. *Community, not city, can convert field*. Well thought out, convincing argument

**Second Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert. *Around Town*. "strong and clear voice, like the first of the set a lot."

**Third Place:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. *Open Letter To EPC*.

**Honorable Mention:** Elburn Herald, Keith Beebe. *Inflexible AYP standards*.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Mike Plunkett. *Impasse In Washington? "We Have Met The Enemy"* Excellent, nicely assembled, on target, even a bit amusing"

**Second Place:** The Leader-Union, Vandalia, Dave Bell. *Irresponsible acts*. "Nicely done, persuasive - efficient use of words to make case"

**Third Place:** Kendall County Record, Yorkville, Kathy Farren. *Time limit needed on public comment.*" Nice. I like the research to back up the opinion."

**Honorable Mention:** Ledger-Sentinel, Oswego, John Etheredge. *County should restrict burning near cities*. Well- reasoned and supported.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Dan Haley. *Editorial 2/29*.

**Second Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Staff. *Jones sentence too lenient*.

**Third Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Dan Haley. *Editorial 7/11*.

**Honorable Mention:** Downers Grove Reporter, Jerry Moore. *Park District should return veteran memorial*.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Eric Olson. *Our View – Coffee Fund scandal at NIU*. Excellent job holding a local institution responsible and crusading for transparent handling of possible misuse of public money. If I were the NIU president, I'd hate this editorial writer. If I were a taxpayer, I'd say, "thank you."

**Second Place:** Robinson Daily News, Greg Bilbrey. *Public-service pay low, but...* Nice, lively writing. The writer shows creativity in coming up with a theme and then using three local cases to demonstrate it. Well done.

**Third Place:** Pekin Daily Times, Staff. *Time for feuding neighbors to kiss and make up*. Writer picks out an important community issue and gets down to the core of it by making a simple, but powerful point: "We do not care who is right or wrong. We only care about safety."

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Staff. *Pay more attention to union negotiations*. Takes an important topic, especially in tight economic times, and looks for a compromise that benefits the city, the public workforce and the public trust.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Jim Dunn. *The Rita Crundwell case*. Well-argued pieces that look comprehensively at a crisis and possible solutions.

Excellent job giving specific models to consider for reforms and making clear the editorial board's positions. Good outrage. Great use of the perfect photo in the last editorial.

**Second Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Gary Metro. *LEAP DAY TORNADO*. These editorials served their community exactly as editorials should -- taking on a perceived injustice and championing a better outcome. Especially important when the topic is a natural disaster. I also like the way the writer(s) used an editorial to rally individuals to help with some of the recovery, giving a list of volunteer opportunities. That shows respect for readers and interconnectivity.

**Third Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Jim Dey. *Email controversy more of the same*. Excellent editorials by Dey. Interesting, varied topics. Good use of skepticism presented in a humorous way (Grrrr) and guided by common sense. The award is for all three of Dey's editorials as a single entry.

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Dan McCaleb. *Hard at Work*. These editorials take on a difficult, unsexy topic and makes it compelling using a variety of approaches.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Kate N. Grossman. *'Chicago schools showdown: 5 editorials'*. Drew Peterson editorial is excellent. Crisply written, appropriately acerbic in some places and prudently cautious in others. Stand up to teachers also excellent, an against-the-editorial-board-grain, clear piece of writing. One edit not on schools, but I don't care. A strong package of edits with clear writing and compelling argumentation.

**Second Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Kenda Burrows. *ARDC's mixed message*. Strong editorial on an outrageous situation. Good job holding the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission panel accountable for hypocrisy, in punishment given vs. conclusions reached.

**Third Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Kenda Burrows. *Reduce size of Rock Island County Board*. Nice, dogged campaign on an important administrative initiative, using repetition and reader engagement well.

## **CLASS 04 - EDITORIAL PAGE**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Staff. *Woodstock Independent Editorial Pages*. Well-written editorials on good topics. Nice that it has local cartoons, which is unusual for a newspaper this size. Good display of letters-to-the-editor, contributing to overall pleasing layout. My only suggestion: Have the fillers be ones sharing opinions, not info that seems more properly placed on news pages. (Maybe find local bloggers and print their take on issues?) Otherwise, well done.

**Second Place:** The Pinckneyville Press.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville. An editorial page that's not afraid to do things a bit differently. Good editorials placed at the top of

the page, nice "Talk to Us" feature that gives readers more of a chance to share their opinions along with letters, and a guest column that uses the writer's signature. Nice cartoon selection. Good job.

**Second Place:** Pike Press, Pittsfield, Julie Boren, Michael Boren, Wayne Utterback. *Editorial pages for April 18, March 28.* Great letters to editor. I like that they let 'em run a bit long. Good for running local cartoons, though concealed weapon one is more of an illustration. Editorials are local, pertinent. Views are clearly marked; layout understandable with an interesting mix.

**Third Place:** Riverside-Brookfield Landmark, Bob Uphues. *April 18; Nov. 21.* Good editorials on important topics. Lots of room for letters. Nice, clean layout

### Division C

**First Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Ken Trainor. *4/18 and 7/25 Viewpoints sections.* Readers of this paper get a lot from their editorial/opinion pages. I am impressed with the number of presentation of letters to the editor and columnists (though I wouldn't mind an ID line at the end to know who those writers are). Graphics with them are great. Nice modern look to pages. Good editorials on important topics and I like that the paper's opinion is on the second page. I also like the pages having a Twitter account. Good job!

**Second Place:** Downers Grove Reporter, Jerry Moore. *Downers Grove Reporter editorial page.*

**Third Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Staff. *Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville.*

### Division D

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. Opinions. Good variety of editorial topics and columnist viewpoints. Pleasingly -- and a little differently -- laid out.

### Division E

**First Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Jim Dey. *Editorial pages April 15, 2012 and May 20, 2012.* Lively, clean pages with a nice mix of columnists, including some from Illinois commenting on national issues. Nice to see. Good amount of space given to letters, plus the Voices features is a nice extra. Timely, informative guess commentary about why city maintains fund balances.

**Second Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Jim Dunn, *Opinion page editor.* *April 19 (mandatory week); Nov. 17.* Excellent editorials on Crundwell, so interesting (especially nice tie-in to Reagan's "trust but verify" comment) that even an outsider like me was hooked. Excellent amount of space given to letters, plus, a nice idea of publishing online comments (with writers' names). I even could see how that might be incentive to keep online comments civil. Well done.

**Third Place:** The Southern Illinoian, Carbondale, Gary Metro. *Editorial page April 15 June 1.* Well-written editorial on cameras in the courtroom. I especially liked that the writer addressed readers, encouraging them to shun news coverage and watch the full trial. Nice layout and printing of public officials' contact info. I generally like the thumbs-up-thumbs-down, short approach to editorials, but some of the topics seemed to deserve full-blown treatment.



Interesting columnists. Would like to see more than one featured "Voice of the Reader."

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake. Good, solid editorial pages. It's clear they weren't writing a one-time editorial on volunteers, but have made it an issue/cause in the community and for the newspaper. I like the prominent space given to letters to the editor (especially on the Feb. 12 page), and the editorial cartoon run large. Good tip of the hat, too, to poetry. Very traditional pages, but ones that serve their community and readership well.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune. Outstanding editorial pages. Beautifully crafted/argued editorial endorsement in presidential contest. Great, creative, thought-provoking features throughout entry pages, including on campaign slogans, Zorn/Bryne conversation, and Flashback to the famous Dewey Beats Truman headline. Plus plenty of space for readers' letters. Everything editorial and op-ed pages should be.

**Second Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Kenda Burrows, editorial page editor. *Viewpoints.* "What a delightful tones these editorial pages take. Fresh, sharp writing with a conversational approach in editorials with local significance. Great commentary by Vincent G. Thomas about Lincoln Elementary.

Roger Ruthhart's column smartly frames the candidate debate above, though it would have been nice to see some age/gender/racial diversity among the columnists. Good space for letters on op-ed page, though I'd drop the stamped envelope graphic logo.

**Third Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Mike Bailey. One thinks the pronoun "one" should be banned from all writing. Otherwise, good topics in editorials, passionately written. Plenty of room for readers and local commentary. Good diversity among writers.

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

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Pam Monson. *Gunman wreaks terror on neighborhood.* This was an original, very timely, local story with a great deal of significant subject matter. The story was well written, the quotes were well used and the story was thorough with the account of the details, especially with the neighbors' accounts of what happened. The story had a great lead and flowed well throughout the entire story.

**Second Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka, Jerry McDowell. *School revisits safety measures.* It was a great local spin on a national event. The story was the subject of school safety after the school shooting in Connecticut and was very significant, the lead was well written, it was a great way of capturing the reader's attention, the overall story was well written, there was a great flow and a good use of quotes. The side bar was a good addition.

**Third Place:** Forest Park Review, Jean Lotus. *Cops observe gang funeral.* This piece featured thorough reporting was thorough and it did a good job of keeping a reader's attention.

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Mike Neumann. *Development faces opposition.* This was just a very well-done, local story with impact and significance.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Berwyn Life, Brian Hudson. *Medicaid's missteps.* The entry was a national story (Medicaid) with a local spin. The anecdotal leads were great. The story had a great flow to it and it was an attention grabber all the way through. The writer was thorough in his reporting on the subject.

**Second Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Pavel Slepicka. *Hazelwonder Gets Five Year Sentence.* This was an entry that included serious subject matter of local importance. The thoroughness of the reporter's account of the trial was also good. I found the reporter's use of quotes to be very effective and well placed.

**Third Place:** County Journal, Percy, Jerry Willis. *Ron Coleman responds book about his family tragedy.*

**Honorable Mention:** Piatt County Journal-Republican, Monticello, Steve Hoffman, Andrew Helregel. *Carts now commonplace in county.*

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago. *Indicted state rep heads to court.* This is a highly significant story because it focused on another Illinois politician who was stealing. (If you can believe that!) The story was timely and clearly written. Great work!

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Anna Lothson. *Section 8 Housing Protest.* I thought the lead of this story was particularly good and very attention grabbing.

**Third Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Terry Dean. *Mann principal search begins in April.* This entry was about a principal resigning after the mishandling of a state test, obviously an issue of great interest to local readers. Thoroughly reported, cleanly written.

**Honorable Mention:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Robert Lyons. Jerseyville business center of synthetic sweep. Robert Lyons did a really fine job with this piece.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Caitlin Mullen and Jeff Engelhardt. *McCullough guilty.* Excellent work from inside a courtroom. You offered good description and good quotes. And the details surrounding the case gave you great material to work with.

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Ariel Cheung. *Drug Forfeiture Funds - 'Finders Keepers'.* The details in this story made it a very interesting read. I'm sure it took the reporters a while to gather so much detail. Great effort.

**Third Place:** McDonough County Voice, Macomb, Dave Gong. *Online Government Transparency.* This is an interesting topic and I liked how the

reporter provided an early summary -- and a real good quote from Costin -- as to why this is important.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, Jerry Crimmins. *The death of Philip H. Corboy*. Nice package with lots of details and effective quotes.

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Kayleigh Zyskowski. *Windsor, Gays feel the brunt of the storm*. Lots of detailed description alone made this story worthy of an award. Good job!

### **Division E**

**First Place:** La Salle NewsTribune. *Westclox fire*. Lots of hustle is evident in the stories that make up this entry. Story may have benefitted from a little tighter editing but it still flows well. Staff should be proud of their work.

**Second Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Doug Wilson, Steve Bohnstedt, Phil Carlson. *Fifth Street Fireball*. Good reporting. Nicely packaged. Could have been a first place contender with more descriptive writing in the opening graphs. But overall, a lot of good work.

**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Tara Becker, Emily Coleman. *Time to get some money back*. Like the lead, liked the writing. Loved the details in these stories. What a turn of events!

**Third Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Kevin Craver. *We succeeded: McCullom Lake lawsuits*. Like the opening graphs of this piece. They really drew me into what I thought might be a complicated story. But you write for the reader and this story turned out to be a good read. Well done.

**Honorable Mention:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Don O'Brien. *Mount Sterling man sentenced to prison*. Great writing. Excellent courtroom descriptions.

**Honorable Mention:** The Commercial-News, Danville, Brian Huchel. *Retailers report more shoplifting.* Excellent lead for a very interesting story. Had this been in a business story category, it might have ranked higher. But overall, very nice work.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak, Chris Fusco, Carol Marin. *'Daley nephew charged in Koschman killing'*. The extensive amount of work that went into this coverage carried it to first place. The work of the reporter -- and the tight editing -- made it an outstanding entry.

**Second Place:** Chicago Tribune, Staff. *NATO terrorism plot*. Excellent work on a story that easily rose to the top in this competition. Good job in particular by the reporters in gathering the details.

**Third Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Kevin Barlow, Ken Lowe. *Groundswell of fear*. This story hooked me from the start with the writing. I was drawn in and wanted to know more. Excellent story.

**Third Place:** Chicago Tribune, Jeremy Gerner and Cynthia Dizikes. *Saving Officer Pearson*. I loved the descriptive writing and the organization of this story. Great job by all involved.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Tribune, Jared S. Hopkins, Alex Richards. *Paid To Stay Home*. This is the kind of story that always makes a good read because it seems unbelievable. And in this case, it's written very well so the reader gets a complete and full understanding.

**Honorable Mention:** Rockford Register Star, Staff. *Medical helicopter crash kills 3*. I liked this entry because by the end of the story, I knew something about each of the three people who died. The reporter did a great job of putting together the details of their personalities and who they were.

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

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Forest Park Review, Jean Lotus. *Will video gambling come to Forest Park?*

**Second Place:** Forest Leaves, River Forest, Bill Dwyer, David Pollard and Nick Moroni. *Testing and proving Chris Welch*.

**Third Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka, Cheryl Wolfe. *Capponi coverage*.

**Honorable Mention:** The Pinckneyville Press, Nate Fisher, Jessica Holder, Jeff Egbert. *Dashcam Unleashes Events*.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Lake County Journal, Grayslake, Staff. *Confronting the bully*.

**Second Place:** Pike Press, Pittsfield, Wayne Utterback. *Concealed carry series*.

**Third Place:** Des Plaines Journal, Todd Wessell, Tom Robb. *Police Dept. Rocked By Allegations Of Corruption*.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Anna Lothson. *Oak Park's pigeon debate*.

**Second Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Robert Lyons. *Victorian Festival cancelled*.

**Third Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Robert Lyons. *City vs. Violators*.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Courier-News, Elgin, Emily McFarlan Miller. *Diversity in Schools*. Well-executed, comprehensive look at an important subject for our times. The variety of sources and approaches to this complex issue elevates the efforts above the rest in a highly competitive category. Great work.

**Second Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, staff. *Arcola standoff: 5 years later*. Nice planning on this multiple-part series helped to deliver a powerful look back at a tragedy that obviously still resonates.

**Third Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. *NIU's "coffee fund"*. Plenty of good digging unearthed a wealth of questionable behavior that resonated to the highest levels of the university. Clear, well-written work.

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Caitlin Mullen. *Journey through Drug Court*. Commendable job of putting the human touch on an important societal issue. The profiles of addicts in recovery are powerful and delicately handled.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Al Lagattolla, Chelsea McDougall, Joan Oliver. *Confronting the Bully*. Impeccably executed, this bullying series puts human faces on this all-too-common scourge. Thorough reporting coupled with supporting graphics, sidebars and like make this entry stand out in very competitive category.

**Second Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Brian Stanley and Tony Graf. *Heroin in Will County*. Poignant look at a devastating problem, rendered without maudlin, weepy prose. The reporters did a fine job handling the delicate subject matter to give it weight and importance -- not sensationalism.

**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Christopher Heimerman. *Concussions: The Hidden Injury*. Hard look at an important topic affecting our young athletes. Well-sourced stories captured the many angles of the concussion epidemic -- all in measured, balanced pieces. Strong layout helped with story delivery.

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Sarah Sutschek, Kevin Craver, Kevin Lyons. *Special Prosecutor Factory*. What a twisted tale to unravel! This series showed a nice amount of perseverance in pulling everything together. A minefield of information was navigated beautifully.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune, Christy Gutowski and Bill Ruthhart. *Chicago Tribune: "Children at Risk."* This was a comprehensive series that had a real and measurable impact on programs designed to protect the most vulnerable children. The reporters deftly mixed government data and heartbreaking stories of abuse and neglect to expose a shamefully inadequate system.

**Second Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak, Chris Fusco. *'Disability Pays'*. A very readable and well-researched expose of shocking abuses of government disability rules. The big-game photos were priceless.

**Third Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, George Pawlaczyk, Beth Hundsdorfer. *Hidden suffering, hidden death*. This series had immediate impact, forcing an overhaul of a seriously deficient government agency by exposing horrific abuse and neglect and rescuing one at-risk woman from a clearly dangerous situation. This is journalism that made a real difference.

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

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka, Cheryl Wolfe. *Circuit clerk's hiring practices questioned*. Judged as first of 4 articles in a single entry, the others being "Tablet computer debuts in voting, " "Capponi arraigned on theft, " and "R-B audit reveals weak controls." This first piece was well written and held

my attention from the beginning to end. I would have liked to see follow-up articles on what happened with this issue.

**Second Place:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. *County Board*. The writer's style is easy to read and interjects humor, which is appreciated. I was taken a little aback by the editorial style but also realize that added to readability. I was disappointed the last article did not build on the other three by continuing to reveal more items from the investigation.

**Third Place:** Clinton Journal, Staff. *Wapella Village Board*. This was fun to read! Wapella Village Board sounds as messed up as some munis I've covered. The writing was concise and the writer was apparently not afraid to report what I am sure does not make him popular with the board. The fraud piece was interesting as well and showed the reporter's range. Well done!

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Mike Neumann. *Courthouse public acquisition*. Interesting topic. Timeline was especially helpful. The last article was the best with short lead and interesting discussion on choosing a time period for restoration. I would have liked to see shorter leads in the other pieces but overall it was well done and well presented.

## **Division B**

**First Place:** Ledger-Sentinel, Oswego, Matt Schury. *Kendall County Coroner's Office*. Every single article in this series held my attention from beginning to end. The writer did an excellent job of bringing both the coroner and his political opponent to life (as well as the assistant who went on maternity leave. ) Great use of quotes. The people all came across as human and the reader was able to make judgments on their character based on the info provided.

**Second Place:** Granite City Press Record, Jim Merkel. *Government Beat reporting*. Very interesting and enterprising topics. Writing is tight.

**Third Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Rick Wade. *Bellm Fired.* Interesting articles which held my attention. Not sure it represents a beat all that well, but the pieces were interesting and well done. I did see some opinion words in the text but it wasn't overdone. It seemed to be an attempt to add a narrative quality to the articles. It did convey the atmosphere to the reader, esp. the part about the one guy voting his conscience as time ticked by."

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Donna Barker. *Princeton Park Board*. Articles were concise and interesting. I found the bullying one and the skate park lights to be the most interesting.

## **Division C**

**First Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Anna Lothson. *Government beat reporting*. I liked this entry best because the writer did enter articles on a variety of topics. This showed an ability to handle various issues. The topics were interesting, especially the gun issues and the strike. I liked the narrative lead on the strike story. Generally speaking, leads were good. I found the budget story the least interesting but appreciated its inclusion in the package.

**Second Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Robert Lyons. *Jerseyville Council*. I liked the lead in the betting parlor story. This entry as a whole showed a nice cross section of topics. The alcohol story reflects an issue that crops up everywhere and the writer does a good job of presenting both sides.

**Third Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Bob Crossen. *Crossen's county*. The topics were complicated and the writer explained them well.

#### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Ariel Cheung. Nice narratives, in-depth, clearly knows the beat

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Joe Ward.

**Third Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, David Thomas.

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Tom Loewy. *School consolidation*. Clear, and vividly detailed.

#### **Division E**

**First Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Patrick Wade. *Split-pot poker*.

**Second Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Christine des Garennes. *UI officials: Suspect was outstanding candidate*.

**Third Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Allison Petty.

**Honorable Mention:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Ashley Rhodebeck.

#### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Tim Novak. City Hall reporting, Tim Novak. *Watchdog!* The disability story must have caused a stir! Really good work on all stories.

**Second Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Doug Finke. *Illinois lawmakers among best paid*. Fantastic! In-depth, interesting, important and the interactive map is very fun to use.

**Third Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Brian Brueggemann. *Does the care outweigh the cost*.

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Scott Wuerz. *State's budget crisis*.

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

#### **Division A**

**First Place:** Paxton Record, Will Brumleve. *Paxton TIF district*.

**Second Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Mike Neumann. *When the levy grates*.

**Third Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Mike Neumann. *The Big Squeeze*.

**Honorable Mention:** The Pinckneyville Press, Nate Fisher. *This is Serious...*

#### **Division B**

**First Place:** Granite City Press Record, Sarah Baraba. *Business/economic reporting*.

**Second Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Barb Kromphardt. *Turning over the land.*

**Third Place:** The Leader-Union, Vandalia, Staff. *Weathering the Drought, Hot dry weather.*

**Honorable Mention:** Pike Press, Pittsfield, Beth Zumwalt. *Residents claim wrongful eviction.*

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Downers Grove Reporter, Brian Hudson. *Chicago plays incentive game.*

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Anna Lothson. *Oak Park's 'shoestring' Arts District.*

**Third Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Bob Crossen. *Promoting from within.*

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Joanie Stiers/Lisa Coon. *Farm Bill.*

**Second Place:** Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, Roy Strom. *In-House Counsel profiles series.*

**Third Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, Laura Wolfe. *Rural transportation.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, John Pulliam. *Alaska to Illinois salmon connection.*

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Teresa Churchill; Chris Lusvardi. *Business Economic Reporting.* Nice expansive look at an important economic story for the state. The variety of coverage set this entry apart.

**Second Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Jonathan Bilyk. *Entrepreneurship.* Good cross-section of the business community is represented in this well-written effort.

**Third Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Jonathan Bilyk. *Farm land series.* Nice work on an important topic. Shows good research and focus.

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Kevin Craver. *Tax cap: Property taxes keep rising.* Presented a complicated issue in a straight-forward manner. These pieces served the readers well.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Will Buss. *Steve Jobs: In The Beginning.* This story provides fascinating insight and evidence into what a visionary Steve Jobs really was. And the local connection makes this absolutely golden. Well done and well told.

**Second Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Stephanie Zimmermann. *'Cashing in on cancer'.* These are the kinds of stories that news organizations need to write. Making the public aware of questionable fundraising tactics provides a critical public service. Stephanie nails it.



**Third Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Karina Gonzalez. *Struggle to start over*. This is such a sad story, full of empathy, and one that needs to be told. And big banks wonder why they have bad reputations. Karina handles it superbly.

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Phil Luciano. *Pekin Pooper Scoopers*. No groundbreaking reporting going on here, but this story screams for the treatment that Phil gave it. Not many business stories are fun, but this one was played perfectly.

## **CLASS 09 – SPORTS STORY**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Plano Record, Christine Bolin Dascher. *Jim Green retires*.

**Second Place:** Paxton Record, Andrew Rosten. *Garret Waterstradt is No. 1*.

**Third Place:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. *Something To Cheer About*.

**Honorable Mention:** Paxton Record, Cody Westerlund. *Baseball league game story*.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Lake Forester, Lake Forest, John Borneman. *Schildorfer getting noticed*.

**Second Place:** Piatt County Journal-Republican, Monticello, Andrew Helregel. *Nine schools decide to leave Okaw*.

**Third Place:** The Galena Gazette, Andrew Brunner. *Gazette Sports News*.

**Honorable Mention:** Piatt County Journal-Republican, Monticello, Andrew Helregel. *Perfection - MMS State Champs*.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Matthew Wheaton. *Johnson to start life as a pro*.

**Second Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Steve Nitz, Ross Jacobson, Jeff Arnold. *NIU football tops Kent St. in MAC title game*.

**Third Place:** Times-Republic, Watseka, Ryan Buchan. *Watseska\_road\_warriors*.

**Third Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Mike Trueblood. *Jackson's action title*.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Staff. *Top to Bottom*.

**Second Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Fred Kroner. *Ringin' Double*.

**Third Place:** The Telegraph, Alton, Pete Hayes. *Giants shut down Cards, 5-0 and force Game 6*.

**Honorable Mention:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Staff. *Welcome to the family*.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Daniel Makarewicz. *McGhee advances to 2A finals*.

**Second Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Dave Reynolds. *Dana Davis found dead.*  
**Third Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Randy Reinhardt. *Shot in the arm.*  
**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Dave Eminian. *Memories on Ice.*

## **CLASS 10 - SPORTS FEATURE**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Paxton Record, Andrew Rosten. *Clearer Minds.*  
**Second Place:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. *Competitive Edge Or Critical Mistake.*  
**Third Place:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. *Toughest Blackhawk Of Them All.*  
**Honorable Mention:** Buffalo Grove Countryside, Ronnie Wachter. *Female kicker suits up for Patriots, friend.*

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Rantoul Press, Matt Daniels. *Making a name for himself.*  
**Second Place:** The Regional News, Palos Heights, Jeff Vorva. *Miracles can happen.*  
**Third Place:** Rantoul Press, Matt Daniels. *Beyond baseball.*  
**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Kevin Hieronymus. *Minor accomplishment.*

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Downers Grove Reporter, Jason Rossi, Ryan Long, Scott Schmid. *Olympics preview.*  
**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Staff. *A long way to go.*  
**Third Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Brad Spencer. *Man on a mission.*  
**Honorable Mention:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Brad Spencer. Meet Wohlschaeger: *The ringmaster.*

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Matthew Wheaton. *Hunter travels the Midwest.*  
**Second Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Ryan Wood. *Conversion complete.*  
**Third Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Tom Loewy. *For the love of the game.*  
**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Steve Stein. *Paying tribute to Pekin's No. 1 baseball fan.*

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Dan Woessner. *Father Time.* This was an inspiring, well-observed and well-written piece. It's the rare sports story that focuses on the pure joy of play.

**Second Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Kevin Druley. *Baseball as a second language*. This series goes beyond wins, losses and stats to tell a human story of strivers chasing their baseball dreams. It reveals the people behind the players despite the language barriers.

**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Christopher Heimerman. *The Hidden Injury*. Thoroughly researched, with a definite point of view, this series covered all the angles of the new focus on concussions in youth sports.

**Honorable Mention:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Jay Schwab. *Athlete, mom, honor student*. A clear-eyed, unsentimental depiction of a young girl and her family confronting and accepting life's challenges as she pursues her sports dreams despite the odds.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Patrick Kuhl. *Batboy recalls a little bit of baseball heaven*. The writer really captured the essence of this great storyteller.

**Second Place:** Chicago Tribune, Brian Hamilton. *Iron Will - drive, passion and a squirrel*. Beautifully written piece that fully captured this young wrestler on the verge of the Olympics.

**Third Place:** Rockford Register Star, Matt Trowbridge. *Father, son share baseball bond*. The category contained many stories about players and coaches overcoming tragedy or adversity. This was by far the best-written and most heart-felt.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Tribune, Jared S. Hopkins. *Understanding Brandon Marshall*. An intriguing look at one of the NFL's many talented but troubled stars. Great sports writing like this goes beyond the stats and carefully tended facades of pro athletes.

## **CLASS 11 - ENTERPRISE/FEATURE WRITING**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Elburn Herald, Susan O'Neill. *This, too, shall pass*. This piece was written as tightly, clearly and concisely as anything in the category -- making it a pleasure to read.

**Second Place:** Forest Park Review, Jean Lotus. *Ray's demise greatly exaggerated*. This piece was a delight to read. The writer had fun, which helps the reader, but also added the news context of the trend.

**Third Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Mike Neumann and Katelyn Stanek. *Section 8 housing*. This writer did a fine job of telling me a story while also giving me the news on which the story was based.

**Honorable Mention:** Forest Park Review, Amy Malina. *Alma makeover*. Nice writing and solid news peg helped the reader through the article.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Lake County Journal, Grayslake, Cassandra Dowell, Alyssa Kay. *Special report: County in need*. This package was comprehensive but better yet, it was readable. Most importantly, the package tells multiple stories of people in need.

**Second Place:** East Peoria Times-Courier, DeWayne Bartels (now deceased). *Paramedic 3: A few hours in their shoes.* Although a shift with an EMT has been done before, it's hard to do it much better. The writer captures the drama, humor and humanity of the EMT.

**Third Place:** East Peoria Times-Courier, DeWayne Bartels (now deceased). *Mental illness package.* This package was extremely well written, taking the real stories of real people in giving the news.

**Honorable Mention:** Park Ridge Herald-Advocate, Jennifer Johnson. *Facing down 'policeman's worst nightmare'.* The writer captured the real drama felt by the officer through the encounter of the suicidal man. Nice writing kept the readers' attention.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Downers Grove Reporter, Joe Sinopoli. *Downers Grove homeless.* Homelessness is a tough problem that's handled well here, with excellent supporting facts and figures.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Anna Lothson. *Legendary shop on the brink.* I really had a sense of the woman and her shop because the writer set the scene for me.

**Third Place:** The MidWeek, Sycamore, Doug Oleson, Curtis Clegg. *Honoring Those Who Serve.* Nice portraits of an array of people who have served the nation. So good, I would like to have read more.

**Honorable Mention:** Valley Free Press, Sandwich, Debbie Behrends. *Sheridan memorial is a work in progress.* Good descriptive language, along with some good, old-fashioned reporting brought this story home.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, David Thomas. *Prescription for distress.* This package mixed a beautifully told personal story with hard news and excellent reporting on a subject that matters to all seniors. That's a nice accomplishment.

**Second Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, David Thomas. *Preventing dangerous dog encounters.* A wonderfully moving story helps move the reader through the package that is really about something larger than this one person and her dog.

**Third Place:** Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, Pat Milhizer. *Lawyers make a 'new person' out of WWII vet.* This story was personal, it was a mystery and it was news. That's tough to mix all that so seamlessly.

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Ariel Cheung. *Cold Case: 32-year-old murder leaves questions.* Cold case stories are commonplace now but this one excelled by really telling the stories of the dead man and the suspect.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Katie Anderson. *Imprisoned hearts.* Excellent look at a group we don't often think about: the families of the imprisoned.

**Second Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Jenny Young. *Young mother's cancer returns*. A profile that didn't gloss over the uncomfortable details of its subject's life.

**Third Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Rodney Hart. *Unsettled Spirit*. The story hooked me. Although this is a long story, the writer did a good job keeping it moving along.

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Emily Coleman. *Not just numbers: Faces of unemployment*. A very ambitious project.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Kim Janssen. *'Don Vale Goes Home'*. Reporters often talk about how we want to keep crime or accident victims from being a number. Kim Janssen did that for Don Vale.

**Second Place:** Chicago Tribune, Jeremy Gornier and Cynthia Dizikes. *Saving Officer Pearson*. An amazing tick-tock tale that never gets bogged down. You feel the tension as officers, medics and doctors struggle to save a life.

**Third Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Matt Buedel. *A Dangerous High*. The main story does a good job exploring the heroin problem in Peoria, while the column displays the human toll.

**Honorable Mention:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Paul Swiech. *Facing the Worst*. A well-told story about a tragic set of circumstances.

## **CLASS 12 - FEATURE WRITING**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Mahomet Citizen, Amelia Benner. *Ready for takeoff*. Great descriptions. Very easy to visualize scene. Unique story.

**Second Place:** Coal City Courant, Ann Gill. *Missing Meagan*. A compelling story that is beautifully written.

**Third Place:** Forest Park Review, Jean Lotus. *How to stay married for 75 years*. Writing created a clear picture of how the family and couple live and stay together.

**Honorable Mention:** Woodford Times, Adam Larck. *Phil Fischer Oldsmobile collection*. Interesting character study. Very detailed stories of how and where he collected the cars.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Oregon Republican Reporter, Earleen Hinton. *Turtle Time at the Grasslands*. Very unique and interesting topic. Well written.

**Second Place:** Rantoul Press, Dave Hinton. *Scammed*. Very well done. It took courage for the couple to come forward and the reporter was bold in the writing of it.

**Third Place:** Lake County Journal, Grayslake, Sheryl DeVore. *Hérons raise young on artificial nest poles*. Very descriptive, both visually and sound. Interesting look at a unique project.

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Terri Simon. *Sign, sign, everywhere a sign.* An interesting look at an art form that is changing.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** The Doings - La Grange, Jane Michaels. *Father and son tag team iguanas in the Bahamas.* Nice story about a father-son adventure. Beginning with the iguana bite and returning to that theme through the story provided just the right touch of unity to the story.

**Second Place:** Downers Grove Reporter, Joe Sinopoli. *Restored B-17.* Nice little short story that didn't try to make too much of the event. The two vignettes of the visiting vets' memories were just the right touch to get the story aloft and make it fly above most of the rest of the competition.

**Third Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, La Risa Lynch. *A flare for the hair.* An interesting story about an unusual competition. I felt like the writer took on the role of a cheerleader a bit too much instead of letting the reader draw his own conclusions and the story needed a stronger ending.

**Honorable Mention:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, John Rice. *Attorney by day, Apocalpyto by night.* Interesting story, especially the cross-cultural aspect. A little long, though. I grew weary of the topic before I reached the end. It would also have benefited from getting more action and less explanation at the top of the story.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Courier-News, Elgin, Emily McFarlan Miller. *Archery hits the mark with young film fans.* Well-told and richly reported trend story that is smartly presented with sharp photos and design.

**Second Place:** Daily Leader, Pontiac, Cynthia Grau. *Tiny Fingerprints lead to big remodel job.* A fun, engaging read that any homeowner or married couple would relate to. Smart hed and photo display make this an inviting package.

**Third Place:** Pekin Daily Times, Elise Zwicky. *Not all memories fade.* Haunting story. The writing brings you right back in time to the scene. Well designed and well told.

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Leader, Pontiac, Luke Smucker. *Bachmann's business a (Cheese) cake walk.* Well-told story of local start-up that took off. Shows you what spirit and dedication can do for your business.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Becky Malkovich. *A Day for Jaybird.* An amazing story that captured me from beginning to end

**Second Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Tracy Moss. *View from the inside.* Gave great insight into issues the elderly face every day and for the most part go unnoticed in the hustle and bustle of the younger generation's lives

**Third Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Jami Kunzer. *Peaks and valleys.* Sometimes in life when we lose someone we love it destroys us, stories like this give everyone the inspiration to go on

**Honorable Mention:** The Telegraph, Alton, Kathie Bassett. *Caring For Cara*. This young man has incredible heart at such an early age. The descriptive way it was written brought tears to my eyes.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Teri Maddox. *That's My Dad*. Answered just about every, "But how does he... ?" I had.

**Second Place:** Chicago Tribune, Ted Gregory. *Ted Gregory features*. This is based only on the first story, since as I read the rules, this category is meant to be entries from a single publication. The story about Cassie Stanley put you in the surgery suite with her family.

**Third Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Frank Main. *'Hurricane Dwyane,'* Frank Main. Portrayed well the bond of love between aunt and nephew.

**Honorable Mention:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Chris Young. *The Great Escape*. Great anecdotes from an interesting life.

## **CLASS 13 - ORIGINAL COLUMN**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Woodstock Independent, John Daab. *On the Town*. Both humor and emotion in these entries. Storytelling at its finest. All entries were concise and to the point, using the minimum number of words to effectively convey the premises of each column. Fast and enjoyable reads. Well done.

**Second Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Eric Fisher. *Fish Tales*. Only a writer would go to the grocery store, discover a premise for a column, and then stand there and actually count how many different varieties of cereal there are knowing that readers would want that detail. Easy flowing pieces that relate to the human experiences. And how can one go wrong with getting a lollipop at the bank for a grandchild? Beautiful.

**Third Place:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. *Point To Ponder*. Good storytelling and hyper-local. Dan's not afraid to let his emotions show, and he can translate that into words that readers can understand and relate to. Although a bit on the long side, still good reading.

**Honorable Mention:** Forest Park Review, John Rice. *Original Column John Rice*. Brief and to the point, but still effective slices of life columns that readers can relate to.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** East Peoria Times-Courier, DeWayne Bartels (now deceased). *DeWayne's World*. Brilliant and thorough storytelling and compelling to read. There was conviction in Dewayne's writing, along with the belief that he was providing the reader with credible, well-researched information and thoughtful analysis.

**Second Place:** Lake County Journal, Grayslake, Judi Veoukas. *Off The Deep End*. Simply hilarious. Judi takes a slice of life and adds her unique perspective. And the results are oftentimes uproarious. The column premises are strong and she excites them wonderfully. I laughed out loud several times. Well played.

**Third Place:** Glenview Announcements, Irv Leavitt. *Columns by Irv Leavitt*. "This line right here is worth the price of admission: "My dream is to walk behind the elephant that nobody else knows has suddenly learned to poop \$100 bills. That paints a picture. This was a strong field of columns this year and there wasn't much daylight between first and third. Well done."

**Honorable Mention:** Chillicothe Times-Bulletin, Marianne Gillespie. Marianne's *Meanderings*. The Zorro stuff is compelling reading and a great local angle. Very good storytelling.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, John Fountain III. *original column*. John's in-your-face prose grab the reader from the first word and don't let go until the last word. The writing is edgy and the subject matter pertinent. He demands that readers think and feel. And he demands that they think and feel some more. His columns shout "Read me!" and we are indeed compelled to do so. Well done.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Ken Trainor. *Three columns, 4/4, 4/11, 6/27*. Wonderful storytelling and compelling reading. Copy editors can on occasion be some of the best columnists out there if they get a chance to write. It must be all that reading they have to do that makes them better writers. Ken should write even more than he does.

**Third Place:** Valley Free Press, Sandwich, Debbie Behrends. *Never a bad time to thank a veteran*. And it's never a bad time to write about thanking a veteran. The personal story of her father lends credibility to the piece and makes it personal. And personal always plays well with readers.

**Honorable Mention:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Dan Haley. *Dan Haley Columns, 8/1, 5/2, 7/18*. Good storytelling with personal insights.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jay Redfern. *Jay Redfern columns*. There's not much difference between first and fourth place in this division, but Jay gets the nod on the strength of the Andy Griffith and junior high dance pieces. Some great emotion and passion - and memories - in those pieces that readers surely can relate to. Interestingly, though, the Facebook reactions worked pretty well in the junior high dancing column but I thought actually took away from the personal emotion of the Andy column.

**Second Place:** Pekin Daily Times, Michelle Teheux. *Are two-thirds of Pekin residents lazy?* Michelle calls "bull" on the Pekin City Council and its janitorial services contract and then goes about carving up council members with a solid case. The "what they could buy" with the money that was saved was particularly solid. But she does have to tell us what was on the front page that never was. C'mon, what could have been that bad that it's still a secret?

**Third Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Penny Weaver. *Penny Weaver columns*. Penny punches the Mattoon City Council and squarely lands a haymaker right on its collective nose. Although the columns are a touch long-



winded, Penny has strong opinions and isn't afraid to slap the readers upside the head with them to get their attention. Her columns demand to be read.

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Tom Loewy. *Tom Loewy columns*. The Santa Claus column is a great read. Tom knew how to take a story that someone had told him and run with it. If the piece doesn't bring a tear to your eye, then check your pulse. And the contrast between the blooming life of the sunflower plant against the life snuffed out by the shooting is clear and compelling. Well done.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Michael Penkava. "*Facing the attack of the cartis violentis*". There is a lot of great writing in this division, and it starts with Michael. Funny, witty, compelling pieces that just about everyone can relate to. Penkava is a must read. Well done.

**Second Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Larry Lough. *Memories Stick; Election Year; Forecast Sunshine*. Larry's prison escape story is fascinating. And although he tends to be high on the word count, Larry's columns read quickly, from the first word to the last.

**Third Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Brian Stanley. *Brian Stanley Columns: life of Brian*. The amputated foot-in-the-vodka story is just so freaky that it demands to be read. And Brian presents it in a not-so-freaky way, which makes it a must read.

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Dick Peterson. "*Beyond the labels, there is a person*". Bringing the personal aspect of mental illness gives it credibility and emotion. All of Dick's columns are heartfelt and personal and readers relate to that.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Roger Ebert. *A selection of three online columns by Roger Ebert*. Legend. What more needs to be said?

**Second Place:** Chicago Tribune, Rex W. Hueppke The end of facts: Brilliant; the skewering of Trump: with the skill of a surgeon; and a futuristic future that invokes the Jetsons and Jed Clampett: outstanding. Everything Rex writes surely is a must read for all of Chicago-and and beyond.

**Third Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Matt Buedel. *Columns by Matt Buedel*. Wow. Two unique and highly personal opportunities to write and Matt delivers big-time with these columns. Compelling from first word to last. Just. . . wow.

**Honorable Mention:** The Rock Island Argus, Shane Brown. *Christmas spirit / werewolves / chubby*. Taking a seemingly small line from a trivia contest and turning it into a highly readable and enjoyable column is a gift. Shane is much closer to "genius" than he is to being "extracted with a crane."

## **CLASS 14 - SPORTS COLUMN**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Mahomet Citizen, Terry Greene. *From the Press Box*. Writer went beyond the game to provide insight to their readers.

**Second Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka, Jeff Wiseman. *The Bottom Line*. Delivered history and facts well, putting the present in perspective.  
**Third Place:** The Astoria South Fulton Argus, Darren Churchill. *Sports Column*.  
**Honorable Mention:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. *Point To Ponder*.

### Division B

**First Place:** Rantoul Press, Matt Daniels. *No rest for the weary*. Tackled some unique subjects, doing good work when he became part of the story.  
**Second Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Kevin Hieronymus. *Sportsmanship... Logan... Marshall....* Showed community ties with work featuring more than the basic game.  
**Third Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield, Scott Taylor. *Sports columns by Scott Taylor*. Went after big topics and incorporated their point of view.  
**Honorable Mention:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Kyle Herschelmann. *Center and Guard*.

### Division D

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Ross Jacobson. *Views*. Went beyond the game to present a fresh point of view. Friday soccer surely had people talking.  
**Second Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, John Sahly. *Views*. Presented subjects in a way in which you could sense them around you. Sound, touch all came off the page.  
**Third Place:** Pekin Daily Times, Mark Rich. *Turks no longer a secret*. Concise writing contributed to a lively pace.  
**Honorable Mention:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Brad Spencer. *Sports column*.

### Division E

**First Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Jay Schwab. *Daley; Game changer; Taste for Kane County*. Touching piece on high school athlete is followed by quality baseball work. The analysis of league markets was a surprising touch.  
**Second Place:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, Steve Soucie. *Sports columns by Steve Soucie*. Great blend of facts and color. Bats leaves reader seeing the kids talking about their hits with that little ripple of frustration.  
**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Dan Woessner. *Thanks for lessons; Time for schools; Punishment*. Samples on local topics carried the day. Made first person work in look at money in schools.  
**Honorable Mention:** The Telegraph, Alton, Staff. *Pete Hayes Sports Column Entry*.

### Division F

**First Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Randy Kindred. *A life spent/Polio aside/Blame him*. Sought out great subjects and brought out vivid pictures of them in concise form.

**Second Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Rick Telander. *3 sports columns by Rick Telander.* Turned a photo op into a great piece, and a story you want to turn away into one you can't stop reading.

**Third Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Jim Ruppert. *Cubs; Wills; Fetter.* Unique subjects and angles made for compelling reads.

**Honorable Mention:** SouthtownStar, Tinley Park, Tony Baranek. *Tony Baranek Columns.*

## **CLASS 15 - PHOTO SERIES**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jessica Holder. *Thresherman at Work.*

**Second Place:** Beecher City Journal, PJ Ryan. *Our girls play in state championship.*

**Third Place:** The Courier, Carterville, William Bateman. *New Den.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Courier, Carterville, Steve Buhman, Jon-Erik Bradford. *Christmas in Carterville.*

### **Division B**

**First Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Kyle Herschelman. *Big Dawg Dare.* Great action and nice variety of photos. Every photo adds something to the story. It truly is a story, not just a splatter of photos grouped on a page.

**Second Place:** Ledger-Sentinel, Oswego, Joanne Pleskovich. *Pumpkin Races.* Delightful collection of photos. The photographer worked hard to get all the great moments of the event.

**Third Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Mike Vaughn. *A tribute to Daniel.* Good emotion and variety of photos. Needed a close-up of faces or hands holding something to complete the story.

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Robin Donnelly. *A spectacular catch.* Photographer was at the right place at the right time and performed magnificently.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Nick Adams. *A hobby for life.* Wonderful compositions and moments.

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Kyle Bursaw. *Fighting for her dreams.* "Nice variety, tight, wide, detail. A great overall story subject."

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jake May. *I'll be home for Christmas.*

**Third Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jake May. *A game to remember.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jake May. *Homecoming.* Nice little story shot with a phone... well done..

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Kevin Kilhoffer. *Clashin' in.*

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Phil Carlson. *Fifth Street Fireball*. Beautiful photos and a good variety of images considering they were all taken the same day.

**Second Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Joel Hawksley. *Squad of Two*. Photographer spent a lot of time with these men and the photos capture the story well... some really nice moments in here.

**Third Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Paul Newton. *A Day For Jaybird*. Great capturing of mood. Good variety of shots. We can imagine that this was a big hit with readers.

**Honorable Mention:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles, Sandy Bressner. *Patterson Funeral*. Nicely framed, colorful shots. The US Flag makes a great photographic icon.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Fred Zwicky. *Farm Camp*. I smiled and laughed as I viewed these images. What a joyful and well-executed slice of life. I love that readers got to see a variety of the activities from such creative and interesting perspectives. In one of the online comments, a reader wrote, "We are very lucky to have such a talented photographer for our newspaper." They are indeed. It is an honor and pleasure to experience your work.

**Second Place:** SouthtownStar, Tinley Park, Matt Marton. *Haiti: A Nation of Extremes*. The photos are impressive by themselves. I'm glad you included the PDFs of how they appeared in print, too. The black-and-white treatment worked well for this compelling topic. Your readers are lucky to have a newspaper that connects them to the rest of the world — even the devastating parts — on such a personal level.

**Third Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Fred Zwicky. *Redneck Fishing*. More fine work. I relished the variety and enthusiasm in these images.

**Honorable Mention:** SouthtownStar, Tinley Park, Brett Roseman. *Sled Hockey*. The varied perspectives and angles enhance the visual story of this young athlete's courage and determination.

## **CLASS 16 - SPOT NEWS PHOTO**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Courier, Carterville, Jon-Erik Bradford. *Taking a break*.

**Second Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert. *Welcome Home*. I like this shot but not sure this is the correct category. Seems like General News, but the image was not in that group.

**Third Place:** El Paso Journal, Kim Kearney. *Scene of the accident*.

**Honorable Mention:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert. *First Responders*.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Rantoul Press, Jessica Starkey. *No tornado, just rain*. Awesome photo--from the subject to the lighting, extremely well done.

**Second Place:** Republic-Times, Waterloo, Alan Dooley. *Blaze of Glory*. Photographer captured the enormity of the fire with this image.

**Third Place:** Oregon Republican Reporter, Chris Johnson. *Fatal Fire*. The peak of the moment was captured. Readers certainly grasp the extent of the fire.

**Honorable Mention:** The Reporter, Hickory Hills, Jason Maholy. *Random hearts in snow*. Not sure this is exactly spot news, but the judges had to look at it more than once, which makes a compelling photo.

### Division C

**First Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Robert Lyons. *Rollover wreckage*. Captures the drama in one shot. You don't need a cutline to know what's going on in this picture. We like the framing of the second helicopter hovering.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, David Pierini. A nice contrast between the accident in the background and the touching moment in the foreground.

**Third Place:** Naperville Sun, Brian Powers. *Advice*. Interesting contrast between police in riot gear and the sweet smile on the lady's face. Nice eye as we can imagine there was little time to catch this shot.

### Division D

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jake May. *Helping Howard*. "Can't help but look at this one, and want to know the rest of the story."

**Second Place:** Daily Leader, Pontiac, Joy Butler. *Reaction*. "This one made me think of John Filo and his photo from Kent State. One suggestion would have been to crop the center of the image vertical to maximize the impact of the woman's emotion."

**Third Place:** The Journal-Standard, Freeport, Joe Tamborello. *Fatal motorcycle versus car*. Caption made this one.

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Leader, Pontiac, Joy Butler. *firemen silhouette*.

### Division E

**First Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Joel Hawksley. *Comforted*. Great moment and emotion.

**Second Place:** The Times, Ottawa, Doug Larson. *Smoke Twist*. This was the best of the fire photos... wonderful light and great colors..

**Third Place:** The Times, Ottawa, Tom Sistik. *Escape From Danger*. Good emotion and subtle moment.

**Honorable Mention:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Steve Jahnke. *Caught*. Good job by the photographer at getting to the scene and capturing the moment.

### Division F

**First Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Justin L. Fowler. *Heartbreaking Discovery*. The light. The composition. The anguish. In one frame, this portrays the horror of the tornado in a personal, gut-wrenching way. This is the type of image that makes people far away from tragedies take notice and care about their fellow humans.

**Second Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Kim Janssen. *'Don Vale Goes Home' photo.* My heart aches for those left behind in this photo. The tight crop makes it all the more powerful.

**Third Place:** Rockford Register Star, Max Gersh. *Firefighter and dog.* The tight crop and perspective make this an intimate, gut-wrenching moment. The cutline sadly informs viewers that another dog has died, but this image is hopeful and kind. (I hope this dog recovered quickly.)

**Honorable Mention:** SouthtownStar, Tinley Park, Joseph P. Meier. *House Fire.* The light was in your favor during this emotional shot. But your composition and angle made it even more powerful.

## **CLASS 17 - GENERAL NEWS PHOTO**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Cairo Citizen, Isaac Smith. *Gospel voices contest.*

**Second Place:** The Cairo Citizen, Isaac Smith. *Wreaths across America.*

**Third Place:** The Cairo Citizen, Isaac Smith. *Drought.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Courier, Carterville, Steve Buhman. *12/13 window.*

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Granite City Press Record, John Swistak Jr.. *Peanut butter.* Photographer used two elements--the kids' faces and the peanut butter crashing to combine for a winning photo. People read newspapers so we are glad the kids were in focus. Super photo.

**Second Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Daniel Winningham. *Live Line Demo Inc.* Nice use of lighting to capture the moment. Could have benefitted from tighter cropping, but still an image that catches the eye.

**Third Place:** Mason County Democrat, Havana, Wendy Martin. *Auction.* What we like about this photo is the juxtaposition of the patriotic mural behind the people. It looks like a Norman Rockwell painting.

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Daniel Acker. *Here comes a headache.* Nice capture -- great timing.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Downers Grove Reporter, Mark Busch. *A veteran salutes.* Above average image from common event coverage. We've seen a lot of similar pictures but this one stands out as clean and setting a tone. Nicely framed.

**Second Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Bob Crossen. Just a little sting. Background and expression tell the story. Framing is nice. Good emotion from the subject.

**Third Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Mike Weaver. *All dolled up.* Certainly catches your attention with the boy in the pink dress eating pizza. Makes us want to know more about the story, which the good caption provided. We're sure readers enjoyed this image.

**Honorable Mention:** The MidWeek, Sycamore, Curtis Clegg. *Cinco de Mayo*. Visually, a stunning array of colors; good capture of movement and flavor of event. Nice expression on boy's face. We really liked this image.

#### **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Kyle Bursaw. *Drug test*. Something you don't see everyday

**Second Place:** Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, Natalie Battaglia. *Law students look for opportunities*. "Nice job of seeing outside the box."

**Third Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jake May. *He's home*.

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Kevin Kilhoffer. *Disaster on cue*.

#### **Division E**

**First Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Joel Hawksley. *Out For A Hunt*. Nicely composed... nice light..

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Sarah Nader. *Chevy Bird*. Great unexpected quirky moment that is well composed.

**Third Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Paul Newton. *A Flight Of Honor*. Composition, moment, and light all right on.

**Honorable Mention:** La Salle NewsTribune, Anthony Soufflé. *Look what I caught*. Fun moment..

#### **Division F**

**First Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Paul Colletti. *Salute*. The joy this this child's face made me smile despite the sad nature of the event. The contrast of the uniform and young person added layers to the story.

**Second Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, David Zalaznik. *First Day of School*. I laughed out loud when I saw this photo. This child's personality shines in a simple, intimate moment.

**Third Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Taylor Glascock. *Vigil Comfort*.

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Steve Nagy. *Salute with dad*. I like the pride, wonder and awe in this photo. It would have been a bit stronger to me if the dimensions hadn't been so severe and if there were a bit more background space to draw one's eye to the girl and soldier.

### **CLASS 18 - FEATURE PHOTO**

#### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Cairo Citizen, Isaac Smith. *Pulaski County fair*.

**Second Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Ken Farver. *Jennie Vlahos with horse Outlaw*.

**Third Place:** The Navigator & Journal-Register, Patrick Seil. *Dawn of a new season*.

**Honorable Mention:** The Cairo Citizen, Isaac Smith. *Smoking in the sun*.

## Division B

**First Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Staff. *Time Lapsed Silo Fall*. Photographer used the new technology not to be cute, but rather to tell a story in a single image. Excellent image.

**Second Place:** Republic-Times, Waterloo, Alan Dooley. *Pretty white sky trails*. Photographer saw a great photo opportunity and selected the fisheye as a way to maximize the potential. Nice to see something different.

**Third Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Daniel Winningham. *Ice Sculpture*. Available can be a beautiful thing, and the photographer used that light for a nice moment.

**Honorable Mention:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Pavel Slepicka. *Kindergarteners Celebrate The Number 100*. Lots going in the photo with faces.

## Division C

**First Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Robert Lyons. *Rigging up a ride*. This was an easy choice for first. A true feature photo. A found situation that made us laugh. A truly unique image.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, David Pierini. The honest emotion on the boy's face carried this image to second place. It's a bit grainy and could be framed better but a great shot regardless.

**Third Place:** Skyline, Chicago, David Pierini. A beautiful picture and a close call on judging. Classic and classy image of Chicago. We could imagine this photo on a poster; if we had not seen so many similar it would have rated higher.

**Honorable Mention:** Naperville Sun, Brian Powers. *Jumper*. This is the most bizarre image we think we have ever seen. It's surreal and a great capture. If the story was about alien abductions, this picture would have won first place. We couldn't not award it something.

## Division D

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jake May. *Bubbles*. Going under the assumption that the subject was NOT asked to smash his nose into the plexiglas side of the tank, you can't help but look at this photo and appreciate the capture of a special moment.

**Second Place:** Daily Leader, Pontiac, Joy Butler. *Cowboy pairs*.

**Third Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Steve Davis. *Morning ride*. Wonderful composition... Americana at its best.

**Third Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Kyle Bursaw. *Eye exam*. Might have been more appropriate in the General News category but still a fine photograph.

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Josh Bradshaw. *Sign Fix Up*.

## Division E

**First Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Alex T. Paschal. *Snow in the Pines*. Great light and composition... a well done weather feature with a nice little moment.

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Josh Peckler. *Scorching Ice Cream*. Great moment... made the judges laugh... Great slice of life



**Third Place:** The Telegraph, Alton, John Badman. *Hot Weather*. Well done and clean weather feature.

**Honorable Mention:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Lisa Morrison. *Shark Dissection*. This category had a ton of fantastic images, many of which could have been award winners. We liked this one because there's really no need for a caption. The boy with the knife is obviously feeling a bit skittish. We wonder how he's going to dissect the shark without looking at it.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Steve Nagy. *Fish fear*. I laughed out loud when I saw this. The father's hands add another layer to an already expressive and hysterical image.

**Second Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, David Spencer. *Rockets Red Glare*. I hope the school called and ordered a giant print of this gorgeous image to hang in the building. What lovely light and composition. The football players are dramatic, but I love the extra element of the silhouetted people in the stands in the top right.

**Third Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Steve Nagy. *Fly daddy*. The father desperately trying not to face-plant. The skateboard in mid-air. I would have laughed out loud with just these two elements in a well-composed shot. But the focus on the boy -- and his exasperated expression -- make this absolutely priceless. What a clever entry name as well.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times, Brian Jackson. *'What's left of Hurricane Sandy'*. The juxtaposition of the tiny photographer and towering wave make this composition breathtaking.

## **CLASS 19 - PERSONALITY PORTRAIT**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Forest Park Review, David Pierini.

**Second Place:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. *Golembiewski Steps Down*.

**Third Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Ken Farver. *Route 14 Auto*.

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Ken Farver. *Bria Romine*.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Granite City Press Record, John Swistak Jr. *Clown*. Dramatic lighting draws the viewer into the moment.

**Second Place:** Berwyn Life, Erica Benson. *NATO clown*. The "rule of thirds" holds up well here.

**Third Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Daniel Winningham. *Cavalier*. Actually, we think the dog in the background really makes this photo work.

**Honorable Mention:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Daniel Winningham. *Fall Sports Preview*. Great work.

### Division C

**First Place:** Naperville Sun, Brian Powers. *Goalie*. Super stop-action. Extremely well executed. We wonder how many takes this took. Might have popped without the light pole but an outstanding, interesting and well framed image.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, David Pierini. Captures the tone of the story. Nice choice of having one of the women looking forward and the other not. There feels like a spontaneity within a posed picture.

**Third Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, David Pierini. You can tell a lot about this man with this single peek into his life. An interesting image that makes us want to know more.

**Honorable Mention:** Naperville Sun, Brian Powers. *Softball*. Super job using effective lighting and high-speed shutter to produce a very stylized portrait of the player of the year. Loved the dust specks caught alongside the dust cloud.

### Division D

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Kyle Bursaw. *Swimmer of the Year*. Where better to take a portrait of a swimmer?

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Nick Adams. *Finally 21*. Interesting flash work helps this one.

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jake May. *The Final Salute*. Wonderful slice of Americana.

**Third Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Rob Winner. *Pie-eating contestant*.

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Rob Winner. *Snow globe girl*.

### Division E

**First Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Joel Hawksley. *Ready To Fight*. Beautiful light!

**Second Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Joel Hawksley. *Runners Of The Year*. Different look at what could have been a typical runner portrait.

**Third Place:** The Herald-News, Joliet, Brett Roseman. *Remembering Christina*. Nice light and emotion.

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Alex T. Paschal. *Fiddler*. Another category with a ton of great photos. This one has great lighting coming out of the barn window. The barn and the fiddle along with the hat and the beard tell the story.

### Division F

**First Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Paul Colletti. *Yuck*. I laughed hysterically when I viewed this photo. What an expressive little girl and brilliant execution.

**Second Place:** Rockford Register Star, Max Gersh. *Record-breaker*. I admire the technical and logistical aspects of this creative shot. Stunning.

**Third Place:** SouthtownStar, Tinley Park, Matt Marton. *Young Haiti Hospital Patient*. The composition of this image and the juxtaposition of the lovely flower and the solemn child add to the depth of this already emotional situation.

**Honorable Mention:** SouthtownStar, Tinley Park, Brett Roseman. *Abuse Victim*. Protecting a source's privacy can be challenging and easily can veer into clichés. I love this thoughtful and technically admirable take on a tough story.

## **CLASS 20 - SPORTS PHOTO**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Elburn Herald, Patti Wilk. *Furious 6th inning leads to comeback over YHS for Regional*. Nice Jubilation

**Second Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Elaine Fisher. *Kulpa. Wilmington. soccer*. Good action could have used a tighter crop.

**Third Place:** The Leader, St. Joseph, Nora Maberry-Daniels. *Running the field*. Nice movement

**Honorable Mention:** Greene Prairie Press, Carrollton, Carmen Ensinger. *Hawks fall in playoffs*. Good moment to catch

### **Division B**

**First Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Pavel Slepicka. *Rains Didn't Dampen Roubaix Determination*. Nice use of long lens and selective focus gets the event captured very professionally. Good job even in lousy weather.

**Second Place:** Lake County Journal, Grayslake, Candace H. Johnson. *Rugby*. Good lighting and action combine for a nice sports shot and the dark background really helps.

**Third Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield, Scott Taylor. *Hurdling a fallen runner*. Good action moment. Photographer didn't give up on the moment.

**Honorable Mention:** Oregon Republican Reporter, Chris Johnson. *Out of the Bunker*. Lighting helps produce a nice golf image. Judges actually cover professional golf and really liked this photo.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** The Doings - ("Weekly") Burr Ridge, Rob Dicker. *Pure joy*. Photographer did a great job of capturing the storytelling moment of the game. Honest emotion.

**Second Place:** Naperville Sun, Brian Powers. *Dive*. Great timing with player completely off the ground and the ball visible in the glove. Razor sharp peak action. Might have been improved with tighter crop on top.

**Third Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, David Pierini. Great capture of football moment. The added bonus of the obvious face mask penalty with the ball visible really helped it.

**Honorable Mention:** Naperville Sun, Brian Powers. *Cheer*. Great emotion. Loved the out-of-focus person in back with arms up to further express the emotion of the moment.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Kyle Bursaw. *Wide-eyed with excitement*.

**Second Place:** The Journal-Standard, Freeport, Joe Tamborello. *Victory and Defeat*.

**Third Place:** The Journal-Standard, Freeport, Joe Tamborello. *Play at the plate.*  
**Honorable Mention:** Du Quoin Evening Call, Doug Daniels. *Dazzling Defense by Davis.*

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, H. Rick Bamman. *Finger Tip Catch.* Great sports action moment

**Second Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Alex T. Paschal. *Moms Comfort.* Nice use of repetition and great moments, wish #51's feet were not cropped.

**Third Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Jim Bowling. *St. Anthony Celebration.* Nice moment and good job getting in close...

**Honorable Mention:** La Salle NewsTribune, Amanda Whitlock. *Game winning catch.* Great peak action!

### **Division F**

**First Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Paul Colletti. *The eagle has landed.*

**Second Place:** SouthtownStar, Tinley Park, Joseph P. Meier. *Defender Hurdle.*

**Third Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Fred Zwicky. *Tears of Joy.*

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Zia Nizami. *Tangled.*

## **CLASS 21 - EDITORIAL CARTOON**

**First Place:** Pike Press, Pittsfield, Bill Beard. *Mayan Colander.* Nice play on words, along with the accompanying illustration, to display the folly of the "end-of-the world" non-event.

**Second Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Jack Higgins. *'The weekend'.* Good job on a dark subject. It presents itself as a start reality check.

**Third Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Jack Higgins. *'Blagojevich goes to prison'.* Humorous display of the post-conviction attitude of a corrupt politician does well in getting the message across.

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Jim Pearson. *Woodstock Independent editorial cartoon.* Combining the outline of the U. S. with the flag and a character with a "thumbs up", as a call for National Newspaper Week is a great combination and reminder of the First Amendment to the Constitution.

## **CLASS 22 – ILLUSTRATION**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dustin Jordan. *Fall Sports Cover.*

**Second Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Jason Neumann. *Road maps cartoon.*

**Third Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Jason Neumann. *Council bets on video gambling cartoon.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert, Nate Fisher. *This is Serious....*

## **Division B**

**First Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Staff. *Blackburn Timeline.*

**Second Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Staff. *Silo.*

**Third Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Greg Wallace. *Herman.*

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Greg Wallace. *Beast Mode.*

## **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Christina Landon. *Economy Challenges Salvation Army.*

**Second Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Kristina Peters. *“Keeping the streets safe”.*

**Third Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Claire Innes. *Wednesday Journal 2012.*

**Honorable Mention:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Julie Beaulieu. *“The safety network”.*

## **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Scott Helmchen. *Unwrap a season of sounds.*

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Scott Helmchen. *Anatomy of a Super Summer.*

**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Alex T. Paschal. *Growing\_Green.*

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Alex T. Paschal. *Tattooed\_Worker.*

## **Division F**

**First Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, David Proeber. *Fiscal cliff tax advice.*

**Second Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, David Proeber. *Electric car tax refund.*

**Third Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Michael Anthony Noel. *Suffering and Sniffling.*

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, Jason Koch. *Don't let the baby split you up.*

## **CLASS 23 - INFORMATIONAL GRAPHIC**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. *By the numbers.* The dark box, pleasing colors and bold headline text draws the reader's eye into the graphic. Provides a lot of information, but in an organized and visually-pleasing manner.

**Second Place:** Winnetka Talk, Lenore Krasner. *Winnetka Flooding remedies.* This graphic is a nice supplement to a story about a proposed tunnel to remedy flooding issues in Winnetka. The map offers readers a quick look at how the

proposed tunnel would or would not affect their neighborhoods. Information is displayed in a clean and easily understood manner.

**Third Place:** Winnetka Talk, Lenore Krasner. *Proposed Winnetka bikeway master plan.* The map provides a great tool for readers to visualize where proposed bicycle routes are planned in relation to points of interest. A perfect graphic element for the story.

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. *Housing sales and purchases.* A nice visual element to break up an otherwise text-heavy page. Nice use of colors.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Glenview Announcements, Lenore Krasner. *Big plans for Willow Road/I-294 corridor.* A nice, clean graphic that shows the location, layout and specifics of a proposed four-story apartment building and other nearby amenities. The architectural rendering was an added bonus for readers who wished to visualize what the complex would look like. A solid winner above the rest.

**Second Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Greg Wallace. *Three Rivers.* An informative map that shows the new Three Rivers Conference, where schools are in proximity to each other and their respective enrollment numbers. A nice color-coded visual to show readers how the conference is divided.

**Third Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Staff. *Halloween Events.* Boasting black, orange and yellow colors, and a spooky fiery-eyed skull face, there's no mistaking that this is a graphic for Halloween. The banner graphic stands out on the page and provides a convenient location for readers looking for local Halloween events.

**Honorable Mention:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Staff. *Temperature Info.* A simple, yet effective, graphic that shows the high temperatures during a six-day heat wave and highest temperatures recorded for each summer month. I liked how the color of the arrow and record temperature were the same as the story's headline. Seemed like it tied everything together.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Christina Landon. *Cost of Sheley.* It was a close race with the second place entry, but this one edged it out by a slight margin. Despite a lot of information in a small area, the graphic is clean, professional-looking and very effective. This judge particularly liked the use of the money text and the convicted murderer's face on the bill. Well done.

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Christina Landon. *Pot Penalties.* A very nice, eye-catching graphic to show how various cities in the state of Illinois fine marijuana possession. The colors stood out on the page and were relevant to the subject. The use of marijuana leaves as points on the map was a great idea.

**Third Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, Penny Weaver. *School report card data.* The graphic was easy to read and informative. Nice use of the crayons to add a pop of color.

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Staff. *Graphic.*

## Division E

**First Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Jean Zerfowski. *Titanic timeline*. Though the timeline featured a lot of information in a relatively small space, it didn't appear cluttered like many of the other entries in this category. The timeline fit well with the rest of the page and made this judge interested in reading the story. Well done.

**Second Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Rhonda May. *The Perfect Storm*. A simple, yet effective graphic that drives home the point of the article. Eye-catching.

**Third Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Mike Albright. *A roller-coaster ride*. This judge really liked the timeline of the highs and lows during Bruce Weber's tenure as Illinois basketball coach. Loved how the use of quotes at the beginning and end of the timeline formed a complete picture. Nice overall appearance of the graphic.

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Valeria Katzenstein. *The Expedition*. A nice supplement to a story about two men and their journey down the Mississippi in an environmentally friendly trimaran they created. Great use of a map to show their journey.

## Division F

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune, Alex Bordens, Mike Kellams, Jonathon Berlin. *A game of speed and distance*. This page really grabbed the judge. Loved the use of the half circles to show the running world records. Lots of information, but not cluttered. A clear winner.

**Second Place:** Chicago Tribune, Staff. *How Obama won*. Visually-pleasing charts to show how Obama won the election. Nice use of colors and relevant information.

**Third Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Jason Koch. *On the issues*. Though a little text-heavy, the use of the maps break up the page nicely. Great information and a valuable tool for voters.

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Michael Anthony Noel. *Thanksgiving*. Nice use of fall colors and art to convey information about the price of an average Thanksgiving dinner. Nicely done.

## CLASS 24 - SINGLE PAGE DESIGN

### Division A

**First Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. *Reduce, reuse, recycle*. A smart, cool illustration made this the clear leader of the pack. Nice and clean with strong lines and solid news judgment. Great work.

**Second Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. *The rise of the suburbs*. A clever illustration made this page stand out. It made for a clean, eye-catching package with smart use of white space. You might consider, however, making either a one-column block of story text or two columns of equal width; the story with two columns of different widths was a bit jarring. Besides that, great job.

**Third Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. *Flying high at 80*. It's apparent that some care was taken with the skydiver art -- cutting it out, fading the background -- and the efforts paid off. The image captures Kady Rachford's exhilaration and transfers some of that excitement to the page. Nice work.

**Honorable Mention:** Forest Park Review, Claire Innes, Luke Baker. *Forest Park Review 2012*. The page's general crisp look and clever centerpiece headline helped push it into an award. The masthead has a strong use of color, and its apparent thoughtful efforts were made to brighten up what could have been flat art (the cutout of the sculpture). Good job.

## Division B

**First Place:** The Joliet Bugle, Jonathan Samples. *Hedging their bets*. A strong design, especially given the tight space constraints of a tab cover. The simple colors and dominant image create a clean, eye-catching page. Great job.

**Second Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Greg Wallace. *Lift high the cross*. This was a surprising and unique take on a photo page, and it almost looked like artwork on the page. Even while maintaining the outward shape of the cross, the photo spread managed to incorporate a dominant photo and other images of different sizes and shapes, helping to keep eye appeal. The small, simple text block helped keep the layout clean and quiet. Good job.

**Third Place:** The Leader-Union, Vandalia, Andrew Harner. *How far can Fayette County go?* Your photo collage turned what could be an ordinary page into an attention grabber. The crops of the photos are great, and the photos themselves perfectly capture action and excitement. Nice work.

**Honorable Mention:** The Joliet Bugle, Jonathan Samples. *Balanced Budget*. A nice headline treatment and a perfectly sized text block help create an attractive, informative page for your readers. It's always risky to use clip art or line art images as illustrations. On this page, I think it works (but I'd still try to do so sparingly). One tiny, tiny nitpick: The deck-head seems out of place centered; if it were flush left, like the other headlines, it might create a cleaner look for the page. Nice job.

## Division C

**First Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Claire Innes. *Face Time 2012*. Often as designers, we're at the mercy of the photos that are given to us for a page. You have an array of knockout images here, and you used them to their greatest potential. (I hope your talented photographer appreciates the display you gave to his work!) The placement is thoughtful, the typography is well balanced and the touches of white space allow the photos to breathe. Great job.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Claire Innes, Brad Spencer. *Wednesday Journal 2012*. What a smart illustration -- both strips across the double truck -- to engage a reader! I imagine for many in your community, the homes depicted would be a familiar sight, and the built-in history info below the images would help stir more interest. Beyond the clever top



illustration, the pages are eye-catching and engaging, with good balance and nice use of white space. Great job.

**Third Place:** The Shorewood Sentinel, Staff. *More than just a horse farm.* I've gone round and round with photographers in the past about putting type on a photo, and I agree that is most often a bad practice and can steal the power from an image. If used at all, it should be very sparingly. This is not one of those cases. As a reader, my eye is perhaps more drawn to the photo because the headline and text at top force me to focus in on the whimsy of the photo. Nice typography on the headline treatment; perhaps a bit less text would have helped keep a bit of balance. All in all, good job.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Journal, Claire Innes. *Chicago Journal 2012.* I've always thought that one of the keys to good design is to give your art the space it needs to help tell the story. You have a strong, story-telling photo here, and a simple cover. By keeping the design clean and crisp, you got out of the way of a great photo and let it do its job. Nice work.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jake May. *A game to remember.* I'm usually hesitant to reward photo spreads, but this one is utterly deserving. You went beyond just choosing strong photos with spot-on crops and placing them wisely. You also were very thoughtful with your typography and smart with your use of white space. The result is a magazine-worthy layout that grabs the reader's attention. Great work.

**Second Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Nick Gerts. *NIU wins MAC championship game.* A smart use of art and good sense of balance help this page sing, and the bold head and clean design help guide the reader's eye around the page. Great job.

**Third Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Kristina Peters. *Page One.* Solid news page, thanks to strong news sense and good balance. There are plenty of entry points (breakouts, pull quotes, mug shots) to grab a reader's eye, but the careful design leaves the page clean, not cluttered. Good work.

**Honorable Mention:** Pekin Daily Times, Rick Rynerson. *Single Page Design.* Nothing flashy here -- just a solid news page with dominant art, good balance, clean layout. Nice job.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Scott Helmchen. *Spider-Man.* The pure comic-book joy of this page catapults it into first place. It captures the color and fun of the classic Spidey but also manages to be informative for readers. Great work!

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Dave Lemery. *The Boys from 52.* It's rare that a package can be this dense with information and yet so easy to read. The skillful hand of the designer made that possible, adding layers and breakouts and entry points, plus keeping the design clean and organized. Good use of color and balance helped, too. This page is a good example for how

packages can accommodate a lot of information in a way that doesn't intimidate readers. Impressive.

**Third Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Mike Goebel. *February or Flubbruary?* This page's alternative story form, strong typography and good balance make a reader stop and read. The photo placement and clever cropping make a fellow designer appreciate the care that went into making this page so appealing and effective. Great job.

**Honorable Mention:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Mike Goebel. *Ready or not.* A fun approach livens up what could be a ho-hum story about a new coach. The words of advice on the left engage readers, and the other layers (salary box, past coaches) help keep their attention.

**Honorable Mention:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Jean Zerfowski. *Single page design.* A clever illustration helps make what could be a rather standard page into something unique. The typography works with the subject in the center story, and the rest of the page is fairly clean. Good job.

## **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune, Staff. *Olympics Special Section.* It looks like hours and hours of work went into this illustration -- but it's so eye-catching and effective that it was worth the effort. As a reader, I was engaged in the illustration immediately and pored over the tiny images. But beyond the eye appeal, there is also a lot of useful information packed into this page. Fantastic package.

**Second Place:** Chicago Tribune, Chuck Burke. *How DCFS failed these kids.* The photo collage that carries this page is as striking as it is heartbreaking. It's an effective tool at illustrating the story, aided by a muted color scheme and smart photo placement. Great page.

**Third Place:** Chicago Sun-Times, Jessica Sedgwick. *'The Girl, Next Door,' Jessica Sedgwick.* A clean layout aided by strong photos played up to their best advantage. Smart typography and strong balance add to the attractive, eye-catching spread. Great job.

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Chris Grimm. *Summer Camp double-truck.* A unique perspective gives this page definite eye appeal. It's aided by clean typography and an informative, reader-friendly sidebar. Good work.

## **CLASS 25 - NEWSPAPER DESIGN**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Forest Park Review, Staff. *Forest Park Review 2012.* Design of flag really makes the front page pop. Typography includes nice mix of font styles and densities. Overall flow of paper is smooth, eye-pleasing.

**Second Place:** Suburban News Bulletin, Geneva, Brandon Bressner, publisher. Treatment of single topic on P1 delivers impact. Typefaces are clean. Pages have a nice flow and are uncluttered. Not sure if B&W is a choice, but it is effective nonetheless.

**Third Place:** Elburn Herald, *April 19, May 24 editions.* Nice use of photos, pull quotes and other graphical elements to complement the stories. Flag is well-executed; probably the best in this category.

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Nice, solid newspaper. Clean and fresh. Easy to navigate. Nice, large photo on front.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville. Nice use of dominant art. Effective use of teasers. Headline sizes should be larger and more varied.

**Second Place:** Chillicothe Times-Bulletin, Staff. Nice, clean headline fonts with good variation. Static photos detract from the overall look. Good use of skyboxes.

**Third Place:** Collinsville Herald. Nice use of skyboxes. Dominant art should be larger. Very clean design and easy-to-read type. Flag and index box have perhaps too much wasted space.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Chicago Journal, Claire Innes. From the flag on down, design elements are used for maximum effectiveness. The Chicago Journal projects a weight much heavier than its circulation size. Nice continuity of layout throughout.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Claire Innes. Typefaces have impact and are easy on the eye. Good use of art elements to augment copy. Nice consistency throughout.

**Third Place:** Austin Weekly News, Chicago, Staff. Crisp, uncluttered design is the hallmark of this paper. Nice use of standing heads and good photo count in each edition.

**Honorable Mention:** Downers Grove Reporter, *April 4, May 23*. This paper deserves some points for an unusual approach to the front page. All of the P1 teasers make legitimate entry points, but it does run the risk of becoming cluttered.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Pekin Daily Times, *April 27th & May 26th*. Very colorful editions; excellent use of photos, especially the gardening feature -- very eye-catching; design is very clean, not jumbled, but several instances of bumping headlines in the Summer Travel Guide.

**Second Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon. Great use of photos on front and at tops of sections. Nice use of color on front of each section to separate stories/material, and the starburst subheads (inside peek, events, etc. ) and info breakout boxes do a great job of bringing attention to those sections.

**Third Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb. Could use more art inside the news section. The food and learning section really stands out and catches the eye. Clean design.

**Honorable Mention:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg. Very clean design but uses several different font types on a single page, which doesn't look as appealing. Excellent use of photos and space for the Downtown inferno layout.

## Division E

**First Place:** The Southern Illinoian, Carbondale. *May 24 Sept.23*. Great use of image cutouts draws readers into the meat of the story. Entry points throughout are well conceived. Paper has a crisp, modern look and feel.

**Second Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur. Effective use of dominant story packages out front. The typeface, photo choices and layout work well together. Skyboxes are effective entry points.

**Third Place:** The Telegraph, Alton. Nice, modular design and good use of art elements help to set this one apart. The small point size used in the skybox may be challenging to readers. Overall, a smooth viewing/reading experience.

## Division F

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune. Great photos throughout help layout; Obama re-election coverage amazing; nice center spread on NATO summit; smart packaging in world briefing section; death notices are tiny making them hard to read; weather page is a little too busy.

**Second Place:** Journal Star, Peoria. Great photos throughout; real nice Super Bowl coverage with effective teasers; overall it has a clean look; easy on the eyes -- type is not too small; inside pages tend to be a little bland after eye-catching fronts.

**Third Place:** Chicago Sun-Times. Tabloids can be tough to design well -- nice job! However, many pages end up looking too similar. Well-done feature sections. "Chicago under fire" was very well done. I think the "backward" sports is jarring.

**Honorable Mention:** Belleville News-Democrat, staff. Overall, not a badly designed paper, but not as strong as the others.

## CLASS 26 - HEADLINE WRITING

### Division A

**First Place:** El Paso Journal, Jennie Kearney. Garnet headline is a gem! Fitness Center headline is very creative.

**Second Place:** The Woodstock Independent, Katelyn Stanek. Council bets headline is very clever. When the levy grates is a very accurate headline for the story.

**Third Place:** The Courier, Carterville, Linda Jorgensen Buhman. *Baaaah; jailhouse; fishing; ice cold; drillbit*. County jailhouse headline rocks.. terrific job. Drill bit headline accurately reflects photo.

**Honorable Mention:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Pam Monson. *Leap of faith*. Leap of Faith headline is clever and accurately reflects the story.

### Division B

**First Place:** East Peoria Times-Courier, DeWayne Bartels. Each headline is absolutely wonderful. All are very clever.

**Second Place:** The Reporter, Hickory Hills, Ken Karrson. *Kamp fire doesn't warm Knights*. Schick, Southern Comfort and Kamp Fire are all very clever headlines to represent the stories

**Third Place:** The Reporter, Hickory Hills, Jason Maholy. *Oak Lawn gives bigger teeth to dog ordinance.* Restaurant's Grand opening headline is a smash! Bigger teeth headline is very clever.

**Honorable Mention:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Kevin Hieronymus. *Sports headlines.* Rivers Run Through it is very imaginative. I love Weidnerup headline. Very accurate for the story.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Ken Trainor. *Five headlines, 1/25, 5/16, 5/23, 6/6, 11/14.* Bye bye to Beye... furniture is very creative. The King headline reflects the story accurately.

**Second Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Robert Lyons.. *Bling, bling...* I love the ring headline...

**Third Place:** Downers Grove Reporter, Jessica Spivak. *Pumped and Ready to Go* is a terrific headline for the story.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Jason Yates. *County board's vote* is a few clever headline. All headlines show creativity.

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Jay Redfern. *OMG! Dancing with scars* is a very accurate headline for the story.

**Third Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Rob Buck. *Absolutely love Murder Most Fowl.* Terrific headline. Very clever and accurate for the story.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Jeff Rogers. *Wait, and see; Here come the Sons; Mane Event.* "All headlines are clearly understood and clever. Mane Event is terrific."

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Scott Helmchen. *Hobbit Forming and Meet Your Maker* catch the eye of the reader.

**Third Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Jens Deju. *Duck, duck.. but no goose* is very imaginative, as is *Cain isn't able.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, Mark Fitton. *Knocking Out Concussions* reflects the story very well.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Katie Jankowske. *Imaginative and clever use of wording in headlines.*

**Second Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Mark Lewis. *Love the Send me your ears. Giving it her best shot* is very moving. Headlines reflect the stories.

**Third Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, John Kraft. *Bucket;Boaters;Feitshans;Impact;Uncharted.* Drop in Bucket headline and photo go very well with story. *School closing headline* is very clever.

**Honorable Mention:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Ed Thompson. *Fur-gone conclusion* is terrific headline

## **CLASS 27 - SPORTS SECTION**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** Village Voices, Stockton

**Second Place:** Woodford Times, Tom Batters.

**Third Place:** Paxton Record, Cody Westerlund, Andrew Rosten. *Sports Section 9-26-12 -- Homecoming Week.*

### **Division B**

**First Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield, Scott Taylor, Mark Gregory.

**Second Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Kevin Hieronymus.

**Third Place:** The Galena Gazette, Andrew Brunner.

**Honorable Mention:** The Leader-Union, Vandalia, Andrew Harner.

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Downers Grove Reporter

**Second Place:** Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville, Sam Elliott.

**Third Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Brad Spencer.

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb

**Second Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg

**Third Place:** Times-Republic, Watseka, Ryan Buchan.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** La Salle NewsTribune, Staff. *Cavs place second.*

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, *NWH sports (June 12, March 18).*

**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, *Sections: June 13; Dec. 8.*

**Honorable Mention:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Blake Toppmeyer, Matt Schuckman, Don O'Brien. *6/10 and 2/25.*

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune, *June 15 and June 24.*

**Second Place:** Belleville News-Democrat

**Third Place:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, *March 5/June 16.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Rock Island Argus, Marc Nesseler, sports editor.

## **CLASS 28 - LIFESTYLE SECTION**

### **Division B**

**First Place:** The Woodstock Independent. *Happy Trails/Travels Along Highway 14.* Travels along Highway 14 was an impressive effort, well-written and informative, with superb photography. Happy Trails is informative and thoughtfully photographed, providing readers with a source of information missing from too many newspapers these days.

**Second Place:** Collinsville Herald. *Life*. What every newspaper promises but few deliver - news and lots of it. Well-written, presented in an easy to read format, with pictures of people and activities. The good old days still work.

**Third Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Rita Roberts. *Lifestyle*. The photo essay on the fair is the standout of the section. While big city folk might consider the content mundane, small-town folk read it, and that's what newspapers are all about. Makes me want to see more.

**Honorable Mention:** The Galena Gazette, Andrew Brunner, Jane Holland. *Encore!* Clean, colorful, classy.

#### **Division D**

**First Place:** Pekin Daily Times, Outstanding breadth of coverage. Overall, the best commitment to quality coverage in their community.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Ken Trainor. 5/9, 5/16. Best design, great photos and in-depth coverage. Great calendar too. Could use more variety in lifestyle areas throughout section.

**Third Place:** Downers Grove Reporter, *DG Reporter On the Go* section.

**Third Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, *Lifestyle*. Good breadth and depth. Could have been second place had it not led with an AP story on May 12th edition. Otherwise, solid job.

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon. Great local photos/stories but too few of them in edition. Too much non-original content (AP/Columnist).

#### **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Scott Helmchen. *Screen and Play*. Colorful. Attractive. Enticing. Bold. Creatively designed. Local and national mix of content. Great use of different design techniques. Easy read for the readers. Entertainment listings well organized and again, easy to read. Great job.

**Second Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling. *May 9 (mandatory week); Aug. 16*. Well-designed sections. Easy to read and attractive. Loved all the "local" news featured. Great selection of photos. Also, entertainment listings were well organized. Listings made it easy for the readers to search. Sections had a community feel to them.

**Third Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur, Jeana Matherly. Attractive and enticing designs. Mix of local and national entertainment news pulls reader into the section. Like the use of cutouts and pullouts. Easy to read pages.

**Honorable Mention:** The Southern Illinoian, Carbondale. *Flipside*. Attractive colorful covers. Easy-to-read entertainment listings. Nice mix of local and national entertainment news.

#### **Division F**

**First Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Laura Fraembs. *Timeout and Arts & Living*.

**Second Place:** Belleville News-Democrat

**Third Place:** SouthtownStar, Tinley Park, Jessi Virtusio. *SouthtownStar, Tinley Park.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Chuck Blystone

## **CLASS 29 - SPECIAL SECTION**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Goreville Gazette. *Goreville Lady Blackcats Win State Title.*  
Interesting and nice layout.

**Second Place:** Forest Park Review, Tom Holmes, John Rice. *Forest Park Chamber of Commerce, 100 years.*

**Third Place:** The Pinckneyville Press. *Red Power Round Up.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Pinckneyville Press. *2012 Resource Guide.*

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Oregon Republican Reporter, Vinde Wells. *Century of Farming.*

**Second Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield, staff. *125th Anniversary Edition for The Enterprise.*

**Third Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield. *Last Minute Gift Guide.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Enterprise, Plainfield. *November Gift Guide.*

### **Division C**

**First Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Claire Innes, David Pierini

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Claire Innes, Alaina Buzas.

**Third Place:** Chicago Journal

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

### **Division D**

**First Place:** Pekin Daily Times. *Horizons.*

**Second Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, *Orange Bowl Tab.*

**Third Place:** Breeze-Courier, Taylorville, *Summer Fun.*

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon, *Farm Focus.*

### **Division E**

**First Place:** The Telegraph, Alton, Kathie Bassett & Georgia Mills. *Homestyle Magazine.*

**Second Place:** The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale, *Life & Style Magazine.*

**Third Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, *Everyday Heroes.*

**Honorable Mention:** The Times, Ottawa, *Wedding Magazine.*

### **Division F**

**First Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, *SO Magazine, November 2012.*

**Second Place:** The Rock Island Argus, *Working The Dream.*



**Second Place:** The Rock Island Argus, *Arsenal at 150*.

**Third Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Roger Kramer, Brad Weisenstein, staff. *Our War*.

### **CLASS 30 - BEST WEBSITE**

#### **Division B**

**First Place:** Republic-Times, Waterloo, Teryn Schaefer, Christine Otten. Clean layout & engaging for the reader.

**Second Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Rita Roberts.

**Third Place:** The Enterprise, Plainfield.

**Honorable Mention:** The Woodstock Independent

**Honorable Mention:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro

#### **Division D**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg

**Second Place:** Times-Republic, Watseka. (Like the inclusion of the print edition.)

**Third Place:** Downers Grove Reporter

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon

#### **Division E**

**First Place:** Herald & Review, Decatur

**Second Place:** The Telegraph, Alton

**Third Place:** Kane County Chronicle, St. Charles

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake

#### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Sun-Times

**Second Place:** Journal Star, Peoria. (Rotating photo gallery is attention getting.)

**Third Place:** Rockford Register Star

**Honorable Mention:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington

### **CLASS 31 - BEST WEB PROJECT**

#### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Pinckneyville Press. *Fire Anniversary*. Great way to tell a story online through pictures. Powerful use of photos and video.

**Second Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert, Jessica Holder. *Welcome Home 661st*. I like how the video highlights the community, gives a real sense of who you all are. Good tie-in with the yellow ribbons. Suggestion: Put some more words on your video and/or in the YouTube description.

**Third Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert, Jessica Holder. *Dashcam Meltdown*. The print reporting and the explanation of this story are A+... but this is a web category. Alas. The video was eye-opening, glad you got it, but if you just watch the video without the background from print, you're lost. Put more words/report in the YouTube description + maybe join the comment stream.

## **Division B**

**First Place:** The Journal-News, Hillsboro, Hope Timmermann and Kourtney Ernst. *Hope In Your Hometown*. This is great community journalism. The videos tell a story; they're not videos for the sake of videos. Interesting to watch, well done.

**Second Place:** Republic-Times, Waterloo, Teryn Schaefer. *Waterloo Winter Sports Preview*. Great use of video to supplement your school sports coverage. Videos are well produced, not too long. Good way to hear from the kids. Nice that parents can buy DVD, too; good service to offer.

**Third Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Rita Roberts. Very useful way to serve your readers. I was impressed with the number of options available - not just school closings, but headline reports that can drive traffic. Makes community journalism pertinent.

## **Division D**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb. *NIU's Road to Miami*. Professional, complete, interesting way to capture a season. User-friendly, plus good journalism.

**Second Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb. *NIU Huskies football videos*. Well-done. The videos are good supplements to stories, letting your subjects literally tell their tale. Kept my attention.

**Third Place:** Journal Gazette & Times-Courier, Mattoon. *Coles County Clash*. Good way to tell a story through photos. Captures your community. Always good to link the print + online products back and forth.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, Jerry Crimmins, Adam Music. *Coverage of the death of Philip H. Corboy*. How better to tell your readers about someone than to get it first-hand? Good use of video to supplement coverage.

## **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake. *Election Central 2012*. This is exactly why websites are good for journalism. Easy for readers to find out useful, pertinent info on candidates, in one spot. Also gave candidates a voice. No worries about space. Good interaction with twitter, too. Nice job.

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Erick Ward, Les Johnson. *2012 Prep Football Preview*. Love the strip across the top to select a team. Easy to use. Great info for readers.

**Third Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Phil Carlson. *Ella-Bratton*. Hearing the mom's voice is something you just can't get in print. This is a perfect supplement to a compelling story.

**Honorable Mention:** La Salle NewsTribune, Staff. *Westclox fire map*. Great interaction here. Gives people useful information.

## **Division F**

**First Place:** The State Journal-Register, Springfield, Ted Schurter & Bart Bolton. *Hoodie Walk*. Powerful way to tell a story. The anonymous hoodie-wearers in their own voices --- we've come a long way from "man on the street."

**Second Place:** Rockford Register Star, Jacob Roufa, Alex Gary and Cathy Bayer. *School Report Cards*. So useful for readers, interactive. It's making the most of online.

**Third Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Paul Colletti and Todd Mizener. *Remembering Lincoln School*. You just can't capture the visuals of a building coming down or the emotion in people's voices in print. This is a great video.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Sun-Times, Dave Hoekstra, Jon Sall. *'Uptown's hillbilly past lives on at Carol's Pub'*. This was fun.

## **CLASS 32 - MOST INNOVATIVE PROJECT**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert, Jessica Holder. *Dashcam Meltdown*. Superb and dogged reporting about the abuse of power in a small community. The readers would have greatly benefitted from more cohesive narratives, however. The reporter cleaved too closely to the legal and procedural events and language. Nevertheless, exposing the threats and cover-up resulted in true public service.

**Second Place:** The Pinckneyville Press. *Fire Anniversary*. A very moving visual narrative about a tragic fire.

**Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert, Jessica Holder. *Welcome Home 661st*. A lovely tribute to the troops, with moving photographs.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Scott Helmchen, Ryan Glab, Adam Nekola. *PlanitNorthwest.com*. clean, easy to navigate websites and excellent mix of news, commentary and information

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Adam Nekola, Lance Booth, Staff. *Everyday Heroes*. Nice use of video to highlight people whose contributions and bravery often go unnoticed.

**Third Place:** Bureau County Republican, Princeton, Terri Simon. *Illinois Valley Living - Fall 2012*. A sweet presentation of local life, personalities and helpful information, although the articles could use a more incisive touch to avoid reading like advertising.

**Honorable Mention:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Staff. *The Shot*. A good idea to dip back in time. The comments could have benefitted from some editing instead of using pure quotes.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Staff. *Arsenal at 150*. Super art. In-depth historical look at an important part of the local past. Clean layout, easy to follow. Nice timeline and chock full of appropriate advertising.

**Second Place:** The Rock Island Argus. *Schilling-Bustos congressional debate*. Thorough and good use of leveraging partnerships and including readers in the process.

## **CLASS 33 – Illinois Public Policy Institute Award for BEST PROMOTION OF PUBLIC’S RIGHT TO KNOW**

### **Division A**

**First Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jeff Egbert. *Dashcam*. Many times the best way to promote the public's right to know is to put it into action. Jeff Egbert and the Pinckneyville Press do that here by using FOIA to shed light on a possible coverup involving police and the mayor's son. Excellent work.

**Second Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jessica Holder, Jeff Egbert. *Surplus Auction*. This package of stories is a good example of why newspapers are still vital to this nation. A few questions from readers about a pre-auction sale of surplus items leads to a FOIA request and investigation showing that the public was wronged. If not for the newspaper's actions, this incident likely would have went uncovered.

**Third Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka, Cheryl Wolfe. *Putting elected officials on notice*. As journalists, we would hope that public officials know the law when it comes to open meetings and open records. But, as this editorial shows, it doesn't hurt to remind them.

**Honorable Mention:** El Paso Journal, Jennie Kearney. *Council in violation of OMA*. It's always good to see when a newspaper exposes violations of open meetings law.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Niles Journal, Tom Robb. *Uncover Years Of Unauthorized Perks*. This series of articles by the Niles Journal represents the essence of good journalism. Freedom of Information Act requests are used to uncover years of bonuses and other perks handed out by the mayor to employees in his favor. This package was a pleasure to read.

**Second Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. *FOIA request to Galena School District*. Excellent work in pursuing a school board action that otherwise would not have come to light.

**Third Place:** Mason County Democrat, Havana, Wendy Martin. *Blue Sky*. This is a good example of using a FOIA request to obtain information to help in the public's understanding of an issue. The columns added further insight.

**Honorable Mention:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Rick Wade. *City Council Secrecy*. If newspapers don't hold elected officials accountable for complying with open meeting laws, who will? This editorial does a nice job in keeping readers informed of violations by city council.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** The Register-Mail, Galesburg, Staff. *Sexual Harassment Settlement*. "Joe Ward is a 'bulldog.'" His persistence, rightfully backed up by the newspaper, brought sunshine to darkness. This is "gumshoe" reporting at its best. The newspaper should be applauded for its persistence and desire for the truth.

**Second Place:** The News-Gazette, Champaign, Tom Kacich, Patrick Wade. *Officials must turn over texts.* This is a fascinating issue and has impacts throughout the country. The editorial is very strong and the story about texting has great quotes from those involved. It gets the message across. The police story is also good and raises many questions, some of which remain unanswered. Good work.

**Third Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Doug Wilson, Maggie Menderski. *Louisiana council member impeached.* This is good reporting with a lot of great quotes. This type of reporting highlights the importance of open meetings laws and gives a good explanation. There are lots of shenanigans going on in Louisiana and this shows it. The good, old boys take a hit here.

**Honorable Mention:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Jim Dunn. These are well written editorials. Especially liked the "jackass" reference. Keep up the good work in calling out those who are in power and think it is their power, not that of the public.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune, David Jackson, Gary Marx and Alex Richards. *An empty-desk epidemic.* In depth find on truancy in Chicago Public Schools given that needed statistics to validate point. The FOIA request that took more than a decade to retrieve did that. Articles flow seamlessly between FOIA finds and real-life examples of the statistics. And article pushed action from school district.

**Second Place:** The Rock Island Argus, Dawn Neuses. *Need a copy? \$6 a page or maybe 5 cents.* Uncovered discrepancies in FOIA request costs throughout county. Reads smoothly and clearly shows differences.

**Third Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, George Pawlaczyk, Beth Hundsdorfer. *Year-long fight to get Workers Comp records.* Both articles address Workers' Comp, but are not on the same specific issue otherwise. Mentions year-long fight, but doesn't elaborate on roadblocks.

### **CLASS 34 - Robert M. Cole Award for BEST SCHOOL BOARD COVERAGE Division A**

**First Place:** Woodford County Journal, Eureka, Cheryl Wolfe. In-depth look at public's input on important district decision. Reports on continuing attempt to exert public control on a school board policy decision.

**Second Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jessica Holder. This paper is consistently aggressive on how it covers the local high school district. Such zeal, including FOIA requests over a questioned property auction, does not flinch from the paper's mission of reporting first, worrying about the fallout later.

**Third Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Eric Fisher, Pam Monson. Comprehensive coverage and detail contained in school board decisions and rationale for them. Graphics really help tell the story. Although these are not hot-button topics, the money involved does warrant the additional coverage and space.

**Honorable Mention:** Village Voices, Stockton, Dan Stevens. Interesting way of "reporting;" liberal insertion of opinion mixed with facts. But the topics were

worthy of consideration and valid points are made. The subjective style probably helps to keep readers interested in the decision-making process.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson, Jane Holland. *New school for Galena? Wow*; this series of articles captures the scope of a major project and its impact. The use of graphics, maps, photos, web polls, interviews, sidebars, etc. , really pull it all together. Thorough, fair and objective reporting, presented in a package that guarantees readership and response.

**Second Place:** Ledger-Sentinel, Oswego, Lyle R. Rolfe. Thorough coverage of school district administrative issues. Public response to engagement on superintendent search captures the intent of school board coverage award.

**Third Place:** The Bolingbrook Bugle, Laura Katauska. *Valley View School District 365U coverage*. Quality, in-depth interviews and background on issues and district leaders. Unique graphic display makes stories more compelling.

**Honorable Mention:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Daniel Winningham. *Carlinville School Board*. Solid reporting on school board meetings; nice use of graphics to help explain numbers.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, Staff. *No Child Left Behind series*. Great series on significant curriculum and class changes that affect student, teacher and community alike. Great use of data, photography and graphics to supplement the content.

**Second Place:** Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest, Terry Dean. Great in-depth look at people or issues. Goes below the surface to find emotions, triggers for the way people decide, react to school board decisions. Glad to see student interviews too.

**Third Place:** Quincy Herald-Whig, Edward Husar. Thorough coverage on major financial issues facing community and district; lots of sidebars and graphics to handle data in reader-friendly formats. Paper played no small part in telling story that enabled referendum to pass.

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Stephen Di Benedetto. *D-300, teachers turn to mediator*. Thorough coverage of volatile issue. Two devices, At a glance and By the numbers, helps reader easily see the details of the offer, cost of contract. Could have also examined effect on students, parents.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune, David Jackson, Gary Marx and Alex Richards. *An empty-desk epidemic*. Wow; this series has to hit home for thousands of students and parents; even those without students have to be moved by the coverage and what impact this issue has on the community at large.

**Second Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Carolyn P. Smith, Brian Brueggemann. *State to oust East St. Louis School Board*. Politically sensitive issue covered thoroughly and objectively, without inciting overreaction.

**Third Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Pam Adams. *Peoria public school coverage compilation*. Solid coverage of school district and administrative issues; potential for volatility balanced with fairness shown to all sides in sensitive issues.

**Honorable Mention:** The Pantagraph, Bloomington, Phyllis Coulter. *Unit 5 still/Making class/Busing/Shooting*. Thorough coverage of school district issues that matter; would help if paper could also work in student and parents as sources.

### **CLASS 35 - Maurice Scott Award for BEST COVERAGE OF TAXATION Division A**

**First Place:** Paxton Record, Will Brumleve. *Paxton TIF district*. From start to finish, the Paxton Record does an excellent job breaking down the TIF agreement and explaining why it is important to readers. Informative breakouts were a key in aiding that understanding.

**Second Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Pam Monson. *City Preparing to sue, 209U asks 25 percent, States attorney*. This package of a stories offers readers a good explanation of a tax issues impacting the community.

**Third Place:** El Paso Journal, Jennie Kearney. *Jan. 18, March 14, July 4*. It's clear from these stories that Jennie Kearney has a good understanding of the issues and she conveys the information succinctly to readers. The TIF story was particularly good.

**Honorable Mention:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jessica Holder. *Tax Payer Concerns*. Good, complete coverage. The investigation by the Pinckneyville Press was a benefit to residents.

### **Division B**

**First Place:** The Galena Gazette, Hillary Dickerson. *Reconsidering the school facilities tax*. The Galena Gazette does an excellent job in breaking down how the school facilities tax impacts local schools and readers. Complex matters are handled in a way that readers can quickly grab the concepts. A series of breakout boxes and charts helps in that understanding.

**Second Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Rick Wade. *Sales Tax*. Rick Wade does a nice job informing readers about both sides of a "tough sell, " a proposed 1 percent sales tax. The benefits and concerns are clearly spelled out.

**Third Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Rick Wade. *Main Editorial*. Strong commentary about a council that's floating a tax hike while not doing much to gain the public's trust.

**Honorable Mention:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Daniel Winningham. *School Lawsuit*.

### **Division E**

**First Place:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, Staff. *Property Tax 2012*. What a user-friendly way to tackle this. The double-truck was very informative, as were

all the graphics. Stories were well-reported and well-written. This stood out as solid, comprehensive coverage.

**Second Place:** La Salle NewsTribune, Kevin Caufield. *Penny for your thoughts.* Topic is excellent and package was well-written.

**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, Staff. *Complex decision.*

**Honorable Mention:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Kevin Craver. *Tax cap: Property taxes keep rising.*

#### **Division F**

**First Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, Brad Weisenstein. *Redbird Express.*

#### **CLASS 36 - Knight Chair Award for Best Investigative/Enterprise Reporting Division A**

**First Place:** Forest Park Review, Jean Lotus. *Gaming forms gamed by commissioner, bar owners.* Solid watchdog reporting on the failure of an official to disclose his financial interest in a gaming issue and of businesses failing to disclose campaign contributions.

**Second Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jessica Holder, Nate Fisher. *Dashcam Events.* The newspaper showed initiative and fortitude in exposing official shenanigans and brazen and backwards attempts to intimidate the press. Kudos for pursuing FOIAs and airing it all in public.

**Third Place:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jessica Holder, Jeff Egbert. *School Surplus Auction.* Worthy and vigilant reporting on a questions about an auction of surplus property.

#### **Division E**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, Staff. *The coffee fund.* An exemplary investigation that showed the value of relentless digging and questioning. It led to the exposure of misdeeds by higher ed administrators and indictments.

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Brett Rowland. *MCC: Building the future.* Thorough enterprise and public service reporting that exposed faulty projections and higher expenses for a county college expansion.

**Third Place:** Sauk Valley Media, Sterling, David Giuliani. *Politics in office of state's attorney?* The kind of watchdog reporting needed in every community to prevent the improper mixing of government resources with political campaigns.

**Honorable Mention:** The Times, Ottawa, Dan Churney. *Questions swirl around pay/Rzasa: Water plant.* A good reporting effort that shows how numbers can make the story.

#### **Division F**

**First Place:** Chicago Tribune, Patricia Callahan, Sam Roe, Michael Hawthorne. *Playing With Fire.* A stunning and comprehensive investigation into a web of corruption of corporations and public officials that promoted ineffective flame retardants into furniture and clothing while putting dangerous chemicals into homes.



**Second Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, George Pawlaczyk, Beth Hundsdorfer. *Hidden suffering, hidden death.* A shocking series of stories into the state's Office of Inspector General into the deaths and abuses of those with disabilities. The reporting was relentless and detailed and led to reform.

**Third Place:** Belleville News-Democrat, George Pawlaczyk, Beth Hundsdorfer. *Workers Comp.* A terrific expose of a state workers compensation system open to abuse and fraud.

**Honorable Mention:** Journal Star, Peoria, Matt Buedel. *Police crash investigation cover-up.* An excellent series of investigative pieces into police misconduct.

## **CLASS 37 - Illinois State Bar Association Lincoln Media Award for BEST LEGAL MEDIA COVERAGE**

### **Division B**

**First Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, *Staff.* Redistricting. Goes beyond standard meeting coverage. Good follow through over time. Nice use of graphics. Well done.

**Second Place:** The Free Press Advocate, Wilmington, Pam Monson. *City preparing to sue, Flash bang suit, City seeks new trial.* Interesting topics packaged for impact.

**Third Place:** Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville, Daniel Winningham. *School Lawsuit.* While this is somewhat standard meeting coverage, it moved ahead on the list for the way it was packaged keeping other meeting topics under a different headline and focusing on this one topic.

**Honorable Mention:** The Pinckneyville Press, Jessica Holder. *Surplus Auction FOIA Response and FOIA Timeline.*

### **Division E**

**First Place:** Daily Chronicle, DeKalb, *Staff.* *Rifkin case leads to police shakeup.* Good job of keeping the heat on and playing the story at the top as we're certain it was a hot topic for your readers. Perhaps the coverage effected positive change. A clear winner in this category. Goes beyond standard trial coverage.

**Second Place:** Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake, Kevin Craver. *McCullom Lake brain cancer cluster.* Thorough job and interesting topic. Displayed well including good sidebars. Not the first time we've seen cancer cluster stories, yet critical for local coverage.

**Third Place:** The Daily Journal, Kankakee, Mike Voss. *Cameras in the courtroom.* Interesting approach of using cameras in the courtroom as a secondary story to murder trial coverage. Photo page was a good idea.

**Honorable Mention:** Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, Josh Weinhold. *Cameras in the Courtroom.* We imagine this was an important topic for your audience. Nice, thorough job.

### **Division F**

**First Place:** The Rock Island Argus, *Staff.* *Cameras in the courtroom.* Great mix of courtroom camera angles - no pun intended. Interesting and relevant. We liked

seeing the technical aspects explained and photographed as well. A very comprehensive look at an issue important to our democracy.

**Second Place:** Journal Star, Peoria, Andy Kravetz and Chris Kaergard. *Are grand juries necessary?* An inside look at an under-reported topic.

**Verle V. Kramer Memorial Trophy - The Woodstock Independent**

2nd Place: The Pinckneyville Press

3rd Place: Forest Park Review

4th Place: Village Voices, Stockton

**Harold and Eva White Memorial Trophy - Bureau County Republican, Princeton**

2nd Place: Macoupin County Enquirer-Democrat, Carlinville

3rd Place: The Journal-News, Hillsboro

4th Place: The Galena Gazette

**Will Loomis Memorial Trophy - Wednesday Journal of Oak Park & River Forest**

2nd Place: Jersey County Journal, Jerseyville

3rd Place: Downers Grove Reporter

4th Place: Naperville Sun

**Patrick Coburn Award of Excellence - The Register-Mail, Galesburg**

2nd Place: Daily Chronicle, DeKalb

3rd Place: Pekin Daily Times

4th Place: Journal Gazette & Times Courier, Mattoon

**Mabel S. Shaw Memorial Trophy - Northwest Herald, Crystal Lake**

2nd Place: Sauk Valley Media, Sterling

3rd Place: The Southern Illinoisan, Carbondale

4th Place: The News-Gazette, Champaign

**Stuart R. Paddock Memorial Trophy - Chicago Tribune**

2nd Place: Rock Island Argus

3rd Place: Chicago Sun-Times

4th Place: Belleville News-Democrat