

Here are the results of the 2009 Missouri Press Association Better Newspaper Contest. Gold Cups, plaques and certificates were presented Saturday, Oct. 17, at the MPA Annual Convention, held this year in the Sheraton Kansas City Sports Complex Hotel.

Newspapers receive points for each award they win. The weekly and daily newspapers with the most points win the Gold Cups. This year's Gold Cup winners are the *Liberty Tribune* and *The Kansas City Star*.

WEEKLIES

1. General Excellence

Class 1

1. Smithville Herald: Lots of faces in this paper. People like to see their neighbors and friends in the paper, and you seem to place an emphasis on getting people's pictures in the paper. Paper is very well organized with a ton of news pertaining to your area.

Attractive front pages and sports pages.

2. Democrat-Argus, Caruthersville: Good coverage of breaking news, like the rising Mississippi River and Hurricane Ike. Lots of local coverage that hits closer to home.

3. Focus on Oak Grove: Good coverage of fire. I loved the big photo on page 1 of June 26 issue. Very thorough coverage; especially two pages of photos inside. Wow! 21 photos related to the fire! I like how you emphasize getting people in the paper, especially with the Proud Oak Grove page.

Class 2

1. The Kearney Courier: Good mix of news throughout paper. Paper is organized well and is easy to read. I especially like the Kearney newsmakers on the front page. This gets people into the paper.

2. Platte County Citizen: Eye-catching photos. Good mix of feature and news stories. Lots of faces of people from around town.

3. The Star Herald, Belton: Lots of news — sex trafficking, multi-vehicle wreck, fire destroys home and much more. Good well-rounded paper.

HM. The Prospect-News, Doniphan: Lots of local news and lots of faces of local people.

Class 3

1. Liberty Tribune: By far the best in the class. Strong headlines, insightful reporting. Opinion page grabs the reader's attention. Photography is first-rate.

2. Christian County Headliner, Ozark: This paper understands what it means to be a newspaper. Hard news, features, sports — the writers know how to capture the reader's attention. Photography and headline writing are top-rate.

3. Bolivar Herald-Free Press: Another fine example of a newspaper that knows how to serve its community. Strong in all phases.

HM. Cassville Democrat: Keep up the great work. Schlichtman knows how to write to capture her readers!

Class 4

1. Gladstone Sun Gazette: This was a tough decision, but the quality of writing and reporting separated the Sun Gazette from other newspapers in this category. It's a good product.

2. Warrenton Journal: This newspaper has a nice hometown feel. Community journalism is its bread and butter. Keep covering the local issues and writing about the people who otherwise may not have the chance to see their names or faces in the newspaper.

3. St. Louis Business Journal: This is a good product overall. Strong writing and reporting. Excellent use of photo illustrations. Good ad design, creativity and presentation.

2. Newspaper Design

Class 1

1. Smithville Herald: Design is easy on the eye. Good use of white space and dominant photos. The blue kicker labels atop the headlines are well done. Nice pictures throughout the paper. It's obvious that the designer places a premium on the main centerpiece package. Good job.

2. Christian County Headliner, Ozark: Great use of type for headlines on main package. They really draw your eyes to these, especially the "Save our river" headline in the June 4 issue. Keep up the good work.

3. Cass County Democrat-Missourian, Harrisonville: I loved the high water front page. You can't go wrong running a photo like this big. Good main packages throughout the paper.

HM. Lawrence County Record, Mt. Vernon: Nice dominant photos, especially the one of Mt. Vernon square in June 18 paper. Paper is well organized with a lot of information throughout.

HM. Kearney Courier: Design on sports pages is impressive. Good main packages and headlines that leave no doubt as to what the top news of the day is.

Class 2

1. St. Louis Business Journal: Outstanding design; fabulous use of graphics, used for the right stories. The page index at bottom of front page is reader-friendly and accessible right away. Your paper uses lots of photos of people, which is great. The staff places the local business stories toward front and national stories in back — makes the paper that much more local. "The List" is unique and informative.

2. The Guidon, Fort Leonard Wood: The paper is considered very "niche," but is extremely interesting. The color and photographs are spot on. The paper is extremely readable. Nice spacing between stories and photographs. Good use of text boxes. The illustrations on the Family Life sections make them inviting to read. The sidebars of "things to do" make it very readable. The paper has one of the best "event calendars" around. Great job!

3. Jefferson County Leader, Festus: The paper is very clean and isn't on a mission to squeeze more type on a page than is necessary, which makes it much nicer on the reader's eye. Color is great. The great thing about this layout is the lack of jumps from page to page. This creates a smooth read from story to story. A lot of news in this paper,

which creates a lot of black ink on a page. More photos could break that up. Great use of reader submitted content.

HM. St. Louis American: Great layout, but color of photographs was off at times. The paper makes great use of faces and names continuously, which makes the layout more inviting. Great use of illustrations and photo cutouts. Overall, very nice newspaper. Try using more graphics; they are helpful at times.

HM. Sun Tribune, Gladstone: Your front pages of sections are fabulous — unique and eye-catching. Great use of white space on those pages. Try using more graphics; they can be helpful at times and break up text.

3. Best Front Page

Class 1

1. Lawrence County Record: Clean, crisp layout. Nice use of color photos. Great use of spot color, not overwhelming. Fresh looking.

2. Cuba Free Press: Good layout each week. Good use of white space.

3. Platte County Landmark: Clean layout; white space used well.

Class 2

1. Jefferson County Journal: Clean, crisp layout. Use white space to make the layout easy to enjoy. Good consistency.

2. Liberty Tribune: Clean layout; good use of pictures.

3. South County Times: Nice use of pictures; easy reading style.

HM. St. Louis Business Journal: (no comments)

4. Best News Story

Class 1

1. Nancy Hull Rigdon, Smithville Herald, Fatal Crash: This was not your average fatal crash story. Talking to the friends and getting personal with the story made this very effective reporting and story telling. Crisp, clean writing style helps to move this story from start to finish.

2. Corey Noles, North Stoddard Countian, Heavy Rains: Well-written pieces with all the necessary information. Good example of keeping a story short yet very informative.

3. Andrew Bottrell, Citizen Observer, Cameron, MAP Scores: Lots of good information from multiple sources. Writer/reporter goes beyond the obvious to put together a very comprehensive story.

HM: Nick Houston, Tipton Times, Drunk Driving: Good story that really tells the impact of a significant news event. Making the second paragraph the lead would have given more impact and really set the stage for the reader.

Class 2

1. Allison Retka, Missouri Lawyers Weekly, Koster's Conversion: Extremely well written. Loved lead, gave us a glimpse of Koster not everyone would see on campaign trail. Very well rounded and writing style flowed beautifully. This reporter spent a lot of time on this piece and interviewed several key figures.

2. Andrea Wood and Arthur McGregor, Jackson County Advocate, House of Prayer: Lead really sets scene of this place before you even have to explain it. Very

detailed. I would shorten it, though. I think you can lose readers with a piece this long. Very well written however.

3. Linda Trest and Dave Marner, Gasconade County Republican, Fraud Exposed: Very thorough piece. Reporters not afraid to take on city hall or police department. Didn't think sidebar was necessary until I read it and realized its relevance. Little long, though.

HM. Tim Schmidt, Warren County Record, Grad Excels: Great description of "grad." That's best way to describe a program like this. It's not easy to get someone to open up and tell personal info like you did.

HM. Kathy Fairchild, Lawrence County Record, Day Turned Tragic: Good description of scene and accident. Conveys seriousness of situation well. Reporter talked to several witnesses, which helped describe the accident.

Class 3

1. Emily Randall, The Northeast News, Paseo ALDI: Concise. Meaty quotes from all sides. Explained density study quickly. Love the length, content, everything!

2. Natalie Shelton, Liberty Tribune, Retired: Very exhaustive. Impressive amount of research. I read each entry regarding this issue with interest, but this entry stood out. Included many details, but I didn't get bogged down with all of them.

3. Ryan Bowling, Nixa Xpress, Animal Shelter: Thorough, well written and researched. Showed frustration of landowner and others without inserting own thoughts.

HM. Mark Webber, Cass County Democrat-Missourian, Kidd: This story actually made me laugh out loud. Well written, but writer seemed to be intentionally poking fun at Kidd. It was made very obvious the writer dislikes Kidd.

Class 4

1. Steve Taylor, Arnold-Imperial Leader, Siding With Sisters: Good reporting; Covered both sides of the issue well and reported it as news.

2. Sarah Whitney, Warrenton Journal, Mapping Seconds: Good presentation of facts told in a good way for the public to understand.

3. Michael Westblade, Gladstone Sun Gazette, Fueling Emergency Services: Good story that reported important info to the public.

5. Best Feature Story

Class 1

1. Jeff Thompson, Camdenton Reporter, Vietnam Vets: Lovely story that paints a picture of a solemn event. Very descriptive. A nice tribute to these other forgotten veterans.

2. Nancy Hull Rigdon, Smithville Herald, Retired Carver: Writer does a great job with leads, drawing in readers. Excellent job capturing the personality of this unique man.

3. Nancy Hull Rigdon, Smithville Herald, Wii Seniors: Best lead in category, and a good, strong story on a growing trend. (Hope you entered the photo of Colley as a feature photo.) Photos were a perfect fit.

Class 2

1. Betsy Lee, Missouri Lawyers Weekly, Rags to Petitions: Outstanding portrait of someone who overcame odds to shine. Great lead, great background. I'd love to have Gloria Colon on my side. Does anyone outside the bar get to see this newspaper (ie the general public)? If not, it's a huge loss to those who can't see this paper!

2. Bill Hankins, Platte County Landmark, Art with Cause: An engaging, fascinating look at a local artist. Photos, layout and story are done very well. A great package.

3. Brad Seiner, Belton Star Herald, Thanks for Memories: The quintessential "slice of life" story about an end to an era.

HM. Betsy Lee, Missouri Lawyers Weekly, Six Months: Gripping, well done.

HM. Allison Retka, Missouri Lawyers Weekly, Broken Covenant: Well-done overview and update on a landmark case.

Class 3.

1. Lisa Schlichtman, Cassville Democrat, Young Apprentice: What a fun story. The two subjects know their stuff, and the writer does a good job conveying that. I liked the photo of Wyatt with the jump. It shows exactly what the story's talking about. The only thing I'd change is tightening the lead.

2. Matt Decker, Fort Leonard Wood Guidon, Coins: Nice job. The story includes plenty of information but isn't as didactic as these kinds of stories can be. The graphics are eye-catching and draw the reader, as does the lead. It made me want to see what I have in my pockets.

3. Mike Ekey, Northeast News, Praying To See: These kinds of stories can get sappy and sentimental, but the writer kept away from that. Thank you! This woman is an inspiration, and the writer did a good job introducing her.

HM. Mike Ekey, Northeast News, Who is Perry Jones: I hope the home can find this man's family. What a heart-wrenching story! I wish you hadn't had to jump it twice.

HM. Ralph Pokorny, Nevada Herald-Tribune, WAVES: Interesting story about a little-known program in World War II.

Class 4

1. Julie Randle, Southside Journal, Double Duty: An interesting look at the life (at least the culinary part) of a firefighter. Seeing what goes on behind the scenes makes them seem more accessible.

2. Marty Harris, South County Times, Hooked on Elephants: It's not often you can get up close and personal with such interesting creatures. Very interesting.

3. Raymond Castile, O'Fallon Journal, I'm Allergic: We've all heard about food allergies, so to make them personal makes them easier to understand. Nice job combining stats with the anecdotes.

HM. Peggy Scott, Jefferson County Leader, No Need to Whistle: Sounds like a fascinating guy. Every healthcare provider needs someone like him.

HM. Kevin Murphy, South County Times, Jefferson Barracks: Made me want to visit.

6. Best News or Feature Series

- 1. Kevin Smith, The Kearney Courier, Bond Issue:** Amazing series. Stood out above the rest in a *very* strong category. Ranged from extremely personal anecdotes to official details effortlessly. Perfect example of a newspaper providing the best coverage.
 - 2. Brian Flinchbaugh, North County Journal, Metro Cuts:** Exhaustive research. Great writing. Topic could have been boring and gotten more boring each week, but each article presented a new way the cuts could affect a different group. Really great job!
 - 3. Jamie Quagliata, St. Charles Journal, Odd Jobs:** Great idea! Good variety of occupations shown. Increases awareness of the local little guys. Kind of like “Dirty Jobs” but a little less dirty.
- HM. Allen Edmonds, Star Herald, Belton:** This is one of those examples of a perfect story falling in your lap. Well written, thorough. It was a difficult decision not placing this higher, but entries were *very* strong this year.
- HM. Karol Wilcox, Caruthersville Democrat-Argus, Ghost Hunting:** Fun to follow. Informal. Entertaining, but maybe a little long. Could have been a three-part series.

7. Tilghman Cloud Memorial Editorial Award

Class 1

- 1. Lawrence County Record, Knight or Nightmare?:** In a clear voice, the editorial drives home the point that lawsuits are an attack on the city’s residents. There was plenty of factual information to back up the opinion. The advice to the community also is clearly stated. This probably helped residents understand what these lawsuits mean to them.
- 2. Cass County Democrat-Missourian, Deserve Better?:** This editorial leaves little doubt the newspaper believes the city’s elected leaders have let everyone down. There is a clear message to readers and the other city council members. Good job of holding the fire to the elected leaders’ feet.
- 3. Christian County Headliner, River Rescue:** Sometimes someone needs to point out unpopular truths. That’s what happens here. There is good use of background information and a clear call to action.

Class 2

- 1. Sun Tribune, Background Checks:** This editorial sends two clear messages: The importance of background checks and dealing with race relations. The paper takes a stand, pointing out this behavior is not acceptable. It points out a community weakness and seeks to move the issue forward.
 - 2. Jefferson County Leader, Smoke Free Air:** Entertaining and straight to the point. There is no doubt what the desired outcome is. This has an easy-to-read style that should capture readers’ attention.
 - 3. Liberty Tribune, Ugly Boxes:** (no comment written)
- HM. Jefferson County Leader, Nothin’ Right:** Fun-loving approach makes for an entertaining read.

8. Best Humorous Column

- 1. Steve Pokin, St. Charles County Journal:** Writing done in consistent style. Content could relate to everyone. We’ve all been there, especially with the security column. Well written.

2. Patrick Martin, Jefferson County Leader: Consistent writing style — sharp, makes you think. Varied topics about current issues.

3. David Knopf, Liberty Tribune: Good consistent, identifiable style. Content is appealing, relates to people and is personable. Columns well written and fleshed out.

HM. Gregg Jones, Washington Missourian, Wednesday: Writing style consistent. Seemed personable and relaxed, like a conversation with a good friend. Topics had familiar feel, as though I could have done the same type of things, which makes the articles more effective.

HM. David Kvidahl, West County Journal: The style and quality of writing are solid and consistent. A “down home” type of writing without needing a family tree to follow along. Friendly and effective.

8. Best Serious Columnist

1. Ray Weikal, Gladstone Sun Tribune: Clean, clear, concise writing. Topics were current. Drew the reader in.

2. Michael Westblade, Gladstone Sun Gazette: Quality of writing was consistent throughout articles. Good imagery.

3. Carolyn Erickson, Fort Leonard Wood Guidon: Effective at making people think. Ideas, columns are clear. Quality is good and consistent.

HM. Brad Seiner, Belton Star Herald: Personable. Style of writing carries throughout columns. Content is good, not the same as everyone else’s.

HM. Lorry Myers, Centralia Fireside Guard: Choice of topics was effective. Brought up things many face, relates well with readers. Style is homey but professional.

9. Best Feature Photo

Class 1

1. Jeff Kirchoff, Lee’s Summit Journal, Hairless for Hope: Capturing the quirky expression on the man’s face moved this photo to front in a tough class. You chose the right shot from several, I’m sure.

2. Brad Seiner, Belton Star Herald, Look Out Below: It’s all about capturing “that moment.” And you did it here. Probably should have played the photo a column bigger. If they’re good, run ’em big!

3. Mark Webber, Cass County Democrat-Missourian, Sweet Corn: Corny — in a fun way. All the elements make this one good, the corn in background, Cargill seed bag, cap, kid’s expression. It’s a feature photo, for sure. Nicely cropped, too.

HM. Dan Steinbeck, Canton Press-News Journal, Bull’s Eye: Good camera angle, nice timing. Just a lot in the photo that’s distracting, but still a good shot.

Class 2.

1. Anne Faltermeier, Liberty Tribune, Roller Derby: Really captures the spirit of the event. Striking color.

2. Jeanne Miller Wood, Washington Missourian, Lunar Eclipse: Tells the story; a real eye-catcher.

3. Susan Warden, Washington Missourian, Eye See You: The reader will be immediately drawn to this excellent photo.

HM. Ryan Prewitt, St. Charles Journal: The photo says it all. Nice contrast of smoke with dark background. Captures the essence of the story.

HM. Jeanne Miller Wood, Washington Missourian, Sun: (no judge's comment)

9. Best Photo Illustration

Class 1

1. Charlie Meeks, Lawrence County Record, Jake Hugs Cow: What a great photo. Great detail. Really shows the young man's connection with the animal. Draws the reader in. Warms the heart!

2. Matt Frye, Smithville Herald, Cheerios Girl: Strong impact. A real eye stopper. Makes the reader wonder what the connection is between the person featured and Cheerios.

3. Anna Faltermeier, Kearney Courier, Cross Country: Captures the isolation associated with long distance running. Good use of contrast.

HM. Jeff McNiell, Houston Herald, King of Swing: Really shows the process of hitting a baseball. Great reproduction, good manipulation.

Class 2

1. Michael Behrens, St. Louis Business Journal, Inbev Mugs: A clean sweep. Clearly the best, the most talented, the most creative. To rub it in, his "pressure keg" illustration probably worthy of honorable mention as well. All of it is good stuff and worthy of praise. Excellent work!

2. Michael Behrens, St. Louis Business Journal, Helicopter: (See above.)

3. Michael Behrens, St. Louis Business Journal, Heavy Hitters: (See above.)

9. Best News Photo

Class 1

1. Mark Webber, Cass County Democrat-Missourian, Garden City Blaze:

Firefighters, suffering and loss are captured in a moment this family will never forget.

2. Corey Noles, North Stoddard Countian, Weekend Fire: A lone fireman silhouetted against a raging inferno. The picture tells the story.

3. Karen Elshout, Missouri Lawyers Weekly, Trailblazer: Could have been a winner in several categories! The crop is fantastic. No doubt, the photographer had something in mind for the story.

Class 2

1. Diana Linsley, Webster-Kirkwood Times, Community Mourns: Very powerful picture that captures the emotion of the moment and a community's feeling. A picture is worth a thousand words.

2. Jeanne Miller Wood, Washington Missourian, Wounded Goose: Such a unique photo opportunity. This photo captures this judge's eye because of the goose and the arrow. Right place, right time.

3. Patrick Martin, Jefferson County Leader, Extrication: Excellent photo that shows real life happens with action and emotion and made me look deep into the photo.

9S-1. Best Sports Photo

1. Bill Hankins, Platte County Landmark, Contact: Great photo that captures the fast action of softball. This photo shows the determination and focus this athlete has on the ball. Great shot!

2. Kyle Wilson, Ozark Christian County Headliner, Tennis: There is just something about this photo that grabs this judges' attention. Maybe it's the angle coupled with the action and how high the player is off the ground. Great job!

3. Rob Viehman, Steelville Star, Stiff Arm: Great reproduction and clarity of this shot, it captures action and is simply a good sports photograph.

HM: Kyle Wilson, Ozark Christian County Headliner , Champions: (No comments.)

HM: Matt Daugherty, Kearney Courier, Baseball: (No comments.)

9S-2. Best Sports Photo

1. Bill Battle, Washington Missourian, DeFelice decks Darby: This picture wins because it captures a unique moment in sports – an umpire knocking down a player. The expression on the faces of both the umpire and the player draws readers in right away, and the cropping and composition are right on the money. The photo tells a story to readers all by itself, which is something every photographer is looking to do when he or she goes to a game that day.

2. Bill Battle, Washington Missourian, Acrobats of Post 218: The composition of this photo helps it stand apart from others. Three separate storylines – a player who overruns the ball, a player who falls down and a player who almost catches the ball – makes the photo entertaining.

3. Matt Frye, Gladstone Sun Tribune, Poor Shot: This picture gives readers a great shot of the emotions that come when a player misses a golf shot. The wincing expression of the eyes and the hand in the face make the shot entertaining. This possibly could have been even higher if it was cropped a little closer to the face.

HM Anna Faltermeier, Gladstone Sun Tribune, State Champ: This picture of a state champion is a good shot of the elation that comes with winning the title. The amount of “dead space” in the photo prevented it from getting a higher place. Other than the cropping issue, this is a strong shot.

HM Bill Battle, Washington Missourian, Miller makes diving catch: The expression on the softball player's face and the fact that the ball is almost in her glove make the picture a strong one. This picture would have placed higher if it were not for the other strong photos in the class.

10-1. Best Photo Package

1. Will Johnson, Gasconade County Republican, Owensville, Body Language: These expressions are priceless. Excellent photography!

2. Steve Fairchild, Lawrence County Record, Mt. Vernon, Waterful Time: Terrific speed on the part of the photographer. He knew when to snap the shutter.

3. Allen Edmonds, Belton Star Herald, Remembering Davis: The entire story is told in these photographs.

HM Anna Faltermeier, Kearney Courier, Horse Trainer: These are huge, beautiful photos – well cropped.

10-2. Best Photo Package

- 1. Mark Johnson, Sun Tribune, Gladstone, Storm Ravaged:** Great photos and captions. Good variety in photo choice and nice layout with photo placement and sizes.
 - 2. Matt Frye, Liberty Tribune, Grape Growing:** Only second place by a fraction. Great photos that make you want to read the story. Great use of lines and cropping in photos.
 - 3. Luke Waack, The Guidon, Fort Leonard Wood, 2008 Best Summer Comp.:** Very appealing photo package. Photos have good variety and depth. Captions are very informative. Photos and copy go well together.
- HM Matt Frye, Liberty Tribune, Herons return to hideout:** Very impressive photos. Clean looking photo package.
- HM Veronica Zucca, Cassville Democrat, Opening Day 2008:** What a fun page!

11A. Best Ad Idea or Promotion of an Advertiser

- 1. Linda Gillis, The Odessan, Odessa, Saluting those who served:** What a tribute! Everyone turning to this page will stop and take the time to read it.
- 2. Dan Schrieber, St. Louis Business Journal, JDRF:** The eyes and expressions on this baby take you right to the text.
- 3. Melissa Homer, Kearney Courier, Chris' Lawn Care:** Excellent balance to the ad. Very informative. Would have been extremely effective if it could have been in color.

11N. Best Ad Idea or Promotion of the Newspaper

- 1. Patrick Martin, Jefferson County Leader, Festus, Requester Campaign:** A great one-time promotion with a very large annual savings to your publication.
 - 2. Kevin Jones, St. Louis American, Diversity Calendar:** A promotion that has brought annual profit back to what was a low volume, low-profit issue.
 - 3. Matt Roberts, Nixa XPress, Request the Xpress:** Great series of ads and giveaways to promote your publication.
- HM. Washington Missourian (Weekend), Hot off the Press:** Nice special section showing past to present including a commitment to quality and the community.

12-1. Best News Content

- 1. Kearney Courier:** Local content throughout the paper. Topics important or interesting to community and good variety.
 - 2. Caruthersville Democrat-Argus:** Good local content and a variety of topics.
 - 3. Lawrence County Record, Mt. Vernon:** Excellent front pages. Local content is good.
- HM. Houston Herald:** Interesting local content.

12-2. Best News Content

- 1. Jefferson County Leader, Festus:** Great news stories and layout. Complete coverage of many activities and news stories on a wide variety of subjects. Stories are very well written.
- 2. Liberty Tribune:** Well-rounded news stories that are written well, and complete weekly coverage.
- 3. Washington Missourian (Wednesday):** Nice layout. Good stories with coverage of many communities.

13. Community Service

1. Washington Missourian, Book Buzz Literacy Project: Kudos! Impressive ongoing community project that brings together young people, families and your newspaper to make reading a fun and interactive activity. You've taken the Book Buzz template and expanded it to serve your community through photos, coverage and active involvement.

2. Gasconade County Republican, Owensville, Bill A. Jacob: Good investigative reporting and research brought this law enforcement abuse to light. The community was well served by your diligence through articles, photos and editorials.

3. St. Louis American, Salute to Excellence: Through your Salute to Excellence program your newspaper has established itself as a major anchor in your community to combine community involvement, individual achievement and inspiration in education to the forefront. Through special sections, photos, editorials and organization, your newspaper serves the community well!

HM. Washington Missourian, Family Reading Night: A great extension of your Book Buzz project! Again, bringing kids, parents and community together, with your newspaper playing an important role in the entire endeavor.

HM. Houston Herald: Welcome Center/Walking Trail: Your newspaper took a lead role in helping to revitalize and beautify your community while encouraging community interest and involvement in the project, too. Ongoing photos and publicity in your newspaper kept readers in the loop!

14-1. Best Editorial Page(s)

1. Lawrence County Record, Mt. Vernon: Here you find a fine editorial in each issue. Staff-written columns are well done. The total offering is clearly tops in this class.

2. Cass County Democrat-Missourian, Harrisonville: Strong editorial taking alderman to woodshed. They shaped up. Nicely done!

3. Platte County Landmark: Good Commentary. Fine mix of local columnists.

14-2. Best Editorial Page(s)

1. Gladstone Sun Gazette: Nice cross-section of opinions. Entertaining informative views with a good point-counterpoint on smoking ban. My particular favorite was Ray Weikal's "My Own MVP."

2. Liberty Tribune: I enjoyed Michael Westblade's work, both with this entry and the first-place Sun Gazette entry. Angie Borgedalen's strong column was hurt by typo in second paragraph. Good, driving column by Mark Johnson.

3. Kansas City Northeast News: Nice local-local touch with the newshound.

15-1. Best Sports Page(s)

1. Belton Star Herald: Mix of stories very good. Pictures and layout are superior. Headlines very good. Inside just as good as the front. Shorten your leads just a little.

2. Chris Geinosky, Kearney Courier: Solid layout and great mix of stories. Oct. 16 photo illustration very cool.

3. Warren County Record, Warrenton: Sept. 4 "Hail Yes" headline was awesome! Strong photos, good variety and good layout.

HM. Gasconade County Republican, Owensville: Solid layout and good leads. Johnson is a very strong writer.

15-2. Best Sports Page(s)

1. Liberty Tribune: Your variety of coverage and good writing helped you edge out a top-notch group of entries. The ‘Remember When’ pieces and ‘Game Changer’ commentaries help add perspective to a sports section. Good all-around coverage, nicely packaged!

2. Mike Terhaar, St. Louis American: Easily the most attractive and easy to read of the entries. Some nice features that add to any sports page. Just not as much variety of sports covered as the winner of the class. Calendar of events is nice, but what about a weekly scoreboard?

3. Washington Missourian (Weekend): Variety of coverage and package was a tad better, for me, than your Wednesday section. Nice photos, good copy, but some pages tend to be wordy and need art. Excellent pages in a tough class.

HM. Bill Knust, Sun Tribune, Gladstone: Tough to leave this entry out of the Top 3 and another judge may not have. It was that close. It’s an easy-to-read sports section with good photo’s and stories that are packaged well.

16-1. Best Sports News Story or Package

1. Brad Seiner, Houston Herald: It was very difficult to pick the best entry of the four submitted by Brad Seiner, as they all could have been the best. I finally decided ‘Coaching Carousel’ as it was more of a feature story than actual game as were most of the entries. I especially liked his leads to stories.

2. Bill Breshears, Bolivar Herald-Free Press: Each entry in the package proved that Bill Breshears is a fine sports writer. The “26 years in the making” was outstanding work. Keep up the good work!

3. Stephen Bubalo, Lee’s Summit Journal: All four of the entries in the package were good, but “Close to Perfect” was best. An added feature to this issue was the Year in Review in pictures. The reproduction of the two pictures could have been better – they were fuzzy. Keep up the good reporting!

16-2. Best Sports News Story or Package

1. Scott Tittrington, Sun Tribune, Gladstone, Best of the Best: A very nice package on Park University’s national championship. The writing is concise and clear. The author interviews a number of players and both stories contain anecdotes that fans watching the games wouldn’t have come across themselves. The column on Brett Ferguson worked very well with the more traditional game story. Good coverage.

2. Jerome Boettcher, Jefferson County Journal, Festus, Turning it all around: This was a good story on how programs can turn around losing streaks into winning traditions. The writer did a good job of interviewing many sources and showing how much work it takes to become a winning program. There were a few typographical errors, other than that it was an award-winning story.

3. Christopher Tritto, St. Louis Business Journal, Dome Challenged: An interesting look at the business angles surrounding the St. Louis Rams and the Edward Jones Dome. It provided readers with information from a wide rang of sources and showed the pros and cons of the decision to renovate the building. The accompanying graphics and sidebars provide interesting information as well.

HM. Kevin Goodwin, Liberty Tribune, Liberty awarded 2001 basketball title: The writer did a good job of taking the next step with this story and interviewing former players on their thoughts on winning a state title seven years later.

17-1. Best Sports Feature Story

1. Tim Schmidt, Warren County Record, Warrenton, Battle Tested: This story had a good, sharp and interesting lead that grabs the attention of readers. The story is also interesting when you find out how many saves the goalie made and how much she meant to her team.

2. Jake Singleton, Lee's Summit Journal, Follow the Leader: This story had a powerful subject and was a well-told feature, but a few mistakes in the lead and an ending that seemed to run on kept it from getting first place. The author does a good job of letting the coach and player tell the story from their own perspectives, and the subject matter makes it an interesting read. Tidy up the lead and shorten the ending and this becomes a first-place feature story.

3. Scott Tittington, Smithville Herald, Mane Attractions: The lead went a little long, but otherwise a well-done story that uses hair as a focal point for tying the players together. It took a little while to get to the main reason why the players are being featured – they are the top goal-scorers and assist-makers on an 18-1 team – but the overall quality was good. The writer also did a nice job of coming up with an ending to tie the story together.

HM. Chris Geinosky, Kearney Courier, Ultra Committed: This was a good story that gave readers insight into a sport many had likely never heard of. If it could have been fleshed out a little more with a little more background on each individual runner it could have worked its way into the top three. Overall though, a good job of going “off the beaten path” to find a story.

HM. Kyle Wilson, Christian County Headliner, Ozark, Chapin: The lead went a little long, but the writer did a good job of interviewing the player and several coaches for the story. It would have been interesting to hear from the school's head coach and possibly her parents: What is it like to watch your daughter hit that many home runs?

17-2. Best Sports Feature Story

1. Kevin Goodwin, Liberty Tribune, Making the Call: Good story about a part of sports that is so important but is seldom covered other than in our complaints.

2. Ryan Bowling, Nixa XPress, He Runs Away: Well written story about a rather bland kind of sport.

3. Bill Knust, Sun Tribune, Gladstone, Lacrosse gains steam: An interesting story about a sport we seldom see on our sports pages.

HM. Jerome Boettcher, News Democrat Journal, Undersized? Maybe but not undervalued: A well handled story.

HM. Kevin Kraus, Jefferson County Leader, Owl coach: Sports pages need stories about subjects other than the games.

18. Best Sports Column

- 1. Jeff Kessinger, Christian County Headliner News, Ozark:** Interesting, offbeat topics presented in fun, lively style. Length a definite plus. Makes this columnist a sure read for any reader – whether a sports freak or not. Well done!
 - 2. Brad Seiner, Star Herald, Belton:** Major courage points for no-holds-barred scolding of a surly wrestler. Writer shows his versatility with lighter topics, too. But for excess of length, this is a contender for the title. Write tighter, you'll gain readers.
 - 3. Scott Tittrington, Smithville Herald:** Easy to read, conversational style is a big plus. Especially enjoyed the repeating theme of “You want heart?”
- HM. Kevin Goodwin, Liberty Tribune:** Easy to read treatment of a variety of topics. This is a columnist I would read regularly.

19-1. Best Special Section

- 1. Bud Jones, The Odessan, Odessa, Graduation Edition:** Many newspapers have graduation issues, but yours was more complete than most. I especially liked the pictures when young, the placement of advertising, remember when page and senior personalities. What a marvelous keepsake.
- 2. Amy Brant and Paul Johns, Republic Monitor, Day Trippin':** There are many ideas and occasions for special sections, but ‘Day Trippin’” caught my eye as being unusual. I thought the make-up was outstanding.
- 3. North Stoddard Countian, Bloomfield, Unique People:** Honoring unique people was a wonderful idea and very good reading. It was easy to read the stories and not get the job of checking entries. Keep up the good work!

19-2. Best Special Section

- 1. Washington Missourian, Hot off the Press:** This commemorative special section was outstanding. Newspapers don't “blow their own horn” often enough. The front page was striking and made the reader want to continue reading. The Inside at the bottom of the page added to explain the inside reading. Overall the section was very impressive.
- 2. The Guidon, Ft. Leonard Wood, From Civilian to Soldier:** Not enough information is told about the military, and this section was great. I especially enjoyed the article entitled “Reception: Preparing for Prime Time.” This section would be very informative for the general public.
- 3. Jefferson County Leader, Festus, The Spirit of Herculaneum:** The four entries from Leader Publications were all good and very informative. They showed the top workmanship and promotion of the newspapers. It was very interesting reading. It mirrors the hard work of the staff.

20. Best Investigative Reporting

- 1. Ed Pruneau, Gregg Jones and Bill Miller, Jr., Washington Missourian, Posed as Federal Agent:** The top entry of Best Investigative Reporting proved department irregularities in the city of Gerald. There had been problems with alleged improper handling of evidence and hiring of police personnel not certified. The entry played a big part in cleaning up the mess.
- 2. Natalie Shelton, Angie Borgedalen and Ray Weikal, Liberty Tribune, School Scandal:** Four top-level school administrators had a no-receipt credit card culture with no

approval of the Board of Education and did not submit receipts. The entry spelled out the accusations and reported the problem to subscribers. The three reporters did a good job.

3. Linda Trest, Gasconade County Republican, Owensville, Fake Federal Agent: Staff writer tracked down leads and found enough information to convince editor and county sheriff that man was posing as a federal drug agent. The imposter worked GPD drug cases and reporter pursued story on own time. This was a great example of Investigative Reporting.

21. Best Local Business Coverage

1. St. Louis Business Journal: Very wide variety of stories and excellent use of graphics, charts, etc. Pleasing layouts.

2. Washington Missourian (Wednesday): A variety of stories and themes. Nice presentation.

3. Houston Herald: A good number of business stories with local impact.

HM. Webster-Kirkwood Times: Good local coverage.

HM. Washington Missourian (Weekend): Good local coverage.

22-1. Best Business Story

1. Allen Edmonds, The Star Herald, Belton, Blight to Bloom: Very well written and thorough. Story takes the reader inside the “closed doors” to learn a bit about negotiations involved in economic development.

2. Heather Cole, Missouri Lawyer’s Weekly, St. Louis, He Sued, She Sued: This story really grows on you and there is substance and documentation. A very good piece of reporting – could have easily been first place.

3. Donna Walter, Missouri Lawyer’s Weekly, St. Louis, Shut Out: A very good story that took time and effort in backgrounding. Excellent reporting.

HM. Mary Kay Morrow, Jackson County Advocate, Grandview, Proven Abilities: Excellent topic. This was a very strong class of entries. Maybe could have used graphics a little on the jump to break up the grey.

HM. Kathy Crawford, Smithville Herald, Local dealerships react: Good connection of a national topic with local impact.

22-2. Best Business Story

1. Lisa R. Brown, St. Louis Business Journal, Steffen’s Pyramid crumbles: Writing covers all details of story from original failed plans to current status of properties involved. Story is of great significance for a large number of people from investors to local workers and residents.

2. Michael Westblade, Sun Gazette, Gladstone, KCI shrugs off losses: Writing takes you from airport at its best to current day and future plans to stay in business. Story is significant in letting people know the airport plans to remain open for a very long time.

3. Karen Cernich, Washington Missourian, Better Insulator: Story covers the changing of times. The world-wide interest in going GREEN and how a local business is turning this into a successful business.

23. Best Coverage of Government

- 1. The Star Herald, Belton, Aquila:** Great information throughout the series. Solid attempt to explain all sides of the issue. Especially helpful was the piece on campaign contributions. Opinion pieces throughout were of added value to readers.
 - 2. Smithville Herald, Fire district election:** Great background to explain the issue. The Q&A was a good addition to the coverage. Follow up on election was good, too.
- HM. Sun Tribune, Gladstone, Gladstone smoking ban:** Good job of explaining beyond the usual council members. Solid information throughout.

24. Best Story about Rural Life or Agriculture

- 1. Ashley Vasquez, Smithville Herald, Breaking down barriers:** This one rose to the top. Erin's character and personality are shown well in the writer's words.
 - 2. Shawn Clubb, Southwest City Journal, St. Louis, Biofuel Buffs:** Great lead paragraphs – this subject has a lot of currency in today's "green" world.
 - 3. Sarah Whitney, Warrenton Journal, Country Eatin':** Nicely executed story about a worthy organization. Not your typical ag story.
- HM. Arthur McGregor, Jackson County Advocate, Grandview, Blowing in the Wind:** Good job of localizing a topic of national interest.
- HM. Natalie Shelton, Liberty Tribune, Giving Back:** Gives a personal face to conservation – great details about the process and the couple.

25. Best Story about Religion

- 1. Chris Campbell, Jefferson County Journal, St. Louis, One hundred minutes of solitude:** Powerful writing that draws the reader in. Captivating. It makes me want to go to the Hermitage, too.
 - 2. Don Corrigan, Webster-Kirkwood Times, Home in Belfast:** Interesting writing. The situation is described in a way that makes it inspiring.
 - 3. Ray Weikal, Sun Tribune, Gladstone, God incense icons:** The description of the services put a picture in my mind. This made the article stronger.
- HM. Karen Cernich, Washington Missourian (Weekend), Share, plant seeds:** you started by describing a normal American from anywhere – with dreams and different directions. Then you link that everyman image to something extraordinary.

26. Best Story about Education

- 1. Allison Retka & Sylvia Hsieh, Missouri Lawyers Weekly, St. Louis, LSAT Exception:** An in-depth look made clear through concise writing and well-chosen quotations at an unfamiliar and potentially divisive topic. The writers covered the issue fairly with many voices sounding off on the issue of the LSAT.
 - 2. Emily Hoffman, Christian County Headliner, Ozark, Bleak Forecast:** Engaging writing – kept me interested in the story from beginning to end. Good use of quotations from school administrators.
 - 3. Ray Weikal, Sun Tribune, Gladstone, Making it work:** Great lead and interesting topic – sheds light on an educational experience that could be misunderstood as "play time." Writer emphasizes a clear educational focus.
- HM. Ray Weikal, Sun Gazette, Gladstone, Financial aid jungle:** Lyrical writing and individual focus gives a face to a sometimes "heavy" topic.

HM. Brett Dalton, Lee's Summit Journal, Do the Math: Engaging accounts of one student's exceptional accomplishment. Writing is light and humorous all the way to the end.

27. Best Story about the Outdoors

1. Don Corrigan, Webster-Kirkwood Times, Restoring the River des Peres: Fine story of an ailing waterway and the public's attempt to heal it – great 'call to action.'

2. Chris Campbell, Jefferson County Journal, St. Louis, Danger: Flying Fish: Who knew!?! Element of surprise "hooked" me on this fish story. The background and statistics solid and "reeled me in!"

3. Mary Shapiro, Chesterfield Journal, St. Louis, Watch your Step: Nice job explaining how wildlife can be a nuisance. Good graphic really caught my eye.

HM. Carrie Alexander, Kearney Courier, Gone to the Birds: Simple, effective and a good reminder that birdwatchers bring in sizeable revenue.

28-1 Best Story about History

1. Kathy Richardson, Houston Herald, Charivaris: The writer took a subject that is part of every community's history and developed it very well. She found people who remembered very interesting and humorous incidents to enhance her story.

2. Sue Ann Luna Jones, Ozark County Times, Gainesville, Great Depression: Economic conditions this year have brought back the topic of the great depression all over the country. The writer of this story developed the history of the subject in her community very well with a number of comments from local people who had examples of how local residents were affected.

3. Amelia Wigton, Christian County Headliner, Ozark, Hatfields-McCoys: Maybe the entry benefited from having a very interesting subject that everyone has heard. But, it was simply a story that caught your attention and her writing carried you through to the end.

HM. Mark Webber, Cass County Democrat-Missourian, Harrisonville, Memorial Day Mystery: The story carried a present-day question back into history and you had to keep reading it to the end.

HM. Richard Jackoway, Missouri Lawyers Weekly, St. Louis, Compliment or Insult?: This newspaper isn't an ordinary community newspaper but the writer took a subject that might be familiar to nearly everyone and really developed it. It was very well written.

28-2. Best Story about History

1. St. Louis American, 80th Anniversary: Well done special section outlining newspaper's history and its relevance to the community. Well-done stories. Happy Anniversary!

2. Fran Mannino, Webster-Kirkwood Times, Tuskegee Airmen: Very well done story on a remarkable airman. Great visuals, good history and wonderful quotes.

3. Ray Weikal, Sun Tribune, Gladstone, Elite Ranger Unit: The best among a number of entries focusing on Vietnam vets. Good lead – really captures the bond between brothers.

HM. Jim Merkel, Southside Journal, St. Louis, Yogi made it big: The direct quotes from Yogi's sister helped make what could have been a dry piece really come to life. Nice job on a historical figure.

29. Best Coverage of Family Living & Young People

1. Washington Missourian: A wide variety of family and youth coverage across many activities and age groups. Nice mix of feature articles, photos and news provides reader with community information and involvement.

2. Tammy Witherspoon, Eldon Advertiser: A wide variety of coverage across many activities and age groups. Good mix of photos, feature articles and community information.

3. Kearney Courier: Variety of coverage across activities and age groups through mix of photos and community information.

HM. Kalen Ponche, St. Charles Journal, St. Louis: Variety of feature articles written by, and for, youth. Community and youth involvement through their writing participation and special section devoted to youth.

HM. The Guidon, Fort Leonard Wood: Nice feature articles across variety of community topics.

30. Best Page Design

1. The Guidon, Fort Leonard Wood, Rediscovering Route 66: The inset photo at/of ?? Route 66 work great with the road sign and the arrow. Very eye-catching layout that prompted me to want to read more. Great job!

2. Melissa Cooley, Sun Tribune, Gladstone, Home of History: Simple yet effective. I'm really not a fan of white text, but it works well here. The top photo and Home of History headline lead me right into the story. Very well done!

3. Amelia Wigton, Christian County Headliner, Ozark, Change is here: This was a unique way to mark Obama's presidential win by adding some local flavor. Nice job of taking your local photos and interspersing them with Obama quotes.

HM. Melissa Cooley, Smithville Herald, Cheerios Cover Girl: Neat story and I like the way you promoted it with the Cheerio's instead of O's and the cover girl's face surrounded by Cheerios boxes.

HM. Rollie Skinner, Bolivar Herald-Free Press, Timeline: Neat way of connecting events 50-some years apart. It made for a compelling read. Very well designed.

31. Best Information Graphic

1. Michael Behrens, St. Louis Business Journal: Great use of a well-known board game – revised to fit hand-in-hand with what the story is telling, including pyramids for properties.

2. Michael Behrens, St. Louis Business Journal: Graphic fit the time of year along with the color use of green for profit and red for loss.

3. Anna Faltermeier, Jared Hoffman and Kathleen McCabe, Sun Gazette, Gladstone: Good use of local landmarks and points of interest.

HM. Michael Behrens, St. Louis Business Journal: Nice use of baseball bat graphic as a timeline to fit with story.

32. Best Editorial Cartoon

1. Mike Gempeler, Lee's Summit Journal, Feelin' Kinda Naked: Easily and quickly makes his point. Labels are accurate. Not overly ironic.

2. Kathy Richardson, Houston Herald, China's Medals: Symbolism is good and self-explanatory. Good computer work to get contrast in blacks and whites.

3. Judy Dixon, Jefferson County Leader, Festus, Chuck the Flipper: Bold message without a cheap shot. Relevant to geographic area. Clearly and openly expresses an opinion.

HM. Judy Dixon, Jefferson County Leader, Festus, Don't Give in to Fear: The exaggeration grips you. Just enough clutter in the drawing.

HM. Mike Gempeler, Lee's Summit Journal, Dangerous Dog: The analogy is bold and hopefully expresses the situation in a different light. Labeling is good.

33. Best Newspaper In Education Program

1. Washington Missourian: In stiff competition, this entry is impressive in scope and presentation. Extensive staff participation is notable.

2. Renee Spaar, The Odessan, Odessa: The range and focus of subject matter make this entry an extremely strong second.

3. Eldon Advertiser: This entry evoked strong support from teachers. All competing in the contest deserve a "nicely done."

34. Best Online Newspaper or Web site

1. Houston Herald: Good! Easy to navigate, clean, clear and crisp.

2. Dwight Bitikofer, Webster-Kirkwood Times: Nice easy flow.

3. Vandalia Leader: Nice – easy to understand.

35. Best Headline Writing

1. Missouri Lawyers Weekly, St. Louis: The best of the bunch. "Ad Wars" strong. "Natural Selection" and "Have Gavel, Will Travel" cemented first place.

2. Southside Journal, St. Louis: Boxing feature buoyed this entry.

3. The Star Herald, Belton: "Blight to Boom" stood out among some nondescript headlines and cemented third place.

DAILIES

36. General Excellence

Class 1

1. Nevada Daily Mail: A very attractive newspaper. This paper won the class easily. This paper displays all the characteristics a good newspaper should have such as its treatment of photos, advertising, layout, sports & editorial pages, etc. Great paper!

2. Boonville Daily News: A clean and easy-to-read newspaper with good photos, layout, legals, sports & front page. Good use of color also makes this paper stand out in the class.

3. Richmond Daily News: A nice clean-looking newspaper with a good mix of advertising and news. Good use of photos and headlines makes this paper an eye-appealing, readable paper with lots of information for the community.

Class 2

- 1. Neosho Daily News:** Good writing and overall scope of news made you the winner. You're a daily, but you are a strong local paper with more local content. Editorial page helped also. Strong paper.
- 2. Camdenton Lake Sun:** A close call between first and second in this class. This is a quality paper with strong local stories, content.
- 3. Fulton Sun:** Strong paper, just not as much local news as others, especially local opinions on Ed page. Photos are good, but need more of them on some pages. Some good local stories discuss issues well.

Class 3

- 1. Columbia Missourian:** Wow...strong local coverage and high percentage of content is locally driven. Excellent photos, layout, creativity. Delivers a solid news punch. Election night coverage superb. Weekend edition is impressive.
- 2. Sedalia Democrat:** Excellent paper, front to back. Presentation of stories and photos pulls reader in, and writing keeps them in. Interesting feature too (Wii games, "Let it Roll"). Nice Headlines.
- 3. Lebanon Daily Record:** What, no opinion page? It would add to a good local paper. Like your Outdoor & Ag pages – those are important to your readers. Solid front page, stories & photos.

Class 4

- 1. St. Louis Post-Dispatch:** Good work on breaking news like city council and presidential election. The entire paper is chock-full of news, much more than you'll find on TV and radio.
- 2. Kansas City Star:** Wow. There is a lot of news packed into this paper. Each section had numerous stories worth reading and the page design is excellent. A lot of thought put into these pages.
- 3. St. Joseph News-Press:** Well-designed newspaper that is organized well. Emphasis is put on more than just the front and sports pages, and that should be commended.

37. Best Newspaper Design

Class 1

- 1. Neosho Daily News:** Excellent layout, the front page stories make you want to open the paper for more.
- 2. Dexter Daily Statesman:** This is a clean design with large pictures, easy to read.
- 3. Boonville Daily News:** Almost all the photos in the three editions were posed, making the paper a bit boring. Though the paper was easy to read and easy to follow.

Class 2

- 1. Jefferson City News Tribune:** Like the centered **headlines, gives your eyes a rest with white space. Excellent color photos.**
- 2. Kansas City Star:** Great use of graphics in articles. Well organized and nice looking pages. Use of all caps on some articles questionable.
- 3. St. Joseph News-Press:** Most pages look very nice.

HM. St. Louis Post-Dispatch: Not sure the light face headlines match the bold introductions to the stories.

HM. Joplin Globe: Excellent sports pages. Pages were defined and easy to read. Watch runover of one to two lines on top of next column over 8-inch column height.

38. Best Front Page

Class 1

1. Neosho Daily News: Tornado front page is eye-catching. The “Devastation” headline has great impact. Good all-around coverage on the tornado aftermath. Good use of dominant photos and I like the typefaces you use. Good job!

2. Lebanon Daily Record: Good mix of stories, from breaking news to feature stories. Good use of photos. All three designs had a story going across the top. Try to vary where the main story goes instead of across the top.

3. Debbie Lack, Dexter Daily Statesman: Lots to see above the fold, with several things that catch the readers’ eyes. Good use of dominant photos and differing headline sizes.

Class 2

1. Kansas City Star: I like the various page designs. All of them worked. You had dominant use of U.S. map and photo illustration with a good mix of stories on the page.

2. Independence/Blue Springs Examiner: You did a bang-up job on the David Cook coverage. Good job of localizing the story of the hometown boy turned rock star. The “He Did It!” page was exceptional with photos and you did something out of the ordinary with the design. **3. St. Joseph News-Press:** Good mix of stories on the page with dominant photo and effective headlines.

3rd. St. Joseph News-Press: Good mix of stories on the page with dominant photos and effective headlines.

HM. St. Louis Post-Dispatch: Good mix of stories but nothing really jumps out design-wise.

HM. Sedalia Democrat: Good photos, especially the kids and the balloon.

39. Best News Story

Class 1

1. Joyce L. Miller, Camdenton Lake Sun, Change tour: I liked your lead and your writing flows very easily. It’s great to hear what those in attendance thought about Obama’s visit rather than campaign rhetoric.

2. Katherine Cummins, Fulton Sun, Emergency response: You set the scene well and told the story in a manner that conveyed the adrenaline of the situation. Good interviews from those involved. Writing stands out. Timeline was a plus.

3. Noreen Hyslop, Dexter Daily Statesman, Missouri loses leader: Very nice piece about a man who obviously made an impact on the state. Reporter’s words painted nice picture of him. Obvious reporter knew him, which added to the story.

HM. Angela Riley, Heather Cole, Donna Walter and Richard Jackoway, St. Louis Daily Record, Hunt for bomber: Writing is strong and tells the story well. Good personal information on victim, which makes story more readable.

HM. Staff, Neosho Daily News, Day after storm: Amazing amount of stories for a small daily. Told story from many angles. Wish writing was stronger, though.

Class 2

1. Kate Schuman, Columbia Missourian, Pay now: Quality of writing is superb. Reporting is thorough. Water issues can be complex and complicated unless written and presented in ways that most readers can easily decipher. Kate Schuman deserves a lot of credit and praise for the work she did on this issue.

2. Annelise Searle, Columbia Missourian, In memory: It's tough to stop reading this once you start even though it's long. This is a really powerful story that illustrates that sometimes good results come from a tragedy.

3. Sean Sposito, Matt Harris and Isabelle Roughol, Columbia Missourian, Salvaging the past: Nice job of reporting, writing and covering a big story from all angles in order to empower readers with information.

Class 3

1. John Shultz and Karen Dillon, Kansas City Star, Spelling Bee glitch: A very well written series of articles on a regional spelling bee champion's battle to remain eligible for the national bee. The leads of the stories were good, there was a lot of information from various sources and anecdotes from parents that gave the story a personal touch. It kept me reading until the final sentence.

2. Staff, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Kirkwood shootings: The coverage of the Kirkwood shootings was a wonderful example of solid journalism. Having quotes and reactions from eye-witnesses gave readers the feeling of being in the city hall when the incident happened, and there was a great deal of information on who the shooter was and why he might have done this. Well done.

3. Hugh Welsh, Independence Examiner, Trapped in paradise: This was a good piece of journalism that used a personal story to shed more light on immigration issues. The story used a wide variety of sources to build a compelling story that was very interesting.

HM. Greg Grisolano, Joplin Globe, Pittsburg skirts controversy: This was a fascinating look at how this business impacts Pittsburg residents. It included many sources and was an interesting piece of journalism on a topic that normally doesn't make the front page of newspapers.

HM. Joe Mahr and Jeremy Kohler, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Deals draw questions: A well-done piece of journalism on how the police chief may be steering business to those he knows. It seemed more like an investigative category story rather than one for a news category.

40. Best Feature Story

Class 1

1. Julia M. Johnson, St. Louis Daily Record, Armed with Shakespeare: What a wonderful story – well told! Tons of first person and excellent background on an unlikely program. Clearly the best of this bunch. Congratulations. Exceptional work.

2. Deanna Wheeler, Camdenton Lake Sun, Navarro searches: Very intimate “inside” treatment of a young man's struggle to find a life he can “live” with. Writer did a nice job

of disarming the subject's natural defenses. You can't help but hope Navarro finds his way.

3. Katherine Cummins, Fulton Sun, Grandma Juanita: Nice crisp bang, bang, bang lead to get us started. Right away we must know more. Animated photo really enhances the package. I've never met this lady, yet she almost seems like a friend. Very enjoyable.

HM. Charis Patires, Camdenton Lake Sun, Twenty miles: Loved the lead and the length; make for a very good read. Writer lets the story's subject tell it in his own words. Nicely done.

HM. Chris Waller, Fulton Sun, Community gathers: Nice crisp lead. Sad story well told. One of those heart grabbers that draws the reader in and holds him. I hope the news is good for Zac.

Class 2

1. Stephanie Detillier, Columbia Missourian, Behavior management: Wow, made me want to read more, you worked the human side of such a sensitive subject to a place of understanding for the reader.

2. Sarah Nail, Sedalia Democrat, She's back: Great story, you presented the human side with the facts that helped you connect with the girl and her family.

3. Tim Lloyd, Columbia Missourian, Re-enlist: You took a subject many don't like to talk about and made it easy to read and it showed compassion at the same time as showing facts.

HM. Catherine Pearson, Columbia Missourian, Lifetime of waiting: Great story.

HM. Matt Harris, Columbia Missourian, Back-to-Basics: Great story.

Class 3

1. Michele Munz, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Caretakers: Great mix of information, facts and personal stories. The article reads easily and flows from beginning to end. Very interesting.

2. Melissa Dunson, Joplin Globe, Life-saving gift: Took on a national problem through multiple personal stories. Looked at many different aspects of the issues.

3. Terry Ganey, Columbia Daily Tribune, Couple's struggle: Pulled the reader into the story. Great personal story to spotlight a state and national issue.

HM. Elizabeth Holland, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Survivor travels: A real tear-jerker.

HM. Steve Paul, Kansas City Star, Finding voice: Great local-interest story.

41. Best News or Feature Series

1. Eric Adler, Kansas City Star, Jessica's Trial: Absolutely, writing at its best. Mr. Adler took me and other readers beyond the courtroom and deep into the life and heartache of Jessica – and all other children who have become victims of sexual abuse. The illustrations and photos were good, as well. Series ran smoothly and the final line in four edition was masterful!

2. Staff, Independence/Blue Springs Examiner, Shades of Green: It was nice to see the use of "man on the street" in a daily newspaper. Good way to get faces and names of regular readers in the paper. This series was so full of useful information that anyone in the country could benefit. The layout was consistently amazing – so eye-friendly. The

Q&As were a nice added touch. Way to go for involving numerous reporters in this series!

3. Joe Mahr, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Free to flee: Joe Mahr opened the eyes of many readers with this series to the issue he addressed. The layout was fantastic. An inside bar detailing the reporting process was just fascinating! Added credibility to the story. The mug shots of the criminals and information was extremely effective and necessary. Just such a fantastic series that brought a major criminal justice flaw to light.

HM. Sarah Nail, Sedalia Democrat, Katy Trail: First-person series was unique and fun. The informative piece about the art of bike riding was original among this year's entries. Readers learned a great deal about a small portion of the state of Missouri and about a local report. Sarah's respect for the Katy Trail was very obvious. Thanks for providing an upbeat read. This series was also a great tool to interact with readers.

HM. Staff, Joplin Globe, Deadly storms: Photographs are wonderful and tell a lot about the grief of the community members. Great regional coverage and what appears to be a good use of web. The May 13 edition page guides were a nice touch, perfect location. All of the articles provide great detail and what assistance was available to victims. Overall the series captured the storm well.

42. Best Editorial

Class 1

1. Fulton Sun, Funeral chapel: Don't know if this persuaded those in authority to close this business, but the opinion of the newspaper certainly wasn't going to help the chapel's cause for more business. Pretty strong position taken by this newspaper, showing its mighty power.

2. Neosho Daily News, FEMA: Very well written. Newspaper made a strong argument why FEMA needs to help much more than it wants so the community can rebuild.

3. Warrensburg Daily Star-Journal, Beyond justice: Strong position on a highly emotional issue. This had to generate a lot of discussion.

HM. Neosho Daily News, This shall pass: Sometimes newspapers play the role of cheerleader, trying to boost spirits when things go wrong or bad. This piece does just that.

Class 2

1. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Balancing PSC: This was well written and well understood by the writer.

2. Jefferson City News Tribune, TDD's need scrutiny: (no comments written)

3. Kansas City Star, In a funk: (no comments written)

43. Best Columnist, Serious

1. E. Thomas McClanahan, Kansas City Star: Well-informed, well-thought-out; opinions stated clearly. Interesting from first to last sentence.

2. Carol Stark, The Joplin Globe: Columnist is obviously familiar with her community and sensitive to its issues.

3. Aisha Sultan, St. Louis Post-Dispatch: Takes ordinary life and creates interesting and thought-provoking articles.

HM. T.J. Greaney, Columbia Daily Tribune: (no judge's comments)

HM. Nancy Vessell, Jefferson City News Tribune: (no judge's comments)

43. Best Columnist, Humorous

1. Barbara Shelly, The Kansas City Star: Good use of humor to express a personal opinion. This column made me mad, smile and thirsty. Thanks for the laugh as we all cry in our beer.

2. Mike Pound, The Joplin Globe: My favorite line: “Instead of telling me how happy my money was, the 401(k) people told me that sometimes money can get sad.” From there, it just got better. Thanks for the laugh.

3. Sandy Turner, The Examiner: Life experiences can be funny at times, as is the case in this nicely done column about home-sitting for family.

44. Best Feature Photo

Class 1

1. Justin Kelly, Fulton Sun, Fair Weather: To capture this photo without blurriness is a job well done. I get the feeling of motion without having an unfocused photo. The light and dark contrast is excellent and great to look at.

2. Jack Ventimiglia, Warrensburg Daily Star-Journal, Wipeout: This photo tells a story without using any words at all. Capturing the joy on the rider’s face will make anyone smile.

3. Justin Kelley, Fulton Sun, Friend Like You: This photo was striking, but in a very simple way. One can feel the emotion and connection between the rider and the horse, which is a very tough thing to capture in a photo. Very calming image.

HM. Rick Rogers, Neosho Daily News, Fun at Fair: (no judge’s comments)

HM. Brady Shoemaker, Lebanon Daily Record, Cross He Bears: (no judge’s comments)

Class 2

1. Mike Ransdell, Kansas City Star, Driving Dogs: You can’t help but laugh when you first see this photo. Seeing this photo puts a smile on everyone’s face and brightens your day. This was a tough category. Lots of good entries. Certainly no losers among the top 4. To win this category says a lot about this photo.

2. Robert Cohen, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Brush-Up: This is a nice photo taken at just the right time. Good composition. Photographer has a good eye.

3. Sydney Brink, Sedalia Democrat, Better Not Cry: In life, there is laughter and sadness. You get a lot of both in this photo. A great photo for Hermanson’s scrapbook. I’m sure a lot of readers enjoyed it and was probably a topic of conversation.

HM. Allison Long, Kansas City Star, Reading Dog: Feel bad about this one only getting honorable mention, which only shows how strong the competition was.

44. Best Photo Illustration

Class 1

1. Dennis Sharkey, Richmond Daily News, Gambling With Education: Photo leads you directly into the story. There is no question what the story is about.

2. Jason Hunsicker, Kirksville Daily Express, Wanted: Very catchy photo for the subject.

Class 2

1. Laurie Skrivan, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Going Green: A lot of thought, time and energy went into creating this photo illustration, which truly catches the reader's attention.

2. Chris Ochsner, Kansas City Star, Financial Storm: The photo illustration sums up the feelings of most Americans at this juncture in their lives.

3. Jim Dyke, Jefferson City News Tribune, Add Water: Wow! This illustration makes you think! A great idea to get the point across.

HM. Tasha Fabela, Jonas and Jennifer Hack, Kansas City Star, Look Back at 2008: (no judge's comment)

HM. Parker Eschelman, Columbia Daily Tribune, First and Ten: (no judge's comment)

44. Best News Photo

Class 1

1. J.C. Ventimiglia, Warrensburg Daily Star-Journal, Getting Help: The photographer lets everyone see what extrication can look like from up close. Nice tight crop. Well done.

2. Corey Noles, Dexter Daily Statesman, Bloomfield Fire: The silhouetted fireman in combination with some remaining detail in the burning building make this one grab the eye.

3. Justin Kelley, Fulton Sun, Police Kosovo: Off to war is the immediate message. Composition and crop make this one stand out.

HM. Ken York, Lebanon Daily Record, Redwing Fire: Nice crop and composition. If I could I would move the photographer closer to the firemen.

HM. Mike McCoy, Dexter Daily Statesman, Bus Crash: At least 15 people in motion at the scene of everyone's nightmare — a school bus crash. Wouldn't it be dramatic with the top third cropped off and the image printed across the full width of the page?

Class 2

1. Don Shrubshell, Columbia Daily Tribune, Trailer Fire: A quiet, personal moment that tugs the heart. Exposure, crop and composition all excellent. Burly fireman kneeling to chat with emotional victim is compelling. Nice job!

2. Eric Keith, St. Joseph News-Press, Apartment Fire: Photographer waded right into this dramatic scene — and took us with him.

3. Robert Cohen, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Ike's Remains: Six faces and we can read them all. Not easily done in circumstances like this. Huge hand gently holding the baby caught my eye.

HM. Eric Keith, St. Joseph News-Press, Tornado: A great job of being there when it happened. In this case literally.

HM. Julie Smith, Jefferson City News Tribune, Tires Deflated: It's not easy to come up with a grabber when the assignment is deflated tires, but Smith pulled it off wonderfully. No emotion or enterprize, but if there was an award for technical merit this would win first place. Great image to just look at!

44. Best Sports Photo

Class 1

- 1. Boonville Daily News, Pirates Sweep:** Focus and background both dead on. Suspended ball says this photographer got the frozen moment. The wonderful face and that mouthful of braces put this one over the top. Well done.
 - 2. Justin Kelley, Fulton Sun, Tigers:** Focus and an uncluttered background get this image off to a great start. The peak action moment of one player sliding beneath another takes it up a notch. Very nice and cropped just right.
 - 3. Justin Kelley, Fulton Sun, Lady Hornets:** Emotion is obvious in this image. Even those with backs to the camera convey the message. A moment these kids will have forever thanks to the photographer's skill and planning.
- HM. Justin Kelly, Fulton Sun, Timely Hitting:** The catcher's expression and the flying dirt tell the tale. Background distractions don't help this shot.

Class 2.

- 1. Rich Sugg, Kansas City Star, UNC TKO:** Not a big fan of superimposed elements over photos, but if there's blame it doesn't rest with the photographer. Five wonderful faces caught at the instant of peak action. Great crop makes this image all it can be. Congratulations!
 - 2. Catalin Abagiu, Columbia Missourian, Them Tigers:** Wonderful rendered moment of quiet, personal bliss in the midst of complete chaos. Image cries out "How sweet it is!"
 - 3. John Slezzer, Kansas City Star, Hitting the Wall:** No margin for error to get this shot. A striking image.
- HM. Keith Myers, Kansas City Star, Trampoline:** Compelling image. An immediate eye-grabber. Great crop.
- HM. David Eulitt, Kansas City Star, Olympic Ball:** This category is loaded with first-class photos and this is certainly among the best. Nice crop. Great faces. Wish it had run about three times as large.

45. Best Photo Package

Class 1

- 1. Neosho Daily News, Day After Storm:** Dramatic photos capturing the aftermath of a devastating tornado. Great storm photo along with the emotion that goes along with losing everything. Great layout helped make this a favorite in the class.
 - 2. Richmond Daily News, Cleaners Fire:** Excellent photography from all different angles. Very good use of color to accent the fire, smoke, flames and water. Good job!
 - 3. Rick Rogers, Neosho Daily News, Fishing Fun:** Love the layout of this photo page. Great mix of angles and photos that made this a great photo page.
- HM. Justin Kelley, Fulton Sun, Circus:** (no judge's comments)

Class 2

- 1. Robert Cohen, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Never Alone:** These photos show total emotion. They tell the story. You would not have needed a headline, cutline or story; the pictures tell it all.
- 2. Mike Pittman, Columbia Missourian, Vineyard to Table:** Clean, crisp and unique.
- 3. Springfield News-Leader, Flooding:** (no judge's comments)

46. Best Ad Idea for an Advertiser

1. Mike Davis, Marshall Democrat-News, Progress: Very eye catching and creative ad. The use of graphics, photos, colors makes this ad stand out in the class. Very informative ad with creative layout.

2. Robin Langdon, Kansas City Star, The Spark: Great ad layout. The cover makes you want to look and read about the event. The mix of stories, ads and graphics makes this a great promotional tool.

3. Jennifer Vanderpool and Nathan Fleischmann, Columbia Daily Tribune, Roots & Blues: Love the cover of this promotional advertisement. The use of color and graphics makes this a top-notch choice in the class.

HM. Shelly Arth, Marshall Democrat-News, Thumbs Up: (no judge's comments)

HM. Columbia Missourian, Homecoming: (no judge's comments)

46. Best Ad Idea for the Newspaper

1. Linda Hoys and Nathan Fleischmann, Columbia Daily Tribune, Smart Gifts: Campaign covers all areas of the paper so each customer can see why he or she would want to buy a subscription.

2. Mitzi St. John and Nathan Fleischman, Columbia Daily Tribune, Providence Bowl: Rack card lets buyers know your special pages are coming out. Showing your colors at the game gets customers to promote your paper to others at a public event.

3. Nathan Fleischmann, Columbia Daily Tribune, Summer Savings: A mailer that gets customers' attention.

47. Best News Content

Class 1

1. Neosho Daily News: Good reporting combined with good writing equal a fine product. This judge likes the bylined news and feature stories. Good photos and attractive layouts invite readership.

2. Camdenton Lake Sun: This fine newspaper performs its mission well. Lake of the Ozarks issues are covered in a readable fashion. A nicely done package for readers.

3. Lebanon Daily Record: Good coverage of local events, bad and good. Provide a fine record for readers and historians.

Class 2

1. St. Louis Post-Dispatch: The Arch and McGuire pieces were excellent. The McGuire stuff was fascinating. I can't imagine the amount of work put in on this. Lots of local news throughout the paper and not just breaking news. Several enterprise pieces tip the tide in Post-Dispatch's favor.

2. Kansas City Star: Good mix of news in the entire paper. This was very difficult to pick between this and first place. Good enterprise pieces (like Murder's Big Month).

3. Columbia Daily Tribune: Lots of news in this paper — an explosion, injury to the county attorney, flooding — all good reads. Well done.

HM. Joplin Globe: Good mix of stories throughout the paper.

48. Community Service

1. Brad Cooper and Jeffrey Spivak, Kansas City Star, Light Rail: In-depth series does a good job of sorting through a complex issue. Photos and graphics keep reader engaged. The community involvement, through their voices at the polls, came full circle through diligent reporting.

2. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Towing Scandal: Sustained watchdog reporting uncovered government abuse and cover-up through in-depth investigative work. Good community involvement by including many personal experiences, as well as feedback on your website.

3. Jeffrey Spivak and Kevin Collison, Kansas City Star, Long Road Back: In-depth, covering a wide range of criteria, yet interesting and informative for the reader without getting too bogged down in numbers. Good use of graphics to help explain the numbers.

HM. Independence Examiner, Shades of Green: Great use of the “green” color and theme to tie the series together. Use of photos and graphics keeps the reader engaged. Covered a broad range of “green” topics with lots of community involvement.

49. Best Editorial Page

Class 1

1. Neosho Daily News: Superb layout and design. Good content, presented in an attractive package. Very well done.

2. Camdenton Lake Sun: Nothing terribly compelling. Typo in lift quote of publisher’s introductory column.

Class 2

1. Kansas City Star: Good layout, effective color photos to pull the reader into the articles. Nice blend of local columnists and guest writers provide effective blend of views.

2. St. Joseph News-Press: Coverage of financial recovery bill separated 2nd and 3rd. The local opinion poll is good, but it should focus on folks who actually have opinions.

3. St. Louis Post-Dispatch: Content is good, especially Kevin Horrigan’s columns, but three of the pages lacked sufficient artwork. Readers need more “hooks” to pull them to a column.

50. Best Sports Page

Class 1

1. Cody Thorn, Neosho Daily News: Great sports pages, section. Has a mix of photography with stories, good use of headlines and graphics. Easily wins this category.

2. Fulton Sun: Good use of photos with stories. Clean look and easy reading. Good sports pages.

3. Boonville Daily News: Good use of graphics and short stories to go along with feature photos and stories. Lots of information in each sports section.

Class 2

1. Holly Lawton, Kansas City Star: Very thorough coverage of the sports world. Headlines catch readers’ eyes and at the same time tell the story. Well designed and well organized.

2. St. Louis Post-Dispatch: Eye-catching illustration with NCAA tickets, question swirling around Cardinals and Chase Daniel. Good, comprehensive coverage of St. Louis area sports, with more than just typical game stories.

3. Columbia Missourian: Interesting stories, especially Greg Hansbrough story and Missouri handshake. Good work on these stories. They aren't your run-of-the-mill sports stories but something unique and you treated them as such. Good job.

HM. Independence/Blue Springs Examiner: Very well-rounded coverage.

HM. Pam Clark, Springfield News-Leader: Good personal stories on Devon Mitchell and Mitchell Jenkins, putting a face on one athlete who overcame the odds and another on the concussion epidemic in high schools.

51. Best Sports News Story or Package

Class 1

1. Cody Thorn, Neosho Daily News, MSHSAA: Very thorough writing covering all aspects of the state track meet. All the articles were well-written, concise and well thought out. It was a pleasure to read all your articles. I felt as though I was there.

2. Seth Harrold, Trenton Republican-Times, Track Team: Well-written article chronicling the state track title for Trenton. Very informative article that was well put together, which made this a very easy read. Great job.

3. Russ Green and Dennis Sharkey, Richmond Daily News, Twice as Nice: Great stories about the championship game. All articles are well written and contain good quotes. Very descriptive stories that gave this judge the impression of being at the contest and feeling the drama of the game.

HM. Chris Waller, Fulton Sun, Hornets Slide: (No judges comments.)

Class 2

1. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, No. 62: This was a comprehensive look at an event that transformed a sport. The McGwire interview was enlightening, but the wow factor for me was the number of people who reminisced about that day. Very thorough and a great read.

2. Allen Vaughan, Springfield News-Leader, One Arm: A fascinating look into the mind of a teenage pitcher who undergoes Tommy John surgery. Very well written, and the writer covered all angles of the story. Good work.

3. Kary Booher, Springfield News-Leader, Flight Pattern: This offered an in-depth look at the Cardinals franchise. It took readers behind the scenes to witness the Cardinals' new philosophy and the people behind it. Very interesting read.

HM. Tom Loeffler, Jefferson City News Tribune: A truly heartwarming story that was well written. The writer did a good job of taking the reader into the story and weaving the past and present together.

52. Best Sports Feature Story

Class 1

1. Cody Thorn, Neosho Daily News, Hansen Tragedy: Sports often reflect life. There are ups, downs; good, bad, joy and sadness. Thorn's feature on this track athlete shows how life and sports relate. As you read you also see that sports are nice distractions from

life's troubles, but once the game's over, you have to get back dealing with life. There's a good message here.

2. Chris Waller, Fulton Sun, Ex-Notre Dame Coach: Good job of passing on the message from Coach Phelps, a national icon, onto your readers. It was also good to explain how this visit to campus came about — sheer chance.

3. Chris Bowie, Boonville Daily News, School Says Good-bye: Seldom do we pay attention to the people in life who work behind the scenes, but impact the lives of others, including young people. Bowie devoted time to such a story.

Class 2

1. Kent Babb, Kansas City Star, Broken Promise: Loved the way the entire story of the coach was told; knowing the back story of him allowed me to have a different perspective of the often-chastised coach. Very in-depth, and extremely well-written piece.

2. RJ Cooper, St. Joseph News-Press, Western Eats it Up: Wonderful job of thinking outside the box to get this story. Especially liked how the writer kept it fun, but also incorporated real-life concerns for these players after football. Overall, a great read that kept me drawn in from beginning to end.

3. Rachel Crader, Columbia Missourian, Biggest Fan: (No judge's comment.)

HM. Sam Mellinger, Kansas City Star, Ex-Royal: (No judge's comment.)

53. Best Sports Column

1. Bryan Burwell, St. Louis Post-Dispatch: Amazing column about Leonard Little and the pain he endures after his mistake. One of the best single columns I've read in years. Overall, the writer offered interesting perspective on local topics. None of his columns were cliché or run-of-the-mill. Very nice work overall.

2. Joe Walljasper, Columbia Daily Tribune: Excellent job of finding different angles for each column. Showed great ability to write about serious topics, human interest, and finally a wonderful light-hearted feature. Story about the Elvis escape artist made me chuckle.

3. Jason Whitlock, Kansas City Star: The points and arguments made by this writer were clear and to the point. Whether a reader agrees with him or not, one would always know where he stands. Overall quality of writing was excellent and very consistent through all pieces.

HM. Tom Loeffler, Jefferson City News Tribune: The column about the DBI was funny, funny, funny. As a driveway basketball fanatic, I appreciated his attention to "the rules." Overall, I like the subtle humor in all his pieces.

54. Best Special Section

Class 1

1. The Neosho Daily News, Crowder College: This special section was a fine way to help dedicate a college building and bell tower. I especially liked the advertisement on the back page in color. This section is a great tribute to a community college.

2. St. Louis Daily Record, Women's Justice Awards: This is a very attractive section; the depth of each award shows the importance given to each woman. These awards and

the space given to them will be incentives in the future. The section was very impressive. Keep up the good work.

3. The Daily Statesman, Dexter, Beyond Hometown Roots: Knowing where former residents are today and learning of their successes make for great reading. Your special section and the depth of the stories were fantastic. It was very difficult to rate the entries.

Class 2

1. Columbia Missourian, Weird Tales of Missouri: Most Special Sections are for common ideas and special occasions, etc. But for a travel section “Weird tales of Missouri” this shows experiences that were very interesting and unusual. The cover was a definite “come in.” I defy readers not to read the inside. I enjoyed it very much; showed the staff’s ingenuity.

2. Mary Lou Montgomery, Hannibal Courier-Post, MLK Jr.: This section was a wonderful tribute to a wonderful individual. I especially enjoyed the depth that is evident by Mary in compiling the information. This section will be a keepsake.

3. Allison Wilson, West Plains Daily Quill, Zizzer 100th: The competition was keen, but the information about Zizzer caught my eye. This section was a wonderful way to celebrate the homecoming of the Zizzers. The make-up could be improved, but with the amount of pictures in section and the work involved, I enjoyed the idea of the section.

Class 3

1. The Examiner, Independence/Blue Springs, David Cook 2: What a homecoming! I was especially impressed with the number of fans and the picture in section C1. 10,000 tickets handed out in one afternoon. The stories and advertisements were superb – a wonderful tribute.

2. Pam Clark, Dean Curtis, Springfield News-Leader, The Curtain Rises: What a special section to begin memories of a new JQH Arena. The pictures and stories are superb and reveal much planning this section should be a keepsake.

3. Kansas City Star, '08: Most newspapers have a football preview section, but the depth of reporting of the *Star* was especially noted. With the Chiefs, NFL, Big 12, Colleges, high schools, what is left? Readers are furnished everything possible for the football season and done superbly.

55. Best Investigative Reporting

Class 1

1. Gregory O’Rear, : Exhaustive efforts covering all aspects of a local crime. Outstanding job presenting all the levels – from local to state – involved in this case

2. Kimberly Long, : Nice job covering responsibility for water contamination/dicoloration.

3. Kathy Fairchild, Marshall Democrat-News: My only question was what next? Although local victims were aided greatly by newspapers, I never found out if there was an arrest, felt like series ended without full conclusion.

Class 2

1. Joe Mahr, Jeremy Kohler and David Hunn, St. Louis Post Dispatch, Police Towing Scandal: Fast work, complete coverage by staff were instrumental in uncovering

and detailing this story. A clear example of a newspaper's watchdog role. Excellent work. Nice to see results when wrong-doers are exposed.

2. Susan Redden, Joplin Globe, Jasper County Public Administration: Redden deserves high praise for her work uncovering this story and the newspaper's work in providing access and documentation to the readers. As with the 1st place winner a clear example of the watchdog role serving the public.

3. Joe Mahr, St. Louis Post Dispatch, Free to Flee: Compelling, almost unable to put down. Paints a vivid portrait of a system gone bad.

H.M. Staff, Columbia Missourian, Tasers: Excellent series. Good job presenting both sides of the taser conflict.

56. Best Local Business Coverage

1. St. Louis Post Dispatch: Tough call. The local Budweiser buyout coverage gave you an edge. But content like pool table maker, concrete gains, etc. also helped. Strong business content, finding some unique stories no one else looked for adds much to excellent business content.

2. Kansas City Star: Excellent business stories. Liked the format of the July 15 Star business weekly, better than your other business sections. It set business content apart. Writers don't leave stones unturned. Good variety and much locally driven.

3. Columbia Daily Tribune: Very good business writing. Just not as much as 1 and 2. Copy, art are packaged well to make it all interesting, inviting to the reader. Cutting MU's energy bill was excellent.

57. Best Business Story – News or Feature

Class 1

1. Katherine Cummins, Fulton Sun, Westlake's Hallmark: Captures a small town snapshot of the recession, really shows how customers and employees alike loved that store. Presented store owner's side in an equally sympathetic manner. Well done.

2. Mike McCoy, Daily Statesman, Dexter, Man follows his passion: Although the headline is very vague and uninformative, the story is interesting and well written. The style made me feel like I could hear Ted talking to me.

Class 2

1. Diane Stafford, Kansas City Star, Golden years: Very timely topic, especially as the workforce changes and the economy spins; very interesting information and well presented.

2. Liz Manring, Columbia Missourian, Made from scratch: Fascinating, this couple is certainly a great example for the next generation. Very well done.

3. Brent Engel, Hannibal Courier-Post, Holcim: Sounds like the airport's the place to be. Well put together and nicely presented.

HM. Tyler Armao, Columbia Missourian, Hub of Activity: Sounds like the airport's the place to be. Well put together and nicely presented.

H.M. Jordan Raubolt, Columbia Daily Tribune, Back in business: Nicely written story about second chances. I hope the Tuckers succeed. Good job.

58. Best Coverage of Government

1. **DeAnn Smith, Lynn Horsley, Kansas City Star, Mayor:** Exhaustive coverage of the mayoral saga leaves few questions unanswered. Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction, and this series is proof of that. Excellent.
2. **St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Tow Scandal:** Excellent investigative work. An example of how good journalism can effect change.
3. **Debby Woodin, Joplin Globe, Councilman Probe:** The history of the ongoing tension is well documented in this series. The writer is thorough and fair in covering a controversial issue.

H.M. Paul Weber, Columbia Missourian, Full Service City: Appreciate the extent of research and coverage. Public's concerns are handled well.

H.M. Rick Montgomery, Kansas City Star, Main Street: Local views give readability to national election coverage. Enjoyed the wide range of people interviewed. Written in a thoughtful and engaging manner.

59. Best Rural Life/Agriculture Story

Class 1

1. **Jack "Miles" Ventimiglia, Warrensburg Daily Star-Journal, Endangered Species:** Good story, easy to read, nice mix of quotes and pertinent information. Relating her dip in the pool to keep flees off, things like that help make a good story a good read. I never got lost.
2. **Marcia Gorrell, Marshall Democrat-News, Family Keeps Farm:** The lead and use of quotes moved this into 2nd from several contenders. Wasn't just a 100 year farm family story, it was a real story about a real family and it's struggles.
3. **Mike McCoy, Daily Statesman, Dexter, Hydroponics:** A few more quotes would have helped make the information easier to present. Strong lead moved this into 3rd ahead of your other entry on cotton farmers' struggles. Get those quotes, they add a lot. Interesting story, none the less.

Class 2

1. **Clinton Thomas, St. Joseph News-Press, High stakes:** Interesting story from start to finish. Lead paragraph even if you are not into ag business grabs you and great story telling keeps you reading. Good use of multiple sources and clean writing style.
2. **Kim McGuire, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Sniff Test:** Great way to handle a controversial issue. Clean, crisp writing, well-rounded story.
3. **Kim McGuire, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Hog Wild:** Interesting well-written story. Good supporting research and it's incorporated into story well.

HM. Sara Shahriari, Columbia Missourian, A forgotten relic: Very interesting well-written and well put together.

HM. Georgina Gustin, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Natural way: Nice handling of a big issue, well put together.

60. Best Story About Religion

1. **Tim Townsend, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Mormons:** This was one of three fabulous stories by the same reporter (extremely hard to choose a favorite), but this story did an outstanding job of presenting a compelling story of growth amongst a faith by those who were once scorned. Good details, statistics.

2. Helen Gray, Kansas City Star, Prophet: The first time I've seen a well-done piece that adequately explains a religious leader, his background and tradition. And how it ties into a contentious political race. Nice Job!

3. Michele Munz, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Fighting denial: One word (for churches): ouch! Reporter did a great job of presenting a complex, broad-ranging issue; how churches and leaders have turned away; and how some are acknowledging and combating domestic violence.

HM. Rachel Smeda, Columbia Missourian, Unusual pulpit: If you had used "professional wrestling" and "religion" in a sentence, I would have thought "No way?" But this was a fascinating story of how spiritual leaders use any means necessary to transmit the gospel — even a wrestling ring!

HM. Staff, Columbia Missourian, Spiritual discovery: Nicely done package. Nice mix of stories.

61. Best Story About Education

1. David Hunn, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Red line: Way to expose such a glaring oversight. Well-written. Great reactions from those involved.

2. Mike Sherry, Dawn Bormann and Joe Robertson, Kansas City Star, They Soar: Great in-depth look at students and how they got to where they are now. Very inspirational.

3. Noreen Hyslop, Dexter Daily Statesman, Blunt: Great story from the lighter side of education.

HM. Brenda Jensen, Richmond Daily News, Backpack: Sheds light on a subject not a lot of people like to think about. Good writing.

HM. Valerie Schremp Hahn, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Master's degree: Both sides of topic covered well. Well-written and to the point, not overdone.

62. Best Story About The Outdoors

1. Katie Underhill, Columbia Missourian, Missing history: Beautifully packaged, well written, plus it gives readers a "call to action." As someone who lives outside of Missouri, it makes me want to visit the park!

2. Kim McGuire, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Home to roost: Great quotes, good statistics, good background. A well-done piece that explains conservation efforts.

3. Karen Dillon, Kansas City Star, Hidden danger: Wow – what an eye-opener. Your use of images really helped explain problem areas, and the quote about the lake being a "giant toilet" should rouse officials to action.

HM. Brent Frazee, Kansas City Star, Ultimate Antlers: Although I'm not a fan of trophy hunting, this was very well done and explains the mania behind it, as well as the problems officials face. Nice package.

HM. Jake Siegel, Columbia Missourian, Pallid sturgeon: The Missourian continues to excel. Another excellent package, and a very well done story on contamination and its affect on a species. Rachel Carson would be proud.

63. Best Story About History

Class 1

1. Wes Franklin, Neosho Daily News, Great escape: Wow – great story capturing first-hand account of WWII veteran. These stories are vital, and the subject of the story has a great voice. Exceptional.

2. Wes Franklin, Neosho Daily News, Images of war: Another winner – another great story by 1st place winner in this category. Great quotes, great voice.

3. Chris Waller, Fulton Sun, Miss Willie: Nice story – especially appreciate the first-hand quotes from someone “who was there.”

HM. John Ford, Neosho Daily News, Piece of history: Great national tie-in to local history.

Class 2

1. Rebecca Delaney, Columbia Missourian, Big find: I can’t find enough good things to say. You’ve got mystery and local people with a lot of history thrown in. Excellent, in-depth reporting and presented with an engaging writing style.

2. Tim O’Neil, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Dethroned: Great coverage of history in this spread. Local impact on community is clear. Good link between past and present.

3. Darryl Levings, Kansas City Star, Last survivor: Ties to historical events and figures make for good reading. Nice compilation of facts and past interviews.

HM. Michelle Brooks, Jefferson City News Tribune, Germanic twist: Fascinating article. Writing flows well and is easily accessible to readers.

HM. Latisha Koetting, Sedalia Democrat, Wrong ship: Well-written story on an interesting twist of fate. Nice spotlight on a local veteran.

64. Best Coverage of Family Living

1. Kansas City Star: Quality and quantity. Kudos for authors of “An Uncertain Future” and the increasing popularity of biking. Good photos matched with excellent reproduction.

2. Jefferson City News Tribune: Piece on Pet Therapy stood out. Strong photos accompanied the layout.

3. Joplin Globe: Column by Jane Drummond strengthened this entry. Good graphic, informative piece on preparing lobster.

65. Best Coverage of Young People

1. Independence/Blue Springs Examiner: Simply excellent! Graduation coverage was unique and engaging, especially like the “Quick S Questions” feature. Nice coverage of other youth activities – sports, dance. Great spotlights on individual and team accomplishments. This is what sells newspapers.

2. Kansas City Star: Graphics really grab readers’ attention. Really like the “In Their Own Words” essays in May 25 edition. I also enjoy Steve Rosen’s column “Kids & Money.” Great Job!

3. Vox Magazine – Columbia Missourian: Ambitious stories and graphic design. I appreciated the thematic nature of each issue. Content appeals to a wide range of young people from teens to 20-somethings.

66. Best Page Design

- 1. Columbia Missourian, May 31:** Outstanding in a very competitive category. Layout helped to tell the story. At first glance reader gets a very strong impression. No matter what page you turn to first, you are drawn in.
 - 2. Stephen Foutes, Jefferson City News Tribune, Halloween:** Bold layout that grabs attention. Page is easy to read and eye easily moves from element to element.
 - 3. Karl Zinke, Independence/Blue Springs Examiner, Top 5:** Clever, eye-catching page designs. Various elements all pull together nicely.
- HM. Anne Kettenbrink, Joplin Globe, H&F:** Lots of things going on on this page, but it's easy to read and distinguishes each element. Nice, clean look.

67. Best Information Graphic

- 1. Rich Rokicki, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Earthquake ready:** The story and graphic worked extremely well together. The graphic itself was very in-depth but yet easy to understand all at the same time. A very interesting read, and even more so for the residents of that city.
 - 2. Rich Rokicki and Cara DeMichele, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Anatomy of a rampage:** This graphic told an entire story all on its own. The design was simple and easy to follow. It was very easy to paint a picture of the entire event in my mind as I followed the path of the killer. Very well done and professionally handled.
 - 3. Noah Musser, Kansas City Star, Ramp meters:** Simple and informative. Great job of giving the readers what they need and not trying to do too much. Very easy to visually understand what the story was describing.
- HM. Darla Cameron and Francisco Fisher, Columbia Missourian, Bad driving weather:** (No comments written.)
- HM. Dave Eames, Kansas City Star, Block party:** (No comments written.)

68. Best Editorial Cartoon

- 1. Lee Judge, Kansas City Star, Price of gas:** The symbolism really grabs you. Good expression of cartoonist's opinion. A simple uncluttered use of one tool to tell the story.
 - 2. John Darkow, Columbia Daily Tribune, Car dinosaurs:** The analogy is strong and ironic for the message. The symbols are appropriate to relay the opinion.
 - 3. Jim Dyke, Jefferson City News Tribune, Horse drinks:** The cartoon easily expresses the artist's opinion. Good contrast in the blacks and whites.
- HM. John Darkow, Columbia Daily Tribune, Crap table:** Good subjective evaluation of the news story. Accurate play on the word. Caricatures are good.
- HM. Jim Dyke, Jefferson City News Tribune, Stimulus:** A striking but clear view of artist's opinion, whether you agree or not.

69. Best Newspaper in Education Program

- 1. Debbie Quinlin, Hannibal Courier-Post:** Wow! Totally impressed with your work and dedication you have to such a worthwhile program and the great response you get from your supporters is a reflection of your dedication.
- 2. Cathy Sewell, St. Louis Post-Dispatch:** You put a lot of thought and energy into your program and it shows. You also have a great variety of information.
- 3. Cindy Campbell, Kansas City Star:** Your on-line program has a lot to offer. It would be better if you could combine with some print media at times also.

70. Best Online Newspaper or Website

1. St. Louis Post-Dispatch

2. Kansas City Star

3. St. Joseph News-Press

HM. Columbia Daily Tribune

HM. Marshall News-Democrat

71. Best Headline Writing

1. Kansas City Star: Good combination of wittiness, opposites and similar phrases (Bury the Hatches, Carve the Turkey, Getting Sloshed, Small Gifts Buy Needs).

2. Columbia Missourian: I liked the “Gates in a Yard” because it served a dual purpose. Headlines that work overtime show dedication on the part of the headline writer.

3. Jefferson City News Tribune: “Mauled in Meltdown?” was great headline about mall trouble. Good word choice.