

NORTH & EAST TEXAS

Press Association



2009 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

NETPA Convention

Thursday, April 8 to Saturday, April 10, 2010

@ Holiday Inn Craig Ranch

3220 Craig Drive, McKinney, Texas, USA 75070

Page Layout

Division 1

1. Daily Sentinel
2. Texarkana Gazette
3. Paris News

Daily Sentinel - Great layouts! Beautiful pages. Color is perfect.

Texarkana Gazette - Most photos are very good, front page is dark. Opinion page seems crammed together and boring. Sports and Accent page are well designed.

Paris News - Pages seem a bit old-fashioned and could use updating. Photos are a bit blurry and/or out of register.

Division 2

1. Waxahachie Daily Light
2. Stephenville Empire-Tribune

Waxahachie Daily Light - Front and sports are clean and interesting. Lifestyle and opinion are very boxy and plain. Photos are great.

Stephenville Empire-Tribune - Sports header is pixelated. Fonts could use updating. Sports photos are out of register.

Division 3

1. Wise County Messenger
2. Hood County News
3. Burleson Star

Wise County Messenger: very interesting pages! Photos are a bit dark but have big impact. Lots of white space and interesting elements.

Hood County News: Very nice flow. Good quality photos. Clean.

Burleson Star: Each page is unique. Nice, big photos. Eye catching. Wish it was a bit more cohesive.

Division 4

1. Mansfield News- Mirror
2. Pittsburg Gazette
3. Wylie News

Mansfield News Mirror: nice flow, clean. Wrestling photo is grainy.

Pittsburg Gazette: could use some white space.

Wylie News: Back to school page is a bit hard to read behind splats. Fonts could use updating.

Division 5

1. Gladewater Mirror
2. Pilot Point Post Signal
3. Sachse News

Gladewater Mirror: very well laid out. Nice flow and great photos.

Pilot Point Post Signal: Beautiful, large photos.

Sachse News: Sports photos are grainy. Design is boxy. Clean.

Division 6

1. Everman Star
2. Crowley Star
3. White Oak Independent

Everman Star: Nice and clean with lots of white space.

Crowley Star: Copy is a bit tight, great looking front page!

White Oak Independent: Nice heads and sub heads. A little cluttered but looks nice.

Advertising

Division 1

1. Paris News
2. Texarkana Gazette

Paris News - Turner: great composition. Century 21: a little dark but eye catching. Kimberly Clark: prominent photo.

Texarkana Gazette - McLarty #1: Clean look, good color. ORR: Good use of color, cars could be much larger. McLarty Stop: not sure what background is. Stop sign is eye catching.

Division 2

1. Athens Daily review
2. Stephenville Empire-Tribune

Athens Daily Review - Kevin Till: looks nice but hard to tell what ad is for. Chimney Sweep: interesting. First State Bank: Good layout but bank sign is hard to read.

Stephenville Empire-Tribune - Barnes: not balanced. Christian School: photo is nice but ad is uninteresting. Monkey: nice layout.

Division 3

1. Hood County News
2. Graham Leader
3. Burleson Star

Hood County News: Woods - clean look. Big "sale," eye catching. Russells - nice white space. Car wash - sharp color.

Graham Leader: ace - excellent. Skin - a bit busy but looks nice. Young - good idea on puzzle.

Burleson Star: Penton - elegant, good color use. Holy cross - boring, dark photos. Woolards - nice colors and design. A bit fuzzy.

Division 4

1. Wylie News
2. Pittsburg Gazette
3. Kaufman Herald

Wylie News: Pet - great photos and layout! Marina - calm and elegant. Monster - fun.

Pittsburg Gazette: Pittsburg - bottom of ad is crowded. Dow - eye catching. Good use of color. Elliott - very nice layout.

Kaufman Herald: Kaufman IESI - good idea, wish photos were larger. KISD - good use of color, nice flow. Kids - bright and cheerful.

Division 5

3. Glen Rose Reporter
2. Lake Country Sun
1. Sachse News

Sachse News: Rod - great color and design! Pool - good flow, clean. Exotics - creative and well designed.

Lake Country Sun: gorilla - stands out. Rock - very balanced, classy. Needs something to let you know what they are trying to say. Anderson - great photo!

Glen Rose Reporter: night out - great design, good flow. La Quinta - classy, needs heading. Dinosaur - type is hard to read.

Division 6

1. Murphy Monitor
2. White Oak Independent
3. Joshua Star

Murphy Monitor: Gardens - great use of photo. Golf - very nice layout. Richardson - good color balance.

White Oak Independent: Jim - very bold! Carnival - cute ad. cutting edge - a little old fashioned.

Joshua Star: Furniture - very balanced. Playtime - very good use of color. Chamber - stands out.

Headline Writing

Division 1

1. Paris News
2. Texarkana Gazette
3. Daily Sentinel

Paris News - Headline #1: (boardroom) funny play on USPS motto. Headline #2: (liquor) love that the headline draws the reader in to see what the story is about .. It was confusing at first but works. Headline #3: (bite) very creative.

Texarkana Gazette - Headline #1: (flu) good play on words, catches reader's eye. Headline #2: (lunar) not my favorite, but the "foot in the door" is really the best part. Headline #3: (Rockwall) very clever.

Daily Sentinel - Headline #1: (fake tans) not very creative, but gets point across well. Headline #2: (banner) tells your story, but lacks creativity. Headline #3: (law) best headline I've ever seen for a police report section - this makes an otherwise boring piece stand out.

Division 2

1. Stephenville Empire-Tribune
2. Athens Daily Review
3. Waxahachie Daily Light

Stephenville Empire-Tribune - (paws) love this headline. Very creative. Catches reader's eye while still encouraging reader to read on. (Business) nice use of wrecked in a headline about a car dealership but kind of average. (Handgun) Catches eyes - perfect.

Athens Daily Review - (tea) cute headline, but my mind immediately thought Texas Education Agency while this is actually tea party - confusion. (Wii) Very clever. (Heartbreak) fits story well.

Waxahachie Daily Light - (Coffee) funny, creative. (food stamp) gets point of story across nicely - best headline. (Flip-flop) fits story well.

Division 3

1. Hood County News
2. Burleson Star
3. Wise County Messenger

Hood County News: (Skeeters) cute - catches eye. (potty) funny and creative. (t-shirts) funny, fits story perfectly.

Burleson Star: (propable) funny (timber) great headline (sew) great play on words.

Wise County Messenger: (flight) different, yet still captures essence of store. I like it. (drinkers) very nice (burglaries) really liked this - brilliant.

Division 4

1. Mansfield News-Mirror
2. Kaufman Herald
3. Pittsburg Gazette

Mansfield News Mirror: (burger) different, interesting. (cell) really like this. (wheel) creative.

Kaufman Herald: (hope) really like this - simple, yet really draws reader in (sobering) another great headline that catches the reader's eye, fits story well (spell) very cute and creative.

Pittsburg Gazette: (rainbow) very cute, really like this (car) fits story well, catches reader's eye (journey) creative.

Division 5 Headline Writing

1. Farmersville Times
2. Pilot Point Post Signal
3. Gladewater Mirror

Farmersville Times: (hot) very creative and appealing. (bunnies) cute. Catches eye. (bells) very nice, creative.

Pilot Point Post Signal: (mayor) creative, like this. (broom) love this, very interesting, great play on words. (nuts) clever.

Gladewater Mirror: (clatter) very nice, works very well for story (dam) funny, catches eye (buzzards) fits story well, creative.

Division 6

1. Big Sandy & Hawkins Journal
2. Princeton Herald
3. Joshua Star

Big Sandy & Hawkins Journal: (grapes) brilliant - while the expression is old, it looks perfectly here. (birds) cute, works for the photo/story. (flow) funny, likes this.

Princeton Herald: (seussical) funny and creative (wheels) interesting, catches eye (paved road) very nice, creative

Joshua Star: (transportation) creative (teachers) interesting, makes reader curious (bird) creative, fitting

Column Writing

Division 1

1. Paris News
2. Texarkana Gazette
3. The Daily Sentinel

Paris News - Dad would have known: great column. Well written and engaging. Kidney donor f its bill - strong lead. Well written.

Texarkana Gazette - Kids will benefit from doing their own work - Strong column. Great way to handle the homework topic. Time for a clean sweep in Garland City - nice job!

Daily Sentinel - On the road again - humorous and engaging! There's more to baseball than the major leagues - great column, even for the non-baseball fan!

Division 2

1. Waxahachie Daily Light
2. Athens Daily Review
3. Waxahachie Daily Light

Waxahachie Daily Light - For the Love of Libby: Very moving! It brought tears to my eyes. Thank you, City of Waxahachie: nice, thank you!

Athens Daily Review - Wii has a got a hold of Mii - great lead! Loved the Wii Mii concept! #2: Oil prices not a slick issue - strong topic choice. Lead paragraph a little weak, but overall a

good column.

Waxahachie Daily Light - Things are just funnier in church. Nice humor piece. Graduates - go get 'em. Nice work.

Division 3

1. Wise County Messenger
2. Graham Leader
3. Hood County News

Wise County Messenger: Remember the words, not the writer - quite powerful! Excellent column - wow! Convertible was cool while it lasted - great column!

Graham Leader: Daylight Savings Time makes no sense - loved it! Being cut off from the rest of the world a refreshing step - many of us could learn a lesson here. Great topic and presentation.

Hood County News: Another great adventure - nice job! A hike for the ages - loved the lead on this one!

Division 4

1. Winsboro News
2. Kaufman Herald - Mike Gresham
3. Wylie News - Judy Truesdell

Winsboro News: Loved the way you looked at the deaths of two doctors.

Kaufman Herald: Doing our part - nicely stated! Quick fix - great column!

Division 5

1. Pilot Point Post-Signal
2. Deport Times- Blossom Times
3. Lake Country Sun

Pilot Point Post Signal: SUV - I laughed all the way through. #2: quite funny!

Deport Times-Blossom Times: Pedometer - loved it! Humorous and quite engaging. Rising water - nice job!

Lake Country Sun: - Aught-nine - great column - very funny! Eye opener - not quite as strong as column #1, but still good.

Division 6

1. Princeton Herald
2. Everman Star
3. Keene Star

Princeton Herald: American - emotional and well written. State fair - interesting viewpoint.

Everman Star: Diabetes - turns a personal story into an interesting read. Christmas dinner - written in a way to make you feel you could have been the subject

Keene Star: Landlord - a good subject written in a strong yet non-beaming way. Hats - made you feel like you were there. A little too much detail.

News Photo

Division 1

1. **Texarkana Gazette**
2. **Daily Sentinel**
3. **Paris News**

Texarkana Gazette - Murder/Suicide - Right place, right time! This was an outstanding photo which might have been slightly improved by a bit of cropping on the right. Wreck - This was a very good after the fact photo that captured the magnitude of the collision with the amount of rubble. Cropping the left about ½” and the top perforce to fill the frame would have improved the composition somewhat.

Daily Sentinel - Body Recovery - this was an outstanding photo made so by the angle from which it was shot. The reproduction of this photo was excellent, but Photo 2 detracted from the overall entry because of its inherent difficulty in reproduction. Shooting - Night shots are difficult to capture very well with the dark aspects versus the light hard to balance. Perhaps a different angle to focus on the action aspect would have been possible. While artistically appealing, the police line tape was not the focus of the content of the story.

Paris News - Sudden impact - This was a good photo that was composed very well. The quality of the reproduction was good with good reproduction of the color. Rescue - This photo appears to be somewhat “drab” and could have benefited from a little more “brightness” during tweaking for reproduction. Perhaps the photographer could have captured a moment when there was a little more discernable action in the rescue or zoom in more of the available action. If policy dictates, the victim’s face could be slightly blurred to protect identity.

Division 2

1. **Waxahachie Daily Light**

Waxahachie Daily Light - #1: photo angle captures the collision from both points with impact. Composition is good but top and right of photo may have been cropped to bring photo in. #2: Good photo angle. Shows impact. Photo is busy. Could have been brought closer in and cropped to the right a bit more.

Division 3

1. **Hood County News**
2. **Wise County Messenger**
3. **Graham Leader**

Hood County News: (Mary Vinson) Photo needs more inset at bottom and could be cropped more to left. Photo captures dark clouds and depth of storm very well. #2: Excellent photo! Great composition. Color is very vivid and accents silhouettes of firefighters very well. Great innovation! Great job!

Wise County Messenger: (Joe Duty) photo captures emotion very well. Good composition. Photo tells the story. #2: Photo

may have been cropped more to left and brought in closer. Shows emotion well.

Graham Leader: (Cherry Young) photo might have been brought in closer. #2: good photo. May7 have been cropped more to the left and brought closer in. Photo captures heat element very well.

Division 4

1. **Winnsboro News**
2. **Mansfield News-Mirror**
3. **Pittsburg Gazette**

Winnsboro News: Graduation: This photo reproduced very well. Panning to the left (less cropping on that side) would have improved the composition of the photo. The depth of field usage was good. Firefighter: Again, panning to the left just slightly would have improved the composition of this photo. The fireman, hose and water steam with the slight blurriness of the blaze in the background made the subject “pop” in the photo. It was a very good reproduction.

Mansfield News Mirror: Wreck: this photo reproduced very well. The composition could have been improved by cropping about ½” on the right to use the red light standard to frame the picture. Also, cropping at the fold would have featured the helicopter a little more in the composition of the photo. Flag retirement: this was a very nice photo. Suggestions: Show a little more of the left and right sides of the photo for better composition and use a little more saturation to make the colors “jump” more and look a little less washed out.

Pittsburg Gazette: DPS: The capture of the apparent defiance and arrogance on the face of the alleged perpetrator is the saving grace on what may otherwise have been a run of the mill photo. Cropping at the fold would have made this photo no less interesting, e.g. , the inset was not really that necessary. If deemed important, run it separately. Road: The composition of this photo captured the reader’s attention. This photo could have benefited from the inclusion of a little more contrast in its reproduction. While there is no penalty for doing so, grayscale submissions make competition more difficult for those choosing to do so.

Division 5

1. **Muenster Enterprise**
2. **Farmersville Times**
3. **Pilot Point Post- Signal**

Muenster Enterprise: photo depicts good sense of emotion. Composition is good. Photo is sharp. Color reproduced well. #2: Photo might have been brought out just a bit. Photo is clear despite smoky aspects.

Farmersville Times: Nice shot. Silhouette of three against orange glow is nice. May be crop out a lot of the darkness on the right and bring closer. #2: good composition.

Pilot Point Post Signal: Photo would have been better if faces were shown. Good color and reproduction. Too close. #2: Good clarity and reproduction. Could have been brought in closer.

Division 6 News Photo

1. Big Sandy & Hawkins Journal
2. Keene Star
3. Everman Star

Big Sandy & Hawkins Journal: trumpeter: composition was the key to making this photo appealing with the vertical placement of the player's body and the horizontal placement of the instrument in the frame. A bit more brightness and contrast would have improved the shot. Fire: the contrast and color are what grabs the reader's attention in this photo. A little more left crop and little more foreground would improve the composition of the shot by moving the name fire spot to the strength of the 1/3 up, 1/3 over position.

Keene Star: fire truck: reproduction of this photo is good. Use of a little more zoom and more precise placement of the cassette and the 1/3 down and 1/3 over in the frame would have improved the composition of this shot. The intent of the shot to not readily discernible from any other back of a fire truck shot. Pipe break: the composition of this shot was reasonably good with the tractor at the 1/3 down horizontal line. However, a little more zoom to maintain the draining action about the same relative position would have placed more attention on the action. The angle of the shot was good.

Everman Star: Ambulance: this was a good photo, but at the same time, somewhat commonplace. Photos like these are normally above average interest if the photographer captures either emotional or dramatic aspects of the situation. Renovation: the mirror effect that came into play allowed this pair of photos to place in the contest. Getting some of the content of the trophy case to show while capturing the mirrored images made this an interesting shot. Masking the exit door area while brightening the rest of the photo would have improved its reproduction.

Editorials

Division 1

1. Texarkana Gazette
2. Daily Sentinel

Texarkana Gazette - Justice - well written. Math - interesting. Daily Sentinel - Nobel - not very local.

Division 2

1. Waxahachie Daily Light

Waxahachie Daily Light - Spirit: well written. Food stamp: well researched.

Division 3

1. Graham Leader
2. Wise County Messenger
3. Hood County News

Hood County News: Cleanup - good public message. Missing Granbury - packs a punch! Well written.
Wise County Messenger: Bond - well thought out and written. Democrats - thought provoking.
Graham Leader: weapons - thought provoking and well written. Memorial Day - nice tribute.

Division 4

1. Mansfield News- Mirror
2. Winnsboro News

Mansfield News Mirror: Newsom - a heartfelt tribute. Shopping list - a good message, well written.

Winnsboro News: Brave - would have liked more info. WHS - basically a wrap up of the school year.

Division 5

1. Pilot Point Post Signal
2. Jacksboro Gazette-News
3. Dublin Citizen

Pilot Point Post Signal: Gee School - packs a punch. Well written and interesting. Same old council - not afraid to say what needs to be said.

Jacksboro Gazette News: Salazar - gets the point across without blaming. Activity center- raises good questions, explains situation well.

Dublin Citizen: Myspace - well written, good viewpoint. TxDot - facts laid out nicely.

Division 6

1. Overton Press

Overton Press: progress - compelling. Father John - nice tribute.

Feature Photo

Division 1

1. Texarkana Gazette
2. Daily Sentinel
3. Paris News

Texarkana Gazette - (Lewis) This photo has almost all of the classic elements of photo composition taken from a very creative angle. It tells a powerful story. (Spendley) This photo was good but could have benefited from some additional cropping or placement within the frame (depending on size of original). About 1/2" could have been cropped from the right or more of the left- if it existed- could have been shown to improve composition. I'm sure newspaper print repro did not fully do justice to the fall colors.

Daily Sentinel - (Ankle) The creative angle from which this shot was taken really makes it "pop." General comment: With high

resolution photography available these days, I suggest less zoom to allow for more room to crop for composition. (Snake) What really (and obviously) grasp the reader's attention is the capture of the student's expression for the photo circumstance. A little more of the areas left and right being should would have improved composition.

Paris News - (Flowers) The depth of field played an important role in the quality of this photo. The composition, while good, could have been improved with a little more cropping on the left side (or a little less on the right). (Car Wash) This photo was shot from an innovative angle. The subject matter appeared too centered to be well composed. While it may have been natural, the reproduction may have made the texture look over "photo shopped."

Division 2

1. Waxahachie Daily Light
2. Athens Daily Review

Waxahachie Daily Light - Mr. Bronca did a very good job of capturing a night scene in the flag retirement photo. Given the conditions and circumstances, it would be difficult to suggest improvements. Field Day: Good job of capturing action. Additional brightness would have improved the reproduction. A lower f-stop may have blurred the background to highlight the subject better. (The danger would be excessive motion blur.)

Athens Daily Review - What goes up - This is a very good photo that reproduced very well. The colors really "jump." Rabbit season: This a "cute" photo with "cute subjects. However, the ordinariness of the photo makes it less appealing.

Division 3

1. Wise County Messenger
2. Burleson Star
3. Breckenridge American

Wise County Messenger: #1 - photo was captured at a perfect precise moment. Composition is good. Overall good photo. #2: Composition is excellent. Timing is very precise. Photo is very unique in nature. Great job!

Burleson Star: #1: Good photo. Captures moment well. May have been cropped more to the left. #2: Andrew Brosig - Great composition. Photo captures excitement of the moment. Photo is very crisp in action. Good job!

Breckenridge American: #1: Photo inset took away from the main photo. The colors clashed. Photo would have been more appealing without inset. #2: Photo was very innovative. Composition is good. Captures moment well.

Division 4

1. The Kaufman Herald
2. Winnsboro News
3. Mount Vernon Optic-Herald

The Kaufman Herald: Memorial: content made this photo an outstanding entry. The photo quality along with very good reproduction made it very appealing to the eye. CPS: Perspec-

tive made this a stand out photo. It was clear and crisp and reproduced well.

Winnsboro News: Morton/Taskila: Photos such as this one rival those of any professional photographers who do this for a living. It was obviously a well planned thought out shot. Dutchie: This is also a very good photo. However, I have seen this concept used many, many times. A second light source to soften the shadows of the face shield could have improved this shot.

Mount Vernon Optic Herald: Melon: This was very good photo that reproduced clearly and crisply. Clipping around the hairline is often a difficult task. While not perfect, the clipping in this case was pretty good. Water Play: At the risk of the yellow being somewhat over exposed, the photo should have been lightened/brightened/contrasted more to improve the features in the girls' faces.

Division 5

1. Pilot Point Post-Signal
2. Gladewater Mirror
3. Farmersville Times

Pilot Point Post Signal: Great photo! Great capture of water droplets. More faces would have been a plus. Good photo. Keith McGee - good composition. Good timing and reproduction.

Gladewater Mirror: Photo has good composition. Captures the moment well. Good color and reproduction. Kim Nill - good action shot. Could have been cropped in the right and brought in.

Farmersville Times: Photo taken at precise moment to capture washer in mid air. #2: Common photo. Good composition.

Division 6

1. Alvarado Star
2. Crowley Star
3. Malakoff News

Alvarado Star: Steeple jack: this "outside the box" display really grabs the reader's interest. It also managed to maintain somewhat classical composition. This photo reproduced well despite the sometimes difficult utilization of clipping. Crunch: again "outside the box" display really draws the reader's attention. Additionally, the action aspect of this photo is an enhancement.

Crowley Star: Porcupine: the nature of the subject coupled with capturing an act not commonly available to the average person makes this somewhat unique photo. More filed on the right would have improved the composition, but the subject would probably be a bit smaller to do so within the frame size used. Graduate: this photo is a good example of a shot that shows both enterprise and innovation. Additionally, the composition was not seriously compromised to do so.

Malokoff News: Dogs: creative shots of animals almost always captivates readers' interests, especially when two are involved having opposing aspects - big/small, young/old, unlikely pairings. This photo is reasonable well composed. Slide: the composition as well as the contrasting colors were the strengths of this photo. While somewhat tedious to do, the light portions of this photo should have been masked while there rest of the photo was brightened and/or lightened to improve its reproduction.

Feature Story

Division 1

1. **Texarkana Gazette**
2. **Paris News**
3. **Daily Sentinel**

Texarkana Gazette - (Monster) Definitely eye catching! The overload of black works well for the piece as does the main photo of the monster. Loved the comments from people in town. (Cuthand) 1) love the layout complete with large quotes - adds to overall effect w/o being in the copy. The only difference that could've been considered was the opposing side's reaction.

Paris News - (Geese) Love the layout with the clipart geese, story is interesting and lets reader see a new/different side of the refuge. Taryn's name is misspelled in front-page cut line. (Art) Story is interesting, headline is interesting, creative angle, photos help tell story well.

Daily Sentinel - (Oliver) "Collin's body" is missing the apostrophe to make it possessive, easy to read. Interesting topic; the breakdown of each aspect makes the story easy to understand. #2: Very interesting story. Photos demonstrate the actions/behaviors explained in the story well; really accent the copy.

Division 2

1. **Waxahachie Daily Light**
2. **Stephenville Empire-Tribune**
3. **Athens Daily Review**

Division 3

1. **Wise County Messenger**
2. **Hood County News**
3. **Burleson Star**

Wise County Messenger: (adoption) this is a great story - I would love to read part two! (freedom) I love the layout and breakdown of service using different stories!

Hood County News: (Roadie) very entertaining story, I love the photos! (Alzheimer's) the breakdown of info makes it easy to read, great article on such an important subject!

Burleson Star: (old town) interesting story, would like to hear what current owners have to say. (Myspace) very interesting as this is a big current issue.

Division 4

1. **Winnsboro News**
2. **Groesbeck Journal**
3. **Wylie News**

Winnsboro News: (Houston) very neat story. (Desire) great story.

Groesbeck Journal: (Horses) Very sweet story. (fighting) interesting story, love the details that really tell all aspects of the story.

Wylie News: (Memories) sweet story, very heartwarming. (Book) interesting story, I would love to know more about the disorder.

Division 5

1. **Gladewater Mirror**
2. **Sachse News**
3. **Glen Rose Reporter**

Gladewater Mirror: (Kirkuk) love the design - looks like there was a printing issue (red font toward bottom) but overall very neat. Story is incredible. (combat) great story

Sachse News: (raccoons) very interesting story, great photos! (twins) very neat human interest story. Would have been neat to hear from kids.

Glen Rose Reporter: (love) sweet story, love the cut out. (artist) very interesting story.

Division 6

1. **Alvarado Star**
2. **Princeton Herald**
3. **Keene Star**

Alvarado Star: fellowship - really nice topic. Was an interesting choice. Informative and well written. Offered a nice insight. (Jan 7) a really superb piece all around. Did a good job showing emotion.

Princeton Herald: (June 11) very interesting topic. Good use of quotes. Had lots of interesting info presented. (Nov 5) nice topic. Solid piece overall.

Keene Star: (March 19) really good subject, lots of good info, a very well written piece. #2: interesting topic. Could have used more details. Just enough to get started then it ends.

Sports Photo

Division 1

1. **Daily Sentinel**
2. **Paris News**
3. **Texarkana Gazette**

Daily Sentinel - Christy Wooten - This was an outstanding capture of action in motion. The color quality of the reproduction was very good. Additionally, the depth of field made this shot particularly eye catching. Andrew Rogers - Crisp midair action shots almost always capture the attention of the reader.

Paris News - Soccer - The midair capture of the action as well as the depth of field in this photo stand out. Clear reproduction of dark faces is difficult to achieve, but the repro quality of this photo may have been improved by a little more lightening, brightening and/or contrast. Football - Did No. 88 get a face mask penalty? The intensity of facial expression was well captured making a somewhat common shot more interesting.

Texarkana Gazette - Shelton - The reproduction was good; the sharpness really came through. General comment: While both shots were good, these views are rather commonplace. Straight-arm - Technically it appeared that the cut line was not intended for inclusion in this entry making the context of this photo questionable. The photo itself had a sharpness when combined with the use of depth of field that made it pleasant to view.

Division 2 Sports Photo

1. Waxahachie Daily Light
- Stephenville Empire-Tribune
3. Athens Daily Review

Waxahachie Daily Light - #1: Photo is captured at precise moment. Great, great photo! #2: Good composition. Great reproduction and color. Good action shot!

Stephenville Empire-Tribune - #1: Photo is brought in too close. Very common photo. Not much zing. #2: Great action shot! Very clear. Good composition. Facial expression on #9 is great. Good photo!

Athens Daily Review - #1: Photo is not very unique. No facial expression though sense of emotion is caught in photo. Photo pulled in a little too close. #2: Good action shot. Reproduction is fuzzy. No facials apparent. Photo may have been brought in a little too close. Good photo!

Division 3

1. Wise County Messenger
2. Hood County News
3. Breckenridge American

Wise County Messenger: #1: Great photo! Might have been cropped more to right. Photo shows emotion and shouts net victory. Good reproduction. #2: Great action shots. Captured facial expressions very well. Composition is a little too centered. Need to see more of the basketball.

Hood County News: #1: good action shot. Cropped a little too close. Player in the back might have added more depth to the photo. Good shot! #2: Good action shot. Should have pulled photo out more to emphasize the net. Good reproduction.

Breckenridge American: #1: Photo is a bit fuzzy. Needs to have more sharpness. Action is good. Cropped more to the left. #2: Good action shot. Cropped a bit too close.

Division 4

1. Winnsboro News
2. Wylie News
3. Groesbeck Journal

Winnsboro News: Football: Composition was very good. Clarity and color quality reproduced very well. This cut line could have had a little more punch by commenting on whether or not the defender was called or a face mask penalty. Wake board: a little cropping on the right would have improved the composition of this photo. It had a high quality reproduction. The concentration on the face of the subject was very good.

Wylie News: Track: The focus and intensity of the runner makes this a stand-out photo. Normally, a centered subject is not so good for composition, but in this case it works. Baseball: Action was key in making this a good quality photo. A little more contrast would have improved the photo reproduction. Cropping about $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the left of this photo would have improved its composition.

Groesbeck Journal: Cycles: The midair catch in this photo was key to making this a stand-out photo in the action category. Composition could have improved by cropping a little at the top and right side or use the finish line to frame the photo or putting a little more of the embankment in the foreground to bring the cyclists slightly higher in the frame. Football: This

photo, while good, lacked some resolution. It also depicted average action. The color aspect reproduced very well.

Division 5

1. The Light and Champion
2. Farmersville Times
3. Dublin Citizen

Light & Champion: B-balls - this photo was a shining example that captured the action with excellent composition. The photographer managed to catch the intensity of several players in the moment. Even though part of the jersey would have been overexposed, the shot probably would have reproduced a little better by tweaking up the brightness and contrast slightly. F-ball - this photo was also well composed by playing to the strength of the left vertical $\frac{1}{3}$ and the top horizontal $\frac{1}{3}$ simultaneously.

Farmersville Times: f-ball - this was a well composed action-packed shot. If more of the photo was available to do so, a little less cropping on the bottom and left may have slightly improved the composition. More clarity in the cut line about who actually recovered the fumble would have been better than leaving it to the reader to infer the result. Girls b-ball - this was an excellent capture of a skirmish. It was a great documentary on determination.

Dublin Citizen: f-ball - this was a well composed action shot. B-ball - this shot was good shot that probably could have been excellent had it not been over-zoomed (or over-cropped). With high resolution photography readily available shoot slightly wider shots to allow more latitude in composition. At first glance, the player seems to be more kneeling than soaring.

Division 6

1. Everman Star
2. Princeton Herald
3. Murphy Monitor

Everman Star: Softball - what makes this a successful shot is the angle from which the photo was taken. It appears the photographer was standing in the field between the pitcher and first base. A little more cropping on the right and a little less on the bottom (if available) would have improved the composition. Track: this photo was also shot from an interesting angle. At the risk of slight overexposure, the reproduction could have been enhanced with additional brightness or lightness.

Princeton Herald: Football - this photo could have fallen prey to the "almost great shot" file had the focal point not precisely located on the featured panther player. For composition, a little less cropper at the top (preferred in this case) or a little more at the bottom would have shifted the action to the strength of the top-horizontal $\frac{1}{3}$. The action is placed a little high in the overall frame. Baseball - the photographer does an outstanding job of capturing player intensity and concentration in this shot. Again, some variation in the cropping would have made the composition a little more powerful. If available, moving the photo about $\frac{1}{2}$ " right in the frame as well as leaving a little more at the top would have made a slight improvement.

Murphy Weekly: softball - capturing the precise timing on this shot primarily made it noteworthy. If there was enough of the photo available, more top, bottom and right side inclusion in the frame would have made the composition more appealing even at the expense of the subject being slightly smaller.

Sports Coverage

Division 1

1. Daily Sentinel
2. Paris News
3. Texarkana Gazette

Daily Sentinel - (Nov 22) Great use of dominant photo really sets this apart. Great info boxes on team history. Solid design, good use of photos and pretty good of sports. (Apr 9) Solid design. Nice mix of stories. Quality writing. Loved the photo/bio of top five players drafted. A very quality section.

Paris News - (Oct 18) Nice mix of photos and stories. Solid bit of sports. Solid writing. Nice photo collage. (Sept 13) Very good coverage of local teams. Good design. Sports mix okay.

Texarkana Gazette - (Sept 11) Nice info boxes. Solid writing. Everything is pretty solid, but nothing really jumps out at you. (June 4) Solid design, solid writing. Nice mix of sports.

Division 2

1. Waxahachie Daily Light.
2. Stephenville Empire-Tribune
3. Athens Daily Review

Waxahachie Daily Light - (Sept 27) Nice use of photos, and a great mix of gamers and feature material. Writing is pretty solid. (June 7) Nice photo collage on front. Nice sports mix and again, good mix of gamers and feature material. A Very quality section.

Stephenville Empire-Tribune - (Sept 27) Nice mix of sports and solid writing. OK design, but a little too much reliance on large photos. A pretty solid section. #2: Solid writing, ok design, good use of photos, nice mix.

Athens Daily Review - (May 21) Nice stat box, solid writing, and good use of extra info at end. (Nov 17) Nice layout. Nice stat boxes, solid writing. Not really much variety of sports.

Division 3

1. Wise County Messenger
2. Hood County News
3. Burleson Star

Wise County Messenger: (Nov 1) solid writing. Nice design. Good mix of games and features. Photos good, except for the top cross country photo on page 5B. (Nov 19) nice emotional photos. Solid writing and nice mix of stories. Good layout. Very solid section.

Hood County News: (Nov 4) Nice mix of sports. Nice photos. Solid design. (June 6) Really nice dominant feature photo. Nice mix of sports.

Burleson Star: (Sept 13) Nice variety of sports. Solid layout. (Nov 8) Good photos. Nice variety. Good photo page.

Division 4

1. Wylie News
2. Mansfield News-Mirror
3. Winnsboro News

Wylie News. (Nov 4) Nice use of photos and good mix of sports. Really solid section. (Jan 21) Nice feature. Good mixture of sports.

Mansfield News Mirror: (Sept 18) Nice mixture of sports. Solid photos. Design ok, writing ok. (Feb 20) Nice feature. Ok design, solid writing.

Winnsboro News: (April 2) Really good layout and design. Nice use of dominant photo. Writing is solid. (Nov 19) Really solid design and nice use of photos. Writing ok, no quotes in game story.

Division 5

1. Pilot Point Post-Signal
2. Glen Rose Reporter
3. Muenster Enterprise

Pilot Point Post Signal: (Nov 20) Solid layout, good photos use of photos, ok writing. Good diversity of sports. (Dec 18) nice mix of sports, good use of photos and solid design.

Glen Rose Reporter: (Feb 29) Nice photos, design ok, photo use could have been better. (Sept 4) solid photos. Nice mix of sports. Writing ok, design ok.

Muenster Enterprise: (Sept 11) Solid writing, photos ok, design could have been better. Nice mix of sports and good photo pages. (Nov 27) nice photo page. Good mix of sports. Design lacking.

Division 6

1. Murphy Monitor
2. Joshua Star
3. Princeton Herald

Murphy Monitor: (Sept 17) Nice use of photos, nice mixture of sports, solid writing. (Nov 5) nice use of photos, good use of photos and photo pages, good mixture of sports.

Joshua Star: (April 16) ok layout, good photos, nice mixture of sports, writing ok (Sept 17) writing solid, xc plots blurry, good mixture, design ok.

Princeton Herald: (Dec 17) nice layout, clean and crisp, writing ok. #2: layout clean and crisp, nice photos writing at least ok all the way through.

News Writing

Division 1

1. **Texarkana Gazette**
2. **Daily Sentinel**
3. **Paris News**

Texarkana Gazette - (Nov 14) Great use of quotes. Quality Timeline, a very informative piece. Had lots of quality info. (Sept 25) Interesting piece. Nice info. Presented well.

Daily Sentinel - (Apr 5) Nice lead- draws in well. Lots of quality info. (Feb 15) interesting topic. Good info and quotes. A very solid piece.

Paris News - (July 29) Had some good info, but left me confused - who was protesting and what were they protesting about? Lacked clarification. Solid but could have been better. (Nov 10) OK lead, but nothing spectacular. Had solid info throughout.

Division 2

1. **Stephenville Empire-Tribune**
2. **Waxahachie Daily Light**
3. **Athens Daily Review**

Stephenville Empire-Tribune - (June 14) Very good idea! A really nice read - tells story well. Good use of quotes. (Dec 11) Well written! Lots of good info.

Waxahachie Daily Light - (Aug 11) A really nice investigative piece - you can tell a lot of work went into this. It was a good read. Lots of good info. (July 26) really good idea - well written - good use of quotes.

Athens Daily Review - (Dec 10) Lots of good info! Quality piece. (Aug 20) Good info, nice details, a good read.

Division 3

1. **Hood County News**
2. **Wise County Messenger**
3. **Breckenridge American**

Hood County News: A very nice read. Very detailed. Well written. Hits a lot of good points. Good use of quotes. #2: a lot of work went into this - very informative and well detailed. Lots of good info. A very good piece.

Wise County Messenger: Nice read. Lots of good quotes. Good info. Well written. #2: plenty of good information. A nice story.

Breckenridge American: good info. #2: informative - clear and concise. Ok quotes.

Division 4

1. **Mansfield News-Mirror**
2. **Groesbeck Journal**
3. **Van Zandt News**

Mansfield News Mirror: (Feb 27) interesting topic, plenty of good info. Well written and concise. (June 26) nice topic. Informa-

tive. Good use of quotes.

Groesbeck Journal: (May 7) informative, well researched, lots of info, written well. (March 12) nice lead, good info, written well.

Van Zandt News: (April 9) nice topic, good info, good quotes, well told. (June 7) nice info, good quotes.

Division 5

1. **Gladewater Mirror**
2. **Pilot Point Post Signal**
3. **Farmersville Times**

Division 6

1. **Keene Star**
2. **Princeton Herald**
3. **Everman Star**

Keene Star: (April 23) well written, great lead, good use of quotes (June 22) nice lead, plenty of good info.

Princeton Herald: (Aug 20) Very creative language, nice lead, plenty of solid info, good job. (July 9) Solid story, concisely written

Everman Star: (Aug 27) solid story, nicely done, plenty of good info. (May 7) good use of quotes, solid info.

General Excellence

Division 1

1. **The Daily Sentinel**
2. **Texarkana Gazette**
3. **Paris News**

Daily Sentinel - (Nov 22) Plenty of good local content across the board. Very solid design in each section. Really nice sports page front. Lack of news in A section is only detriment. A very quality newspaper overall. (Feb 1) Again, plenty of good local content. A good variety of stories. Nice health section. Overall, a very impressive newspaper.

Texarkana Gazette - (April 17) Not a clear division at times on copy - especially inside. Plenty of good local info. Really nice photos and great placement. Makes things really catchy. A very solid paper. (Nov 14) Nice dominant place. Nice selection of stories. Not a clear distinction at times on inside again.

Paris News - (Nov 15) Plenty of good local info. Really nice photos of Veteran's Day. Also lots of good sports photos. The items covering the flag made it tough to read. (June 28) Good local info. Nice life section - well done.

Division 2

1. **Waxahachie Daily Light**
2. **Stephenville Enterprise-Tribune**
3. **Athens Daily Review**

Waxahachie Daily Light - (Nov 1) Lots of really nice stories. Excellent job there. Headlines all looked about the same. Lots of nice local photo. Design was good. (Sept 16) Again, lots of quality stories. A very quality paper. Nice use of photos.

Stephenville Empire-Tribune - (Nov 15) Nice mix of news and feature material. Nice specialty pages.

Athens Daily Review - (Oct 7) Design OK. Nice sports feature. (Nov 1) Some good things present, but not rich in quantity. Specialty pages lacking except for sports.

Division 3

1. **Wise County Messenger**
2. **Hood County News**
3. **Graham Leader**

Wise County Messenger: Great design work, especially in the front page. A very eye catching piece. Good use of photos throughout. #2: Really nice front. Unusual, striking and leave as definite impression.

Hood County News: Really nice design, especially on front and life fronts. Very good work throughout. #2: Plenty of good info. Really nice design work. Just a very solid paper.

Graham Leader: very solid piece. Nice sports emphasis for football playoffs. Plenty of info. #2: nice info throughout.

Division 4

1. **Mansfield News-Mirror**
2. **Kauffman Herald**
3. **Wylie News**

Mansfield News Mirror: (Aug 14) Just a very solid piece overall. Nice layout. Plenty of good material throughout the paper. (June 26) Again, good info throughout. Nice life pages. Nice photo on bridal tab cover.

Kaufman Herald: (Nov 12) Plenty of good info throughout. Nice use of photos - really liked the football cutout on front box. Give it a much bolder look. (Sept 10) A really solid piece. Inside layout could use a little something to separate things, but overall a really solid paper.

Wylie News: (Aug 19) Very well designed and put together. Very easy on the eyes. Solid work throughout. (Nov 18) Plenty of good info. Nice use of photos.

Division 5

1. **Gladewater Mirror**
2. **Sachse News**
3. **Pilot Point Post-Signal**

Gladewater Mirror: (Nov 18) Really nice front page. Excellent job with design here. Nice use of photos throughout. Nice front page feature. (June 3) Lots of good info. Nice special section. A really solid piece.

Sachse News: (Oct 8) Crisp layout. Nice mix of news, photos and feature type material. Really good sports section - lots of variety there. (June 11) Nice info and layout. Very solid work throughout.

Pilot Point Post Signal: (March 13) Nice and crisp layout. Very solid work throughout. (Nov 20) Nice use of photos throughout. Really solid sports section. A very quality paper.

Division 6

1. **Keene Star**
2. **Crowley Star**
3. **Princeton Herald**

Keene Star: (March 12) Nice mix of news and feature material. This was just a very solid paper. Good job. Design was good and easy to follow. (Nov 19) Really nice "Around Keene" pages. That's one of the things that makes this paper stand out. Great use of photos.

Crowley Star: (Aug 20) Really nice front page, really well done. Nice use photos, very solid paper. (Dec 3) Nice photos and use of graphs. Solid work all around.

Princeton Herald: (June 11) nice use of photos throughout most of paper. Nice mix of news and feature type material. (Aug 27) really nice front page. Great use of photos on front. Makes it very eye-catching. Very solid paper.

Special Section

Weekly C

1. **Overton Press**
2. **Sachse News**
3. **Gladewater Mirror**

Weekly D

1. **The Kaufman Herald**
2. **Wylie News**
3. **Pittsburg Gazette**

Semi-Weekly

1. **Hood County**
2. **Wise Co. Messenger**
3. **Breckenridge American**

Daily

1. **Texarkana Gazette**
2. **The Paris News**
3. **The Daily Sentinel**

Community Service

Daily

1. **Texarkana Gazette**
2. **Waxahachie Daily Light**
3. **The Paris News**

Texarkana Gazette: It's amazing how reprehensible the behavior of these elected officials. You did a great job reporting the facts as well as provided excellent op/ed pieces. Fabulous job!

Waxahachie Daily Light: Great coverage of reprehensible behavior. You made a huge difference in the lives of the community.

The Paris News: Very powerful coverage. Excellent job!

Smithville Empire-Tribune: Relay for life - great stories on survivors and the weekly updates.

Semi-Weekly

1. **Hood County News**

Hood County News: What a wonderful program for the community and the soldiers overseas. Your entire staff should be very proud!

Weekly

1. **Gladewater Mirror**
2. **Winnsboro News**
3. **Mart Messenger**

Gladewater Mirror: Very thorough coverage. Excellent way to follow through the entire process. Great job!

Winnsboro News: Good for you in providing such a great awareness. The 700-plus arrests are definitely a result of your coverage.

Mart Messenger: What a wonderful thing for your community! You should be very proud!

Big Sandy & Hawkins Journal: Great job!

Photographer of the Year:

Dailies:

- 1 - **Sam Craft (The Paris News)**
- 2 - **Evan Lewis (Texarkana Gazette)**
- 3 - **Christy Wooten (The Daily Sentinel/Nacogdoches)**

Paris News: Congratulations! While your fellow competition all had real strengths in this area or that, you delivered the total package. Your feature photos are unapologetically simple yet they are colorful, creative, and tell your point clearly. They work! Your sports shots are great. (Too bad composition didn't see fit

to run that soccer photo huge. It was terrific!) And your news shots sealed the deal Your image of a wife mourning at the side of her soldier husband's coffin gave me what other entrants did not. It told me this tale of sorrow, while at the same time it treated the widow with respect. The way you presented the story was more up-standing and effective than if you had show her face. It was a sad, but beautiful image. All of us photographers could learn from your approach. You are hugely gifted and completely deserving of this recognition for being the best.

Texarkana Gazette: Wow! You're such a talented photographer in so many aspects of the job - in sports, news, and features. Your photos are clean, concise in their messages and delivered with as much "whoa!"-factor as possible. Your sports photos are unusual and incredible. Your feature photos were creative and entertaining with a flair for the dramatic. They grab the reader's eyes and don't let go. Your news pictures are proof that you're a solid "on the spot" reporter through a lens. The fact that you got to the mall shooting while the victim was still on the ground was impressive. (As for the image of the mother reacting to the news of her daughter's death... I realize that producing art in such an instance may be difficult, but as ethical photographers we should remember that just because we are often in a position to zero in on one person is tragedy, it doesn't mean we necessarily should.) You must be a real go getter and I hope your editor and publisher fully appreciate your talent.

Daily Sentinel: How fortunate the readers in Nacogdoches are to have such quality captivating photos at their fingertips everyday! Your love of the feature photo shines. Your swimming pool photo made me long for warmer days, your football picture made me instantly image the roar of a Friday night crowd and the rodeo shot made my eyes instinctively wide as if the scene had been unfolding just 10 paces in front of me. To bring out such responses in your viewers should give you a great sense of confidence concerning your effectiveness as a photojournalist. The only thing that caused me to take pause was the fact that you went for the patent easy out photo of the grief-stricken homeowner at the scene of the fire. Next time, think outside the box and challenge yourself to convey the devastation without exploiting the pain of those affected. You'll impress people with your integrity and have an unusual impact.

Athens Daily Review: It's easy to tell from just these few samples that you are a well rounded, photographer - one that has an eye for artistic framing and the hustle it takes to cover breaking news. You obviously worked to get to the scene quickly and covered an event in excellent fashion. (Because of that - that's all the more reason to fight for quality reproduction from your press!) In sports, your baseball shot couldn't have been framed any better. Your football shot was great as far as timing, but could've been punched up a little more with a little Photoshop sharpening. (Be sure you save cut line terms like "spectacular catch" for your editorial pages!) And, finally, your shot of the Mustangs was truly one of the few entries that took my breath away. Wonderful shot! Great job.

Semi-Weeklies - Photographer of the Year:

- 1 - Joe Duty (Wise County Messenger)
- 2 - Mary Vinson (Hood County News)

Wise County Messenger: Simply amazing photography! I feel compelled to admit that as I looked at your news, sports, and feature photos, my jaw literally dropped. I was awestruck - time and again - by images that deliver so many "positives," among them: high drama, exquisite timing, and gripping emotion. From the "oh yeah!" touchdown photo to well framed fire-fighting picture to the unlikely image of a lion unwrapping a Christmas gift, your photography was through and through the winner. What a wonderful eye. It's a true gift that I'm certain gives your readers much to look forward to in each addition. Your photography is the result of talent, artistry, and interesting content striking a perfect balance. Congratulations on this much deserved honor.

Hood County News: Holy smokes! Your fire photo was the first photo I saw and then I couldn't wait to see what was next. You didn't disappoint. From your accident scene shot to your volleyball net action to your yo-ho-ho lil' pirate - it was apparent what a talented photographer you are. Aside from the fact that you competed so strong in your division, I'd say that your photography would have been solidly successful in any of the divisions in this year's NETPA Better Newspaper Contest. Excellent work! Keep running those quality photos large. They definitely deserve the space and the attention.

Weeklies:

- 1 - Jeremy Weber (The Winnsboro News)
- 2 - Janie Hartman (Muenster Enterprise)
- 3 - Keith Magee (Pilot Point Post-Signal)

Winnsboro News: Wow! You won me over in a matter of heartbeats. Of all the many competitors in this division, you were the only one to not only meet but also surpass the criteria I had for defining the winner. In news, you give readers a glimpse "into the moment" during important community events. In sports, your solid shots on the field/court put readers in a rare seat to see better sights than they would for the price of a ticket. And when it comes to feature photography, you obviously plan and execute with a high level of creativity and quality. From your brain to the newsprint, your photos turn out clean both in appearance and intensity. You are the kind of talented, skilled photographer that many in this business strive for years to become. Congratulations on a job extremely well done.

Muenster Enterprise: What refreshing photography! Your fire scene photo is good - your cemetery is your best. You show a rare ability to capture the cuteness mother's love to scrapbook (ie. The sealed with a kiss shot). As well as the skills to sum up the feel of a situation without words proves just how well you can do it all. Thank you for submitting a sports photo that was of something other than photo. I could just imagine the dust just hanging in the air at the tractor pool! Then, when you did submit a football photo (like the rest), you entered one that told the back story of what happens after the game (not like

the rest). Excellent work! Your paper and your readers are lucky to have you. And... it's up to you whether you share this with them... but I think you are fortunate to have press men who try to match the quality of their work to yours.

Pilot Point Post Signal: When your photos illicit one word (or even one syllable) responses (ie. 'ewww' to the camel kiss and 'awww' to poor little Thomas Salis' first day of school), you know you are doing what only the best photographers can do - reach their viewers on a very basic emotional level. The images that allow us to feel a situation - to be brought into a situation - are the ones I believe we appreciate the most. Your news fire photo was one of the best among all the divisions. Your sports shots are precise, clear, and nothing dash to cookie cutter. I appreciated the fact that you chose to enter the powder puff photo because it wasn't expected, traditional or run of the mill. (I just wish you would have snapped a split second later so I could have seen if the defender succeeded in grabbing the flag.) You are an extremely talented photographer with plenty of know how in the field and a curious eye that we are thankful for its incredible results.

Lake Country Sun: Super fire photo! Nighttime blazed shots can be tricky and troublesome technically but you really delivered on this one. You show us very clearly the flames, smoke, hoses, and firemen, and yet you also backed up enough distance so that you could show your readers exactly where all of it was happening. (Be sure captions reflect what's actually in the photo. Yours was a bit confusing because it said firemen from 15 departments were battling the fire when you only showed us a handful.) Otherwise, you are obviously strong in sports as well as features. Your Santa Claus photo, for instance, is all kinds of cute. Still, it's exactly what your readers would expect. Don't be afraid to go "outside the box" and do the unexpected. Surprise is a powerful element that we all too often underutilize. Keep up the good work!

Journalist of the Year:

Dailies:

- 1 - Joann Livingston (Waxahachie Daily Light)
- 2 - Trent Jacobs (The Daily Sentinel/Nacogdoches)
- 3 - Krista Goerte (The Paris News)

Waxahachie Daily Light: In an age of heavy reliability of electronics, it is positively inspiring to see a journalist who doesn't just take one person's claims as gospel, but instead has enough chutzpah to get out from behind her desk and go witness things with her own eyes. You gave great and ambitious coverage (and follow up) on the conduct of staff in your local food stamp office. You held them accountable and spoke up for a part for the population, it seemed, that no one in authority would listen to. In the process you undoubtedly earned a ton of credibility with your readers! You are to be credited for avoiding the comfort zone (you interviewed a self professed murder) and holding your reader's attention with accuracy and a knack for keeping your articles' lengths in proportion to your subject matter. All in all, you are to be commended for being very good at

what you do! Congratulations. P.S. On the story about the bees at the accident scene, you should have used the "SWAT" Team angle as your lead. That was a good way to go with that. Plus - be careful to attribute all allegations.

Daily Sentinel: What an incredible job you did on the illegal casino story. At first, I thought that you had a great, trusting relationship with your local law enforcement agency for it to take you on the raid. Then, when I learn your own investigative techniques led the police to the operation - I was blown away. What guts! That's what reporting is about. Also, the fact that your own records request led to the lost books story was very impressive. You could have benefited from a graphic when talking through that muddle of book numbers lost and accounted for by the INSD. In addition, make sure you avoid editorial terms like beginning a graphic with "Interestingly," - leave that for the reader to decide. Wonderful display of great journalistic abilities on a wide range of topics. Great job!

Paris News: I'm not sure if the domestic abuse victim came to you asking to go public with her identity and case or if you had to be persistent in earning her trust and convincing her to let you tell her story. Either way, you did right by her. Your composition preserves her dignity as it examines her misfortune. You didn't shy away from inserting yourself in a volatile situation so that you could shed some light on a common problem. Hopefully, you showed other victims that they could follow her example and also get help. The way in which you told the sad story of fire victim Darrial Dixon was wonderful. The variety of stories you pinned epitomizes flexibility - the kind that is only possessed by the very best in our profession. Your solid reporting could be stronger still if you avoid such clichés such as "tempers flared" and force every word to work for its spot in the story.

Athens Daily Review: So many times we journalists get so busy in churning out copy about what's happening in the now that we forget we have the tools and ability to produce some awesome analysis of how events in our community have shaped up over time. You did a great job of broadening your scope and offering your readers not only a look back but also a thorough examination of how an event's development has had modern implications. Great work! As for your story on the airplane thief, I believe you could have had a much more interesting lead. Rather than starting with a statement that only tells me this man like airplanes as a hobby, you should jump headfirst into the jist of the story. The facts you gathered are gripping - use them. Otherwise, you did a fantastic job of covering both sides of the story. Your efforts to do so are both noticeable and appreciated. P.S. Make sure your acronyms (ie. Tcommi) are attached with parenthesis to the full name upon first reference.

Semi-Weeklies/Twins:

- 1 - Kathy Swindle (Hood County News)
- 2 - Brandon Evans (Wise County Messenger)
- 3 - Luke Harris (Burleson Star)

Hood County News: Great work! I can almost guarantee your reader's look forward to your special reports and rightly so. You're an incredible journalist. Thoroughness, clarity, fairness, and a flair for intrigue are a few of your strengths. The "Mission in Peril" piece seemed balanced. The "condemned man..."

account was gripping. The articles on underage drinking and junkyard properties serve as excellent examples of how to take common stories and make them personal by recounting specific incidents. All your entries appear well researched - proof that you don't shy away from legwork or touchy situations. I appreciate how you offer readers several points of entry into a story by breaking information down into easily digested tidbits. Once you hook an audience, I love how you work hard to keep them by eliminating a possible sea of grey with subheads, pull out quotes, and mugs of those cited. While this division was filled with accomplished journalists, your accuracy, sensitivity, and ability to entertain elevated you above the rest. Congratulations!

Wise County Messenger: Your fire story is extremely well done. I can tell you got out there in the thick of things and spoke to as many people affected by this historic event as possible. Doing them justice by telling their stories is what its all about. Remember to always attribute opinions or judgments (ie. Your statement-quote - "It appeared as if a clogged chimney shoot led to the devastation"). Nice tribute to the lost pastor and his wife. I'm glad you took the time to explain why they thought it was an accident and not suicide. Your sculptor story showed off your abilities to put the reader exactly where you want them. Great analogies. You also prove your versatility and willingness to take a stand and then back it up with wisdom and facts. Excellent work! Your readers are fortunate to have you.

Burleson Star: You are obviously a very story news writer who is also flexible enough to produce an interesting feature now and again. On the article about the student punished by her school district for comments and photos posted on her Myspace page, I thought you did a wonderful job of presenting both sides of the story without a lean one way or the other. The bump in the night ghost story was entertaining at the least and I assume very time appropriate to coincide with Halloween. Your copy was perhaps one of the cleanest, most well attributed, balanced, and smooth flowing of those I saw. Your City of Character piece felt like PR for the government - maybe if you had put a 'face on the issue' by profiling someone who exudes that long list of qualities, it would have had more impact. Very good reporting and nice tight writing.

The Graham Leader: Great mix of features, news and a column to show your broad range of skills. The story of the mean paralyzed football team coming back to play was cool. And, regardless of your own faith, if you say "thanks to God" in the paper, you had better attribute it to someone. In the malnourished animal story, I was left wondering what punishment the pet owner might face. Try to anticipate and answer your reader's questions. The story of the baby with the heart defect and struggles was good and finished strong. The next time you have one that long, though, you should consider serializing it. Write tighter and chop out excess words that either repeat something already said or don't serve a vital part. Thorough job with lots of style. Good use of transitional and supportive quotes. All around - solid work. Nice job.

Weeklies:

- 1 - Susan Reeves (Mount Vernon Optic Herald)
- 2 - Erin Cooper (Glen Rose Reporter)
- 3 - Aaron May (The Gladewater Mirror)

Mount Vernon Optic Herald: The best journalists among us are the ones who hunt down all the pertinent facts to a story and then deliver them clearly without inflection of his/her own opinions or perceptions. You have that skill down pat as did the other top three writers in this division. You were put on top for your sheer diversity. You seem to be exceptional at handling whatever story comes your way. From news to features to yes, even sports, you've got your community covered. On the story about the cheerleader shoplifters - your writing was precise without a hint of sensationalism. Your ability to research was easy to see in the piece about the car story you cited "50 children have already died this year" but didn't put in a frame of reference such as where they died (Texas, US, world?) An, one of your strongest qualities was evident in your sweet but not overly sentimental profile on Minnie Reeves. Admirable how you conveyed a great feature on its own facts and supporting quotes with NO editorializing. Awesome job. Congratulations!

Glen Rose Reporter: Finally! In a murky sea of entries, I'm finally grounded in your subject matter with clean writing. The greatest of journalists let the facts speak for themselves - with no editorializing, no sensationalizing, and no apparent skewing. You delivered exactly that. The only two questions I could come up with that weren't answer within the bodies your articles were : 1) How old was the person in the rehab focus? (It may not be vital to the story, but in dealing with health related stories, I have the tendency to try to relate to the subjects through my own age. And, I figure if I do it, so do other readers). 2) What apparent news peg did you have for featuring the "mum" and pop flower shop? (i.e. Don't assume all your readers knew it was homecoming or that they read your top PI story! You could have easily addressed that it was homecoming as well as justified why you featured them over other florists in the neighborhood.) Great piece on the murderer and it was particularly nice not to have to follow a jump on.

Gladewater Mirror: You simply take the prize for having the best quote among all the entries! In your piece on the million mile minister Rev. Alton Davis, you could not have summed the story's theme any better than you did by including his quote: "If you keep looking at the goal, what you're doing won't wear you out." In your story about Ft. Hood soldier PFC Angelia Johnson - when we take away the show art - we're still left with a gripping story we can't put down. In your article about senior citizens returning to work, your lead was clever yet on-point. Your Y2K "look back" was an inspiration. Too often we don't do stories that look at what we've been through and how we've changed (for better or worse). Your story fostered a sense of community as you brought your readers together to laugh at themselves as they realize how far they have come. You are very talented at fielding a variety of topics appropriately. Your fact finding is strong and your presentation of those facts is insightful. Your writing is clean, entertaining and valuable. Thanks for being a model for what the rest of us should be doing. P.S. The top 4 placings in this division were nearly too close to be decided!

The Malakoff News: Solid reporting - balanced representation of opposing sides and strong impact. Your article on the rubble issue was ideally thorough and fair to the parties involved. I appreciate how you handled a topic that I'm sure many in your area were talking about non-stop. Good for you for submitting

an open records request and following through on a issue. Go get 'em! Your articles on the Old Rock Building and MISD were excellent - giving readers up to date reports on a hot topic. Also, the ability to take something relatively dry and make it worth reading really became apparent with your coverage of the documentary film. I was hooked by your smooth story telling technique. Excellent.

Sweepstakes

Division 1

1. Texarkana Gazette - 1,000 Points
2. Daily Sentinel - 875 Points
3. Paris News - 800 Points

Division 2

1. Waxahachie Daily Light - 1125 points
2. Stephenville Enterprise-Tribune - 675 points
3. Athens Daily Review - 600 points

Division 3

1. Hood County News (1,025 points)
Wise County Messenger (1,000 points)
3. Graham Leader (375 points)
4. Burleson Star (350 points)

Division 4

1. Winsboro News (700 points)
2. Mansfield News-Mirror (675 points)
3. Wylie News (525 points)
4. Kaufman Herald (400 points)

Division 5

1. Pilot Point Post-Signal (750 points)
2. Gladewater Mirror (675 Points)
3. Farmersville Times (350 points)
4. Sachse News (325 points)

Division 6

1. Princeton Herald (525 points)
2. Keene Star (400 points)
3. Everman Star (375 points)
4. Big Sandy & Hawkins Journal (325 points)

Thank you to the South Texas Press Association for judging the entries.