



**1,203 news/editorial/photography awards given at Raleigh press banquet**

## Latest News

**3,892 entries received**

**109 news organizations participate**

**More than 200 judges across four states help decide the winners**

**Member videos shine a light on #NCPA2017**

### SPONSORED CONTENT



**President Dunn discusses her Olympic dreams in windsurfing and sailing**

## Videos



**Arts & Entertainment**  
Phil and the Flares on the amazing rise of their video careers



**Travel & Leisure**  
StarNews heads to Raleigh



**Style**  
Debby Barden, Montgomery Herald, on career looks that work!



**Education**  
Are we prepared for the future?



**Politics/Government**  
"What's next?" asks NCPA lobbyist Bussian



**Our Opinion**  
GateHouse Coastal Group on the "office"

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# 2016 WILLIAM C. LASSITER AWARD

Since 1988, this annual award has gone to First Amendment proponents in many walks of life. Some of the past winners include congressional representatives, state lawmakers, professors, lawyers. This special award was named in honor of the late William C. Lassiter, a former NCPA general counsel and recognizes members of the public who have made significant contributions in support of open government.

## C. AMANDA MARTIN

**Stevens Martin Vaughn & Tadych, PLLC**  
Raleigh



Amanda Martin is a communications lawyer, representing traditional and social media as well as corporate communicators on issues related to the libel and privacy, the internet, intellectual property, and other speech-based concerns. Ms. Martin is general counsel to the N.C. Press Association, and for more than 20 years, she routinely has counseled reporters, editors and news directors about avoiding libel suits, gaining access to closed government meetings and records and resisting subpoenas. With the advent of the internet, Ms. Martin expanded her practice to include counseling and representing non-media individuals and organizations with social media issues.

Martin is also the co-author of the North Carolina section of the Media Law Resource Center's annual survey on privacy law, co-author of the North Carolina section of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press Open Government Guide, and co-editor of the North Carolina Media Law Handbook, to which she also contributes the chapter on access to public meetings. She is a frequent speaker and panelist at media law forums and workshops and regularly contributes articles to legal, media and other publications. Ms. Martin has taught as an adjunct instructor of media law at the UNC School of Law, the UNC School of Journalism and Mass Communication and Campbell Law School.

### Past Lassiter Award Winners

- |      |  |      |   |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1988 | Congressman Cass Ballenger   | 2000 | Attorney Jon Buchan   |
| 1989 | Rep. George Miller   | 2001 | Rep. Robert Grady   |
| 1990 | Elmer Oettinger, N.C. Institute of Government  | 2002 | Rep. Jennifer Weiss   |
| 1991 | The Hon. James H. Pou Bailey, Retired Senior Judge, 10th Judicial District           | 2003 | Hugh Stevens, NCPA Counsel Emeritus                                   |
| 1992 | Sharon Pennell, Journalism Professor, ASU Member, Caldwell County Board of Education | 2004 | The Hon. Wanda G. Bryant, N.C. Court of Appeals                       |
| 1993 | Senator Marc Basnight  | 2005 | Mark Swanger, Haywood, County Commissioner                            |
| 1994 | Dr. Gene Lanier, East Carolina University  | 2006 | Bob Hall, Democracy North Carolina                                    |
| 1995 | Franz Holsher, Gastonia City Council   | 2007 | Joe Sinsheimer  |
| 1996 | Dr. Margaret Blanchard, UNC-CH School of Journalism & Mass Communication             | 2008 | Tom McClure and Eldridge Painter of Sylva and Jim Rowell of Cullowhee |
| 1997 | Mayor Tom Gwyn, Elkin, N.C.  | 2009 | No winner   |
| 1998 | Senator Roy Cooper   | 2010 | Cathy Packer  |
| 1999 | Senator David Hoyle  | 2011 | No winner   |
|      |  | 2014 | Rep. Marilyn Avila  |
|      |  | 2015 | Sen. Norman Sanderson   |

# HUGH MORTON Photographer of the Year

Daily Newspaper Winner

**ANDREW KRECH**

News & Record  
Greensboro



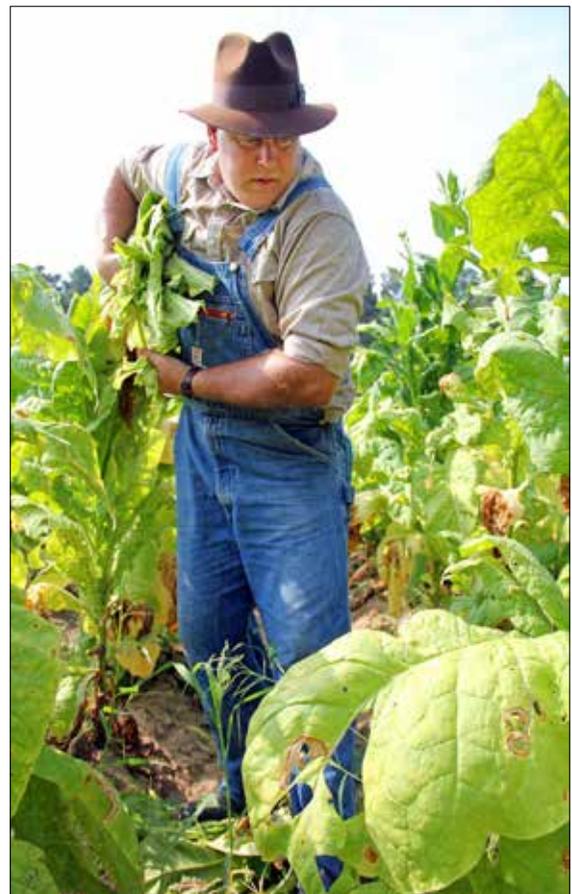
See more of Andrew Krech's work on p. 46

See more of Mark Schultz's work on p. 47

Community Newspaper Winner

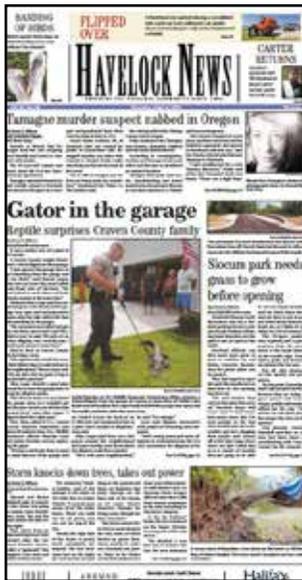
**MARK SCHULTZ**

Durham News  
Durham



# GENERAL EXCELLENCE

## Division A



### FIRST PLACE Havelock New

Havelock

*This was a paper I could really dig into. Eye catching front pages lead to a well designed newspaper meeting the needs of a diverse group of readers. Audience engagement is not lost on this publication, and neither are graphics. This publication proves "digital first" is important, but that the print product should not be lost in the mix. This paper clearly stood out.*

### SECOND PLACE Black Mountain News

Black Mountain

*Solid government reporting and out of the box feature writing set this publication a part from the competition. Informative, yet unique news reporting is mixed in with the standard fare, and the photography in this publication is as crisp as can be. Ad placement isn't overbearing and it was nice to see a sports section not completely devoted to high school athletics.*

### THIRD PLACE Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

*Nice layout, great mix of stories and an arts section that transcends your average lifestyle section - this paper truly has it all.*

## Division B



### FIRST PLACE Outer Banks Sentinel

Nags Head

*In terms of design, this paper had no match in this division. Couple that with solid, and balanced reporting on serious government issues like HB2, this is the kind of newspaper we would happily pick up on a weekly basis. Smart design takes a traditional calendar listing from a passing gaze to full engagement. Excellent work.*

### SECOND PLACE Sylva Herald & Ruralite

Sylva

*We loved the "Good Times" and "Hard Times" features on page one. Solid photography and nice layout throughout this publication. It also offered a nice mix of news - if you are a local government junkie or community news hound, you will likely find what you are looking for here. Nice work.*

### THIRD PLACE The Enquirer-Journal

Monroe

*The color and graphics in this publication were particularly pleasing. Nice layout for Cops/Courts, Sports and Business News sections.*

## Division C



### FIRST PLACE The Pilot

Southern Pines

*What feels like a small town paper from page one proves to be so much more with this publication. Excellent photography throughout - crisp and clear from feature photos to mugshots. Strong reporting on subjects from cops and courts to local government, business, the arts and the community. Strong op-ed section with a lot of local content. I would be happy to call this my hometown newspaper.*

### SECOND PLACE Mountain Xpress

Asheville

*It was a lot of fun tucking into this newspaper. Clean layout with strong photography — nice graphics when they are needed as well. A community's voice really shines in this publication. Loved the "Ode to Asheville" feature. Nice work.*

### THIRD PLACE Smoky Mountain News

Waynesville

*In-depth reporting and design set this paper apart. Ads are well placed, The festival directory is designed well and informative. You clearly have the pulse of your community.*

## Division D



### FIRST PLACE The Washington Daily News

Washington

*Great page one graphic. Clean layout throughout. Writing is clear and solid. Local editorial on new charter school.*

### SECOND PLACE Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

*Clean, compelling layouts. Sensational page one graphic. Terrific ledes on page one, combined with some strong story telling and punchy, compact writing. Love the TLC shown section starters and respect, confident use of white space.*

### THIRD PLACE Times-News

Hendersonville

*Good local news count.*

# GENERAL EXCELLENCE

## Division E



### FIRST PLACE

**StarNews**

Wilmington

*Lots of terrific local stories placed upfront. Local budget editorial. Nice choice of what stories to pull from AP and Bloomberg.*

### SECOND PLACE

**Gaston Gazette**

Gastonia

*Strong active writing; clean layouts; nice combination of local features and news.*

### THIRD PLACE

**High Point Enterprise**

High Point

*High local story count, with a mix of news and features. Well written.*

## Division F



### FIRST PLACE

**Winston-Salem Journal**

Winston-Salem

*Local, local, local story count makes this the top contender.*

### SECOND PLACE

**News & Observer**

Raleigh

*Terrific investigative piece and story telling about police abuse. Great graphics and alternate story forms.*

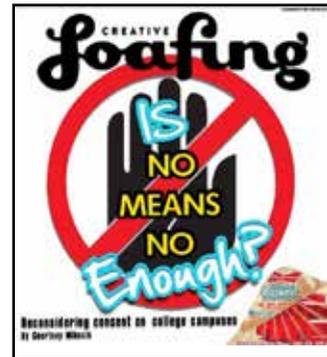
### THIRD PLACE

**Charlotte Observer**

Charlotte

*Strong writing throughout. Good use of alternate story forms/presenting multiple ways into the story.*

## Specialty



### FIRST PLACE

**Creative Loafing**

Charlotte

&

### FIRST PLACE

**Appearance & Design/  
Specialty Publications**

**Creative Loafing**

Charlotte

## Online



### FIRST PLACE

**NC Health News**

northcarolinahealthnews.org

*Good, solid site. Very clean. Good content and plenty of it. Verticals work really well. Like the sliders at the top of the homepage.*

### SECOND PLACE

**NC Policy Watch**

ncpolicywatch.com

*Nice, modern site. Well designed. Good content. Great use of info graphics.*

### THIRD PLACE

**Coastal Review Online**

coastalreview.org

*Nice site. Good combination of content/photos.*

# DIVISION A

## Community newspapers under 3,500 circulation

### GENERAL NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Fred McCormick**

Black Mountain News

Black Mountain

Town employee Belt rescues local woman

*Compelling story about life-or-death incident. Action packed, tightly written, just a gem of a story.*

2nd Place

**Phillip Bantz**

North Carolina Lawyers Weekly

Charlotte

Ambien Defense

*Tightly written, logical, sequential, compelling, interesting to read and clarified an issue that could be confusing.*

3rd Place

**Terry Lane**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

Great white shark on Wrightsville Beach  
*Well-written and well-researched stories about local event with high reader interest. Compelling read.*

### ONLINE BREAKING NEWS COVERAGE

1st Place

**Terry Lane**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

Wrightsville Beach response to military jet crash

### NEWS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Terry Lane**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

Diver swims under fire to end shooting episode at marina

*Great play-by-play recap of a dramatic local event.*

2nd Place

**Scott Brings Plenty**

The Cherokee One Feather

Cherokee

Seeking Hope

*Excellent use of heartfelt quotes from Native American leaders who want to make a difference in helping curb addiction. Nice layout/use of photos to complement text.*

3rd Place

**Davis Moore**

The Highlander

Highlands

An unbearable problem

*It seems so simple: Don't feed the bears! Story does a great job outlining multiple perspectives on why the problem won't go away.*

### FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Carter Giegerich**

The Highlander

Highlands

Special deliveries

*A balanced mix of information and personality combined with supportive photography. Good quotes and background details round out the elements that make this a winning feature.*

2nd Place

**Scott Brings Plenty**

The Cherokee One Feather

Cherokee

Weaving Words

*Well done. The writer shares a moving story about the journey of translation to bring the Cherokee language to children's literature. A short piece that paints a clear picture.*

3rd Place

**Emmy Errante**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

Adult coloring - an exercise in

letting go

*Description pulls the reader into the story. Great mix of sources and background material for a colorful feature!*

### PROFILE FEATURE

1st Place

**Paul Clark**

Black Mountain News

Black Mountain

Veteran remembered for selfless service to country and community

*The reporter succeeded in sharing a piece created with historical references, narrative storytelling, interviews and supportive photographs. All helped the reader form a clear picture of the subject.*

2nd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Suffering in silence

*This powerful profile captures the spirit of the subject as well as the debilitating impact of ALS. The writer managed to show readers what daily life looks like for the subject while using an appropriate tone to illustrate a serious health condition.*

3rd Place

**Bill Moss**

Hendersonville Lightning

Hendersonville

John Humphrey has spent much of his 100 years conserving nature

*The profile opens with the theme of nature that is woven throughout the piece. It reveals an informative sketch of the subject and invites readers to understand a person's life story.*

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING

1st Place

**Imari Scarbrough**

The Anson Record

Wadesboro

Ansonia preps for dark comedy

*Overall, this made me want to see the play myself. Nice job!*

2nd Place

**Carter Giegerich**

The Highlander

Highlands

State of the arts

*The economics of art isn't an easy topic to explore, but you did a great job laying out the information, organizing and keeping the story rolling. This was terrific work!*

3rd Place

**Scott Brings Plenty**

The Cherokee One Feather

Cherokee

Wilson's photos featured in Fayetteville exhibit

*Very well written piece. One-interview stories can sometimes be difficult to keep dynamic, but this fit together very well. Well done*

### EDUCATION REPORTING

1st Place

**Taylor Wright**

Hendersonville Lightning

Hendersonville

Less affluent Bruce Drysdale fast becoming fluent in Spanish

*A very nice read that infuses a definitive educational issue with cultural awareness. Great.*

2nd Place

**Justin Caudell, Frank Taylor**

Crossroads Chronicle

Cashiers

WNC has state's lowest teacher turnover

*This piece provides a comprehensive look at the backbone of the education system: the teachers. Well-researched and executed.*

3rd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Degrees of Debt

*Because seriously, who can't relate to this story and why it's such a problem?*

### NEWS ENTERPRISE REPORTING

1st Place

**Carter Giegerich**

The Highlander

Highlands

Visions for the forest

*Legitimate conflicts about national forest use are presented in a balanced manner here. Keep up the story-telling!*

2nd Place

**Lindell John Kay**

Tarboro Weekly

Tarboro

Officials plan to build new shelter

*This reporter uses bite-sized stories to make an otherwise mundane law enforcement grant story easier to digest.*

2nd Place

**Lindell John Kay**

Tarboro Weekly

Tarboro

Woman has to choose medicine, food

*Here a personalized news-feature brings a specific-to-general treatment to the sad, unintended effects of the health-care insurance coverage story.*

3rd Place

**Bill Moss**

Hendersonville Lightning

Hendersonville

Hendersonville High School

*The battle for how to use or downgrade a historic high school is the focus of this enterprise coverage. The reporter showed patience, diligence and command of the topic.*

### INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

1st Place

**Lindell John Kay**

Tarboro Weekly

Tarboro

Investigation of murder continues

*It's always a good idea to revisit a story years later, especially one in which lingering questions remain. It was nice to hear from the widow.*

### SPORTS NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Simon Gonzalez**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

Army prevails in annual Fishing Battle

*A sports story that is much more than just simply going fishing. Excellent story, made readers feel like they were at the fishing tournament.*

# DIVISION A

2nd Place

**Ken Buday**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Proposed cuts

*Nice perspective from the coach and how the budget cuts would affect a successful program for years to come.*

3rd Place

**Rich Levey**

Tideland News

Swansboro

Pirates drop thriller to Cardinals

*An amazing lead that helped set the tone for the entire article.*

## SPORTS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Rich Levey**

Tideland News

Swansboro

Holloway overcomes injury

2nd Place

**Carter Giegerich**

Crossroads Chronicle

Cashiers

Cashiers resident finds excitement

between two wheels

3rd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Sermons recalls baseball's golden era

## GENERAL NEWS

### PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Rotor heads

*Photographs of a subject through an object like this one can be difficult. This photo executes the technique perfectly. This photographer knows what he is doing and how to do it well. This photo adds context to the story and offers a unique perspective.*

2nd Place

**Emily Errante**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

Wet weather impact on Wrightsville

Beach

*Nicely composed.*

3rd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Active shooter drill

*The three figures of this photograph are nicely framed and create a dynamic picture.*

## FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Ken Buday**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Beeutiful

*Just one word: Awesome!*

2nd Place

**Staff**

Tideland News

Swansboro

Halloween fun

3rd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Sparks fly

## SPORTS FEATURE PHOTO

1st Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Flying high

*The trail of water droplets with the trees in the background and the height of the kite surfer make this picture perfect.*

2nd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Game Night

*The excitement of a high school game. In the stands as well as on the field.*

3rd Place

**Rebecca Barriger**

Lake Gaston Gazette-Observer

Littleton

Sports Wakeboarding

*A group of talented wakeboarding competitors are captured in these photos.*

## SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Ken Buday**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Rams turn back White Oak

*A good football photo made even better by the game conditions. Good detail, big faces -- a nice combination.*

2nd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Sharing the catch

*It's nice to see youth players get their turn in the spotlight, and then to get nice action in the process makes this even better.*

3rd Place

**Rich Levey**

Tideland News

Swansboro

High hurdles

*Track photos can be tricky, but this is a nice angle showing the neck-and-neck battle.*

## PHOTO PAGE OR ESSAY

1st Place

**Arthur Howell**

The Roanoke Beacon

Plymouth

Living History

*Strong photos and writing make this photo essay come alive. It captures the action and the realism of a re-enactment. Very well done.*

2nd Place

**Ken Buday**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Tball

*This t-ball essay uses beautiful images of young players celebrating their first opening day. Well told and well presented.*

3rd Place

**Carolyn Morrisroe**

The Highlander

Highlands

Runnin' in the rain

*Just for degree of difficulty on the part of the photographer and runners, this essay deserves an award. When everyone could have gone home, the event went on and it made for a truly interesting, well designed photo essay.*

## BEST VIDEO

1st Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Gator in the Garage

*A well put together video about an interesting situation. Good shots and good interviews with wildlife officers who provide helpful information to the audience about what to do if they encounter a wild animal.*

2nd Place

**Paul Clark**

Black Mountain News

Black Mountain

Tom Mincarelli wins awards for his

wines

*There were some great and unique shots in this video with good audio as well. The video was long enough to tell the story and got to the point as well as kept the viewer's attention.*

3rd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Craven Community College high altitude balloon payload drop test

*A good documentation of a process. Overall, the process was explained well and there were different and interesting shots provided.*

## BEST MULTIMEDIA PROJECT

1st Place

**Ken Ripley**

Spring Hope Enterprise

Spring Hope

Spring Hope Pumpkin Festival

*Good combination of multimedia. Like that it's available in multiple places - paper's website, YouTube.*

2nd Place

**Terry Lane**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

Sailor overcomes injury to sail the East Coast

*Profile, photo and video work well together. I like the video embedded in the online article (easy to find and flows well).*

3rd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Emerging Engineers

## EDITORIALS

1st Place

**Brad Spaulding, Carolyn Morrisroe**

The Highlander

Highlands

Highlander Editorials

*The quality of the writing was good, and the thinking clear. The entries address important local issues (or, in one case, bring a national issue to a local level).*

2nd Place

**Ken Ripley**

Spring Hope Enterprise

Spring Hope

Editorials

*The writing was clear and polished. The style was engaging. There is a lot to like about these entries.*

3rd Place

**Justin Caudell**

Crossroads Chronicle

Cashiers

June 15, July 6 and July 13, 2016

*Good explanation of the districting issues. The piece on the importance of public engagement in meetings and the process was well done.*

## LIGHTER COLUMNS

1st Place

**Simon Gonzalez**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

*These columns stood out because of the strong approach to different topics. The writing was solid, crisp and very engaging. Exceptional.*

# DIVISION A

## Community newspapers under 3,500 circulation

2nd Place

### **Brad Spaulding**

The Highlander

Highlands

Publisher's Column

*These columns are well-written and cover a good variety of topics. My favorite focused on the Alabama fan and his beloved cap. What a great story. Kudos also to using the column about children to focus on content in the paper. People do love the wish letters.*

3rd Place

### **Barry Fetzer**

The Havelock News

Havelock

*My guilty pleasure.../Here's one solution.../Seeing Christmas...*

*The writing was solid. Points were well-made. My favorite centered on the look back at watching television and using that to deliver a message. That column really resonated with me.*

## SERIOUS COLUMNS

1st Place

### **Simon Gonzalez**

Lumina News

Wrightsville Beach

Collection of columns

2nd Place

### **Barry Fetzer**

The Havelock News

Havelock

*Fighting wrong war.../Everybody has a story.../After 33 years...*

3rd Place

### **W. Curt Vincent**

The Bladen Journal

Elizabethtown

*Remembering..., Exclusive..., A young...*

## SPORTS COLUMNS

1st Place

### **Ken Buday**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Sun did rise

2nd Place

### **Scott Brings Plenty**

The Cherokee One Feather

Cherokee

On the Sidelines

## ELECTION/POLITICAL REPORTING

1st Place

### **Amelia Harper**

Tarboro Weekly

Tarboro

School board up for grabs

*Very fair and balanced coverage of a contested election and at least some discussion of an uncontested seat - which could have been ignored. The little side-by-side for the contested after jump is nice.*

2nd Place

### **Imari Scarbrough**

The Anson Record

Wadesboro

Bond boosters tout benefits

3rd Place

### **Lindell John Kay**

Tarboro Weekly

Tarboro

Cast your vote

## HEADLINE WRITING

1st Place

### **Carter Giegerich**

The Highlander

Highlands

Highlander Headlines

*Great use of small, punchy headlines to grab reader's attention. "State of the arts" stands out as a great headline for a story on the economic climate of the arts. Similarly, "Of palattes and palates" is a strong lead in offering readers a chance to understand just enough of the story and want to read for more.*

2nd Place

### **Carolyn Morrisroe**

The Highlander

Highlands

Highlander Headlines

*These headlines offer great lead-ins to pique the interest of readers.*

3rd Place

### **Scott Brings Plenty**

The Cherokee One Feather

Cherokee

Headlines by Scott Brings Plenty

*Creative use of a print design for "Snow problems."*

## EDITORIAL PAGE

1st Place

### **Jeff Herrin**

Tarboro Weekly

Tarboro

The Tarboro Weekly Editorial Page

*Easily the most attractive editorial pages in the category, this newspaper had a great mix of opinion content on local and regional issues.*

*The columnist was engaging - at times funny and at time heartfelt - and the cartoons added to the elevated look of the publication.*

2nd Place

### **Staff**

Hendersonville Lightning

Hendersonville

Oct. 14, 21, 28

*Great columnist and strong, local editorials. Clearly, having a community-focused editorial voice is a priority for this paper.*

## GENERAL EXCELLENCE FOR WEB SITES

1st Place

### **Staff**

The Havelock News

Havelock

HaveNews.com

*Very nice design. Responsive design works well on mobile. Plenty of information and places to go here. Overall, nice job.*

2nd Place

### **Staff**

Hendersonville Lightning

Hendersonville

HendersonvilleLightning.com

*Plenty of content.*

3rd Place

### **Ken Ripley**

Spring Hope Enterprise

Spring Hope

SpringHopeEnterprise.com

## APPEARANCE & DESIGN

1st Place

### **Staff**

The Havelock News

Havelock

*Smart and attractive front page package for the air show. Overall design very good: typography, standing heads, use of photos.*

2nd Place

### **Scott Brings Plenty**

The Cherokee One Feather

Cherokee

*Nice use of typography. Well balanced pages and inclusion of white space.*

3rd Place

### **Staff**

The Roanoke Beacon

Plymouth

*Nice controlled use of color, especially like the women in business section. Ads nicely rendered and a very clean layout."*

## SPORTS COVERAGE

1st Place

### **W. Curt Vincent**

The Bladen Journal

Elizabethtown

Jan 26, Jan 29 Sports section

*This was the clear winner. Strong use of headlines, large photo on front page serves as a centerpiece for the page to build around. Congratulations to W. Curt Vincent, who appears to be a one-man team with strong ledes and a clear knowledge of the teams he covered. Photographer Kenny Armstrong helps him paint the picture. Great work.*

2nd Place

### **Staff**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Havelock News Sports

*Terrific photos by Ken Buday bring the pages alive. Love the layout of the schedule and results from previous year. Football was the focus here, and the writers and photographers know their teams well.*

3rd Place

### **Rich Levey**

Tideland News

Swansboro

Tideland News Sports

*Lots of variety in the coverage of this newspaper. Soccer, volleyball and football all on the front page, with stats and in-depth coverage of every game. Nice work by this paper.*

## NEWS COVERAGE

1st Place

### **Staff**

The Highlander

Highlands

2nd Place

### **Staff**

The Havelock News

Havelock

3rd Place

### **Staff**

Tideland News

Swansboro

## BEST COMMUNITY COVERAGE

1st Place

### **Staff**

The Havelock News

Havelock

Havelock News

2nd Place

### **Staff**

Black Mountain News

Black Mountain

Feb. 4 and Feb. 25, 2016

# DIVISION A

## Community newspapers under 3,500 circulation

3rd Place

**Scott Brings Plenty, Amble Smoker, Robert Jumper**

The Cherokee One Feather  
*Cherokee*  
The Cherokee One Feather

### BEST NICHE PUBLICATION

1st Place

**Pat Bradford, Simon Gonzalez, Shawn Best**

Lumina News  
*Wrightsville Beach*  
Wrightsville Beach Magazine  
*Gorgeous layouts and photographs with good stories to boot.*

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Farmville Enterprise  
*Farmville*  
Farmville Magazine 2016  
*A well put together publication.*

### CITY/COUNTY GOVERNMENT REPORTING

1st Place

**Carter Giegerich**

Crossroads Chronicle  
*Cashiers*  
County appointment raises questions

W2nd Place

**Imari Scarbrough**

The Anson Record  
*Wadesboro*  
Fire department hot topic for residents  
*This story had good details and reaction from residents about the building proposal.*

3rd Place

**Imari Scarbrough**

The Anson Record  
*Wadesboro*  
Coal ash resolution to be reviewed  
*Reporter did a nice job of capturing all the give and take at the meeting.*

### BEAT NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Imari Scarbrough**

The Anson Record  
*Wadesboro*  
Duke defends coal ash storage  
*Fine reporting, covering two sides of a local environmental issue. Nice work.*

### BEAT FEATURE REPORTING

1st Place

**Lindell John Kay**

Tarboro Weekly  
*Tarboro*  
Second brewery prepares to open

### PHOTOGRAPHY, SPOT

1st Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News  
*Havelock*  
Blaze burns bedroom of Havelock home  
*Anybody on location at the right time can get photos of flames but the composition of this shot (spectators) makes it the clear winner.*

2nd Place

**Drew C. Wilson**

The Havelock News  
*Havelock*  
Newport man in wreck later found unconscious from alleged overdose  
*Dramatic photo that really communicates the story.*

3rd Place

**Carolyn Morrisroe**

The Highlander  
*Highlands*  
House blaze at Mirror Lake  
*Interesting composition. Artsy opportunity.*

### RELIGION & FAITH REPORTING

1st Place

**Chrysta Carroll**

The Bladen Journal  
*Elizabethtown*  
Churches unite for fellowship and worship  
*Very creative lead. Great quotes. Story flowed so well. The story was so easy to read, like corn melting on the cob. It made you want to keep reading. Very well done. Nice job, Christa.*

2nd Place

**Lindell John Kay**

Tarboro Weekly  
*Tarboro*  
Weathering the storm  
*A great lead. "We have weathered the storm," was a tremendous quote and placed just right. The story was short — but sweet. Thanks for giving us just what we need to know. And you wrote it so well.*

3rd Place

**Carter Giegerich**

Crossroads Chronicle  
*Cashiers*  
Technology helps include hearing-impaired churchgoers  
*Good photo with the story. You did well!*

### USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Staff**

The Havelock News  
*Havelock*  
Nov. 4 and 25, 2015

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Highlander  
*Highlands*

3rd Place

**Staff**

The Roanoke Beacon  
*Plymouth*

### SPECIAL SECTION

1st Place

**Zachary Morgan II, Kyle Stephens, Angela Harne**

The Farmville Enterprise  
*Farmville*  
Farmville Central Men's Basketball State Champions  
*Beautiful cover that captures the emotion of the moment. Excellent photography. Nice use of sidebars and pull quotes. Solid writing. Overall, excellent.*

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Highlander  
*Highlands*  
Best of Highlanders  
*Pretty cover. Very informational. Great use of photography. Clean layout. Excellent work.*

3rd Place

**Staff**

The Roanoke Beacon  
*Plymouth*  
First on Scene  
*A very nice tribute to the men and women who protect and preserve North Carolina's communities. This section demonstrates a great deal of organizational work. Nice cover. Overall, excellent effort.*

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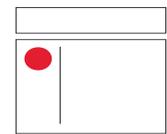
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# DIVISION B

## GENERAL NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Cal Bryant**

Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald  
Ahoskie

Victim becomes villain

*This story is important, airing the unethical conduct of local officials and a disgraceful breakdown of legal processes. The reporter has done this paper's readers a service.*

2nd Place

**Cal Bryant**

Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald  
Ahoskie

Divided We Stand

*Excellent use and placement of quotes gracefully leads readers through a long and detailed story. This law got significant national media attention, but this story has the fine-grained detail that serves local readers. The reporter gives one state legislator enough time to talk that he starts to question the vote he just cast. That's good stuff.*

3rd Place

**Jason Farmer, Tanner Hall, Quintin Ellison**

Sylva Herald and Ruralite  
Sylva

*A road everyone knew was dangerous. The reporters do an excellent job describing a dangerous situation that needs urgent attention. Their reporting caught the attention of state legislators and could contribute to a solution. Great work.*

## NEWS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Renee Spencer**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport

Be tough! Beatini!

*Difficult subject to cover for any journalist. Reporter captured the emotion felt when tragic death hits small community. Many comments collected from those who knew Lily Beatini left readers with a much greater appreciation for why she was so well-respected.*

2nd Place

**Lee Hinnant**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport

*Volunteers assist, document sea turtles. Timely presentation of nature-related news event. Variety of photos used helped draw readers into this interesting story while showcasing the work done by volunteers in protecting the sea turtles.*

3rd Place

**Renee Spencer**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport

Family turns tragedy into lifesaving mission

10

*Reporter Spencer tells of one family's painful journey following a tragic drowning, and their mission to greatly expand water safety programs throughout the area. It's a poignant story, but serves as a reminder that helping others can be an integral part of the healing process.*

## FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Renee Spencer**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport

Tree bark safer than dog's bark

*A fun, well-written tale about a moment in everyday life. Made me smile and captured personality that readers could appreciate. Can imagine editor saying, "Go cover the crab in the tree" and writer spun gold.*

2nd Place

**Morgan Harper**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport

Birds of a Feather

*One of those features where a reader might not think he or she has any interest in the topic, but then can't stop reading because it is so well constructed and the writer's appreciation comes through.*

3rd Place

**Bill Willcox**

The Courier-Times  
Roxboro

PHS establishes fishing club

*The writer took a well-worn topic and elicited insightful quotes and detail that made a routine story stand out.*

## PROFILE FEATURE

1st Place

**B.J. Drye**

The Stanly News & Press  
Albemarle

*A life full of sand, snow, surf and stories. Lovely tribute to an interesting man. Nicely told. Drew me in right away. Makes you wish he was still around to hang out with.*

2nd Place

**Ritchie Starnes**

The Stanly News & Press  
Albemarle

Broken Spoke Farm lassos team roping in Richfield

*Engaging story that educates as well. Entertaining. Now I know about rope, headers and heelers, and the importance of one's horse. And who would guess that two old guys would still be out there roping?*

3rd Place

**Jason Tyson**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport

The Lost Hero of Southport

*This story would be lost forever if it were not for*

## Community newspapers 3,500-10,000 circulation

*the perseverance of a few to keep his memory alive. Indeed, a fascinating and good man, lost too soon.*

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING

1st Place

**Shannon Beamon**

The Stanly News & Press  
Albemarle

Book turns into TV pilot

*This was an engaging, well written piece that kept me interested throughout. Great work!*

2nd Place

**John Lanier**

The Transylvania Times  
Brevard

Shuttles Returns Home For His Feature Film

*Compelling read, well organized and interesting throughout. It shows when you take the time to do more than just a quick phone call interview. Well done!*

3rd Place

**Lee Hinnant**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport

Justin Johnson's blues popularity is not just 'Smoke and Mirrors'

*Terrific writing. Not all music features really make you hear it or want to go out and find it, but this one really did. Thanks for a terrific entry!*

## EDUCATION REPORTING

1st Place

**Caleb Peek**

The News-Record & Sentinel  
Marshall

Board of Education approves new graduation pathway

2nd Place

**Carolyn Steeves**

The Enquirer-Journal  
Monroe

Best Start program seeing results

3rd Place

**Shannon Beamon**

The Stanly News & Press  
Albemarle

Not the average library or school tools

## NEWS ENTERPRISE REPORTING

1st Place

**Patrick Gilbert**

Outer Banks Sentinel  
Nags Head

A Multi-Front War: Dare County's Battle Against Drug Abuse

*This thorough and important project is an exemplary community service demonstrating a*

*newspaper and its journalists' commitment to making a difference. As a seasoned investigative news professor and practitioner, this judge was very impressed. Good job.*

2nd Place

**Catherine Kozak**

Outer Banks Sentinel  
Nags Head

Hidden Epidemic – Poverty

*This series had details and emotion based on multiple sources and facts designed to serve readers. It was well written and easily navigated. Keep it up.*

3rd Place

**Quintin Ellison**

Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva

Homelessness: Owning the problem. Putting a human face on homelessness works effectively here in lifting the lid on what appears to be a much-needed community response. This shows enterprise but coverage must continue. Keep digging; keep caring.

## INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

1st Place

**Matthew Debnam**

The Avery Journal Times  
Newland

Monumental questions raised

*This piece stuck out as traditional, hard-hitting investigative reporting that went the extra mile. This could have easily never been a story, but the reporter took initiative to try to sniff out impropriety -- a true watchdog piece.*

2nd Place

**Quintin Ellison, Tanner Hall**

Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva

WCU dam in need of repair

*A very thorough, thoughtful series of stories, and a great follow-up on a report long since forgotten, it seemed. Great job dredging it back up and using it as the framework for an in-depth look at an issue.*

3rd Place

**Tanner Hall**

Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva

Latest landslide threat reopens debate. Very interesting and well-done piece. A lot of effort was put into providing readers a varied picture of the airport and its impact on the area, and it shows.

## SPORTS NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Kelly Snow**

The Courier-Times  
Roxboro

State Champion

*An otherwise mundane story about a state championship was turned into a must read with the use of quotes and story telling.*

# DIVISION B

2nd Place

**Carey Phillips**

Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva

SMHS basketball coach named

*By the end of this story you felt like you knew the coach. Great job of introducing her to the community.*

3rd Place

**Andy Scheidler**

The Franklin Press  
Franklin  
Trail race

*This race is grueling and the writer did a great job of showing how draining this experience is to the participants.*

## SPORTS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Andy Scheidler**

The Franklin Press  
Franklin  
Life, Legacy

2nd Place

**Andy Scheidler**

The Franklin Press  
Franklin  
Grand Adventure

3rd Place

**Renee Spencer**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Coach Bauer puts another in the win column

## GENERAL NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Ben Katz**

Cherokee Scout  
Murphy

Dancing Queens

*The wide array of photos, each of great quality, captures the mixed atmosphere of energy and exhaustion of dance performances.*

2nd Place

**Jason Farmer**

Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva

Nobles gets life prison sentence

*The expression on this man's face before being sentenced to life in prison says far more than words ever could. Furthermore, rather than cropping the photo tightly around his face, keeping the context of the photo (the onlookers in the background and the large desk before him) makes him appear more isolated and adds to emotion of the photo.*

3rd Place

**David Leone**

The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest

Drop on by!

*Fun and clever! Each subject contributes show the mixed feelings of fear and excitement found at the top of a drop.*

## FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**David Leone**

The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest  
Meet in the Street 2016

2nd Place

**Morgan Harper**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Kid's Day bubbles

3rd Place

**Morgan Harper**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Suncatcher

## SPORTS FEATURE PHOTO

1st Place

**Renee Spencer**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Let's go surfing now  
*The backdrop of the rough waters is breath taking. The look on Renee's face captures her desire to finish out her ride standing up. A picture perfect postcard!*

2nd Place

**Clellie Allen**

The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest  
Play Ball!  
*The will to learn and play the game is in these photos.*

3rd Place

**Ben Katz**

Cherokee Scout  
Murphy  
Rodeo gets rowdy  
*The selection of photos really gives a feel of the competition. Up close and personal. Most of us will never be this close to the action.*

## SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Jeff Davis**

The Chatham News & Record  
Siler City  
A high hurdle  
*What a shot of an amazing athletic feat! And at night to boot. Nicely done..*

2nd Place

**Carol Garrett**

The Courier-Times  
Roxboro  
Rockets Battle  
*Good action. Good color. Good composition.*

## Community newspapers 3,500-10,000 circulation

3rd Place

**Kelly Snow**

The Courier-Times  
Roxboro  
Alley-Oop  
*The photo of the dunk was good on its own right, but the facial expression of the defender puts this over the top.*

## PHOTO PAGE OR ESSAY

1st Place

**Ben Katz**

Cherokee Scout  
Murphy  
Dance of the flame  
*Excellent photos and writing to describe the work and art of pottery making. A complete package in a very strong page design.*

2nd Place

**Clellie Allen, Steve King**

The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest  
Aaaaa! The Fonz is back  
*Excellent photography of scenes with a lot of motion and difficult light. A good presentation of what must have been a terrific show.*

3rd Place

**Ben Katz**

Cherokee Scout  
Murphy  
Harnessing Mountain Roots  
*A total story from the instruments to the audience listening. Very good work. Superb photos and an interesting narrative.*

## BEST MULTIMEDIA PROJECT

1st Place

**Lee Hinnant**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Home serves as a haven for injured birds  
*Love that the article calls out the video and directs readers online. Great photos. Nice combination of articles.*

## EDITORIALS

1st Place

**Quintin Ellison**

Sylva Herald and Ruralite  
Sylva  
Editorials  
*In a category full of good writing, the submissions about anything in a public meeting being public and keeping board members accountable for their promises gave this entry an edge.*

2nd Place

**Tom Boney, Jr.**

The Alamance News  
Graham  
Common theme: boards need more attention to integrity, cost consciousness  
*Polished writing and good awareness of sub-*

*jects. These pieces all include clear explanations of issues.*

3rd Place

**John Lanier**

The Transylvania Times  
Brevard  
Editorials  
*Good variety of subjects.*

## LIGHTER COLUMNS

1st Place

**Quintin Ellison**

Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva  
Lighter Columns  
*In a field with some very strong writing, this entry rose to the top for its consistency throughout the articles. The writer tells a story well and obviously enjoys his work. I could read this every week.*

2nd Place

**Lynn Allred**

Oxford Public Ledger  
Oxford  
The View from Here...  
*This is the kind of work papers don't do enough of any more. The "why we do what we do" explanations were concise and well-written. I think they help readers. Great job.*

3rd Place

**Renee Spencer**

The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Birds of a feather  
*These made me laugh out loud, especially the piece about the food-stealing birds. The personality of the writer really shines through. Great job.*

## SERIOUS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Gene Motley**

Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald  
Ahoskie  
Do we need a Rooney Rule in Hollywood  
*Each sample addresses issues that have received heavy national coverage, yet I learned something new about each issue from the columns that made me think about the subject in a way I hadn't before.*

2nd Place

**Quintin Ellison**

Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva  
Columns  
*Ellison "knows how to turn a phrase." Distinct and engaging prose style with a versatility across different types of subjects.*

3rd Place

**Ritchie Starnes**

Stanly News & Press  
Albemarle

# DIVISION B

The superintendent, the school board, and a father's lingering presence  
*Deftly handles issues the community may not want to hear, and makes subjects like government transparency accessible to a general audience. The Father's Day column is poignant and shows a range with different kinds of subjects.*

## SPORTS COLUMNS

*1st Place*  
**Kelly Snow**  
The Courier-Times  
Roxboro  
Blizzard

*2nd Place*  
**Terry Pope**  
The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
That's the way the ball bounces, et. al.

*3rd Place*  
**Andy Scheidler**  
The Franklin Press  
Franklin  
Summitt, Pay, Pitcher

## ELECTION/POLITICAL REPORTING

*1st Place*  
**Catharin Shepard**  
The News-Journal  
Raeford  
Save Raeford.Com  
*Writer exhaustively tried to find person behind sign.*

*2nd Place*  
**Staff**  
Outer Banks Sentinel  
Nags Head  
HB2 coverage-10 stories  
*Editorial team relentlessly covered HB2 and associated impacts better than any other entry - of which there were several.*

*3rd Place*  
**David Leone**  
The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest  
Candidates talk priorities  
*Writer provides a valuable public service. Grabs attention early and points out importance of local races.*

## HEADLINE WRITING

*1st Place*  
**Patti OKeefe**  
Caswell Messenger  
Yanceyville  
Smoking Guitars - Oh Baby - Oh Baby - Oh Baby and Skirting the Issue  
*"Oh Baby Oh Baby Oh Baby" is such a great headline for a story on triplets. Other two entries also are strong lead-ins.*

*2nd Place*  
**Ed Harper**  
The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Tree bark...; Tree falls...; Gators gobble...  
*"Tree falls; city staff hears it" offered a great laugh! Trees elicit so much furor from residents and this headline manages to pack all of that in.*

*3rd Place*  
**David Leone**  
The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest  
The fast and the flurriest, This rodeo promises to be Pho Nomenal, "Delinquents" steal the show  
*"Fast and the flurriest" is a very cute headline. "Pho Nomenal" was a great use!*

## SPORTS ENTERPRISE WRITING

*1st Place*  
**Kelly Snow**  
The Courier-Times  
Roxboro  
Softball father addresses Board of Commissioners with PCLL concerns

## EDITORIAL PAGE

*1st Place*  
**Staff**  
The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
*Attractive page with a very strong and active editorial voice. This is a newspaper that asserts its opinion, and the strong reaction in the letters section shows a vibrant community debate.*

*2nd Place*  
**Staff**  
Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva  
*I enjoyed the unique voice of the editor's columns and editorials that spoke for community improvement. Active letters section and a lot of voices add to the page.*

*3rd Place*  
**Staff**  
The Chatham News & Record  
Siler City  
*Good writing and lots of local voices add to this page - particularly the edition devoted to remembering the former publisher.*

## GENERAL EXCELLENCE FOR WEB SITES

*1st Place*  
**Staff**  
The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest  
WakeWeekly.com  
*Like the large slider on the homepage. Overall plenty of content, good mix.*

## Community newspapers 3,500-10,000 circulation

*2nd Place*  
**Staff**  
Outer Banks Sentinel  
Nags Head  
OBSentinel.com  
*Solid website. Lots of news. Love the drop-downs on the verticals offering headlines. Good mix of ads. Right rail is really effective.*

*3rd Place*  
**Staff**  
The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
SouthPortPilot.com  
*Sturdy newspaper website. Good content. Really like the live webcam.*

## APPEARANCE & DESIGN

*1st Place*  
**Staff**  
The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest  
Oct. 8, 2015 and Oct. 15, 2015  
*Very nice design, balanced with attractive type faces. Excellent use of photos and ads are well rendered.*

*2nd Place*  
**Staff**  
The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Appearance and design  
*Nice front pages. Good job handling a lot of information, the election coverage in particular.*

*3rd Place*  
**Ron Rogers**  
The Winston-Salem Chronicle  
Winston-Salem  
April 21 and 28, 2016  
*Good functional design. Good mix of typography.*

## SPORTS COVERAGE

*1st Place*  
**Kevin Hensley, Matthew Osborne**  
Cherokee Scout  
Murphy  
Cherokee Scout sports  
*This paper wins almost on variety alone. Nice pull out photos and stat boxes, plus comprehensive coverage across multiple schools. Kevin Hensley keeps a busy schedule, it seems, and delivers. Photos by Ben Katz stand out. Well done.*

*2nd Place*  
**Staff**  
The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
Sports Coverage  
*Nice full page dedicated to fishing and outdoors, which is too often forgotten on many sports pages.*

*3rd Place*  
**Andy Scheidler**  
The Franklin Press  
Franklin  
Sports Coverage  
*Great front page highlighting the best stories of the year.*

## NEWS COVERAGE

*1st Place*  
**Staff**  
The Wake Weekly  
Wake Forest  
Aug. 11, 2016 and Aug. 18, 2016

*2nd Place*  
**Staff**  
Montgomery Herald  
Troy

*3rd Place*  
**Staff**  
Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva

## BEST COMMUNITY COVERAGE

*1st Place*  
**Staff**  
The State Port Pilot  
Southport

*2nd Place*  
**Staff**  
Sylva Herald & Ruralite  
Sylva

*3rd Place*  
**Staff**  
Chatham News & Record  
Siler City

## BEST SPECIAL SECTION

*1st Place*  
**Staff**  
The State Port Pilot  
Southport  
2016 N.C. Fourth of July Festival Program

*2nd Place*  
**Staff**  
Outer Banks Sentinel  
Nags Head  
Sounds of Summer

*3rd Place*  
**Staff**  
Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald  
Ahoskie  
Crossroads 2016

# DIVISION B

## BEST NICHE PUBLICATION

1st Place

**Park Baker, Sean Trapp, Leigh Trapp**

The Transylvania Times

Brevard

Bike Transylvania Magazine

*This publication uses great art and compelling stories to share its purpose with readers. In addition, the design is appealing and allows for readers to not feel inundated. Great balance with ads and editorial copy as many similar publications tend to be ad-heavy.*

2nd Place

**Staff**

Cherokee Scout

Murphy

Country Roads Summer 2016

*Offered a diverse look at activities and events, and provided a lot of wonderful art.*

3rd Place

**Judie Holcomb-Pack**

The Winston-Salem Chronicle  
Winston-Salem

For Seniors Only, July 2016

*From recipes to a variety of activities, For Seniors Only shows older citizens being active and engaging in the community. This publication focused on volunteers and different activities older citizens can take part in, which is more than many senior citizen-driven publications that focus solely on health care and care-giving. Of note, I especially enjoyed Cindy Argiento's "humorous look at growing older."*

## CITY/COUNTY

### GOVERNMENT REPORTING

1st Place

**Clellie Allen**

The Wake Weekly

Wake Forest

*Creative cutting pushes commissioners closer to budget; No new taxes in Franklinton*

*This was one of the easiest and clearest budget stories I've read. The writer wove in decisions and impact with good writing.*

2nd Place

**David Leone**

The Wake Weekly

Wake Forest

*Fire funding may rise; Fire tax hike wanted*

*Nice balance of all sides on the fire tax hike.*

3rd Place

**David Leone**

The Wake Weekly

Wake Forest

*Town hall build 'terrible'; Consensus lacking on leaks*

*The reporter and paper did solid coverage explaining the leaks and why it matters to the town and finances.*

## BEAT NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Park Baker**

The Transylvania Times

Brevard

*Forest Proposal Sparks Different Positions*

*Solid writing. Informative, organized, smart.*

*A refreshing stand-out. Beat writing is not always exciting, but it should be well done, as this is.*

2nd Place

**Renee Spencer**

The State Port Pilot

Southport

*Passing of the colors*

3rd Place

**Shannon Beamon**

The Stanly News & Press

Albemarle

*Masterplan urges people to envision a better downtown*

## BEAT FEATURE REPORTING

1st Place

**Shannon Beamon**

The Stanly News & Press

Albemarle

*Residents celebrate New London's beginnings*

*A nice blend of history and humor, which is pretty hard to beat.*

2nd Place

**Shannon Beamon**

The Stanly News & Press

Albemarle

*Business owners explain why bruises are "Boss"*

*Fun feature!*

3rd Place

**Tomas Murawski**

The Alamance News

Graham

*Solar farms cropping up across rural Alamance (Oct. 1, 2015)*

*An important topic.*

## BEST LEDE

1st Place

**Shannon Beamon**

The Stanly News & Press

Albemarle

2015-16 Ledes

*Really nice selection of leads, but the one on the suicide survivor brought tears to my eyes before I finished the sentence. That's what grabs a reader, and gets the reader to continue on. These leads found the heart of the story and pushed it out front.*

## Community newspapers 3,500-10,000 circulation

2nd Place

**Gary Corsair**

The Graham Star

Robbinsville

*Collection of ledes by Gary Corsair*

*These are the most succinct leads in the entries, and for that reason, so effective.*

3rd Place

**B.J. Drye**

The Stanly News & Press

Albemarle

2015-16 Ledes

*Very much enjoyed these human interest stories, with a warm portrayal of community members. The leads did an excellent job of drawing in the reader, and introducing the subjects.*

## PHOTOGRAPHY, SPOT

1st Place

**Jason Farmer**

Sylva Herald & Ruralite

Sylva

*Air rescue at Paradise Falls*

*Good comprehensive photo coverage.*

2nd Place

**David Leone**

The Wake Weekly

Wake Forest

*Collision claims life of beloved teacher*

3rd Place

**David Leone**

The Wake Weekly

Wake Forest

*Triple homicide suspect Jon Sander receives treatment in ambulance*

## RELIGION & FAITH REPORTING

1st Place

**Dwight Otwell**

Cherokee Scout

Murphy

*Finding God behind bars*

*A very good story.*

1st Place

**Dwight Otwell**

Cherokee Scout

Murphy

*Changing Christian Love*

*EXCELLENT research, well written. You followed the story and had a lot of nice companion pieces. A very good job of letting the facts speak for themselves. Great story.*

3rd Place

**Morgan Harper**

The State Port Pilot

Southport

*Prayer Angel's Work is a Blessing*  
*Well-written story.*

## USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1st Place

**Staff**

The State Port Pilot

Southport

*Nov. 4 and 25, 2015*

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Wake Weekly

Wake Forest

*Feb. 11 and 25, 2016*

3rd Place

**Staff**

The Winston-Salem Chronicle

Winston-Salem

*Feb. 4 and 25, 2016*

## SPECIAL SECTIONS

1st Place

**Staff**

The State Port Pilot

Southport

*2016 N.C. Fourth of July Festival Program*

2nd Place

**Staff**

Outer Banks Sentinel

Nags Heads

*Sounds of Summer*

3rd Place

**Staff**

Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald

Ahoskie

*Crossroads 2016*

# Bringing innovation home

All across North Carolina, we're helping communities to thrive and grow by bringing together locally diverse cultures and ideas that spark innovation. Using the latest technology, we are connecting people and communities with each other and the world. Whether lending our support to advance education initiatives, giving area businesses an edge in the global marketplace, or putting the brakes on distracted driving, we're working to make a difference in the lives of all our friends and neighbors.

We're proud to call North Carolina home and are committed to building a better tomorrow for everyone.

Congratulations to the NCPA 2016 Editorial Contest winners.





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# DISCOVER REAL POSSIBILITIES IN NORTH CAROLINA.

AARP is in North Carolina creating real, meaningful change. We're proud to help all our communities become the best they can be. Like helping people save more of what they earn, providing family caregivers with tips to take care of loved ones, helping to make our communities more livable and hosting fun, informative events all across the state.

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Learn more about AARP in North Carolina at [aarp.org/nc](https://aarp.org/nc).

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 <sup>®</sup> Real Possibilities  
North Carolina

# DIVISION C

## GENERAL NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

### Staff

The Brunswick Beacon

Shalotte

**WATERLOGGED:** Historic rainfall drenches Brunswick County  
*From the catchy one word headline to the last photograph, this story captured my interest in the historic rainfall. The staff did a fabulous job of outlining the significance of this news story. I liked the use of graphics, photos, stories and town by town reports of all the damage. Writers also did a great job of telling the story from multiple angles. Outstanding job!*

2nd Place

### David Sinclair

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Death of a Football Player

*The writer did an excellent job of capturing the raw emotion of the tragedy and providing hope through a caring community.*

3rd Place

### Paul Blest and Jane Porter

INDY Week

Durham

Four Shots on Bragg Street

*The headline immediately captured my interest and pulled me into the story. I liked the use of the sidebar pieces and photos to help tell the story. The writers did a great job in telling a difficult story.*

## ONLINE BREAKING NEWS COVERAGE

1st Place

### Staff

Carteret County News-Times

Morehead City

Three military men enter elementary schools; spark panic

## NEWS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

### Billy Ball

Indy Week

Durham

The Invisibles

*In a very impressive field of entries, "The Invisibles" is the strongest — telling the human stories behind a very controversial issue, unaccompanied minors who immigrate to the US. With a very strong focus on personal stories, this piece also considered the political reaction as well as how the needs of this population are met — and are not met. A very nice piece of reporting.*

2nd Place

### Virginia Daffron

Mountain Xpress

Asheville

**Beyond Bathrooms:** HB2 accelerates changes in attitudes, language  
*Tackling the most infamous recent story to come out of NC, the piece keeps its focus on transgender people affected by H.B. 2 and the political ruckus it raised.*

3rd Place

### Becky Johnson

Smoky Mountain News

Waynesville

**Answering the call:** firefighter shortage  
*With great, in-depth reporting, this piece explores an issue few urban dwellers would ever consider -- how the economic demands of modern life make it difficult for rural communities to sustain life-protecting volunteer fire departments. Illuminating and smart.*

## FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

### Barry Yeoman

INDY Week

Durham

**The 30 Years That Brought Us HB2**  
*Revelatory and relevant, this story places HB2 into historical context. It also shows the dilemmas and dangers now facing the state's trans people, who have to ask themselves, as did one interview subject in this story: Which bathroom "is less likely to get my ass kicked"?*

2nd Place

### Mark Schultz

The Durham News

Durham

**Teen who needs heart makes special request**  
*Great quotes, elegant structure, and an sentimental look at the fulfillment of the wish of a sick teenage girl's wish -- not to visit Disney World, but to have some drag queens come to visit her.*

3rd Place

### Cheryl Burke

Carteret County News-Times

Morehead City

**El sea turtle volunteers have busy season**

*Makes the reader root for an underdog: t. It also introduces the tireless group of volunteers who are determined to help them.*

## PROFILE FEATURE

1st Place

### Todd Wetherington

Duplin Times

Kenansville

Jerry's Journey

*I could not put this piece down. The story was enthralling. Wetherington's first-person style is something I almost dismissed, but it gave*

## Community newspapers over 10,000 circulation

*Jerry's story another level. His writing style, and well-placed quotes from subject, made for a great structure.*

2nd Place

### Grayson Haver Currin

INDY Week

Durham

Saving Eric Bachmann

*Great in-depth piece on an artist's struggle to do what he does. I enjoyed the balance of his personal life and career, combined with the self-doubt and, at times, general apathy with making music. It was more than a glimpse into Bachmann's life and career.*

3rd Place

### Ken Fine

INDY Week

Durham

Saving Grace

*Captured Grace's personality perfectly. Also tackled a really tough subject matter in the process.*

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING

1st Place

### Brian Howe

INDY Week

Durham

The Brass Menagerie

*Oh my, I loved this story! There was really tough competition in this category but your story stood out. Beautifully crafted. Absolutely brilliant. Great work*

2nd Place

### Chris Vitiello

INDY Week

Durham

Luck of the Draw!

*I loved your lede, and this story just draws you in from the get-go. Terrific, creative writing. Kudos!*

3rd Place

### Page Leggett

Creative Loafing

Charlotte

Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves

*Terrific reporting. This story really flowed in a very competitive category. Great work!*

## EDUCATION REPORTING

1st Place

### Cory Vaillancourt

Smoky Mountain News

Waynesville

Tale of the tape

*Here is a rarely reported angle on the education funding issue. Thorough and heartfelt.*

2nd Place

### Jessi Stone

Smoky Mountain News

Waynesville

Lottery Lootery

*What an interesting topic. The writer has a firm command of the subject.*

3rd Place

### Holly Kays

Smoky Mountain News

Waynesville

Worming towards a better way

## NEWS ENTERPRISE REPORTING

1st Place

### Holly Kays

Smoky Mountain News

Waynesville

Existing with elk

*This entry went well beyond the routine with innovative, resourceful use of sources on an important non-mainstream issue. Presented in a clear, balance way. Stand-out journalism.*

2nd Place

### David Sinclair

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Investigation Called for After Toddler's Death

*A sterling example of a reporter who would not give up either. Bravo.*

3rd Place

### Lindsay Kriz

The Brunswick Beacon

Shalotte

Scam smarts

*Coverage with all the ingredients of service-to-readers enterprise reporting. Humanizes the scam game, explains details, finds help. A job well done if one victim avoided.*

## INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

1st Place

### Becky Johnson

Smoky Mountain News

Waynesville

Academia for Sale

*Obtaining internal e-mail communications showed a high degree of initiative and a side of the story that otherwise would not have come to light. The writer also clearly had a strong understanding of the subject matter and went out of the way to represent multiple viewpoints. Excellent work.*

2nd Place

### Allison Richmond

The Mountaineer

Waynesville

Brian Center Sexual Assault

*Pulling together numerous sources requiring deep analysis was a stand-out characteristic of this series of stories. It's clear the work had a substantial impact and real-life consequences, which is the most any investigative journalist can hope for.*

# DIVISION C

3rd Place

**Allison Richmond**

The Mountaineer

Waynesville

Misplaced Trust

*A straight-forward investigation that led to action, and made change in a family's life.*

*Nice work connecting the dots and showing a pattern.*

## SPORTS NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Ryan Pitkin**

Creative Loafing

Charlotte

The Game Outside the Game

*A remarkable story on an often overlooked part of professional sports in ticket scalping.*

*You humanized an otherwise mundane story about phony tickets.*

2nd Place

**Justin Parker**

Lake Norman Citizen

Huntersville

Growing up Gibbs: Football's in the

DNA

3rd Place

**D. Clay Best**

Garner Cleveland Record

Garner

So long, for now, old friend

## SPORTS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Bryan Reed**

INDY Week

Durham

Unstoppable Force

2nd Place

**Jessika Morgan**

North Raleigh News

Raleigh

Senior reliever finds way to cope with tough loss

3rd Place

**Ryan Wilusz**

The Durham News

Durham

Fighter trades the streets for the ring

## GENERAL NEWS

### PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Mark Schultz**

The Durham News

Durham

Sheriff: 'If this makes a difference for one or two ...'

*Perfectly composed. This photo doesn't need any kind of context to have a strong impact.*

*Every element contributes to the final product.*

2nd Place

**James Nix**

Independent Tribune

Concord

Cruz Rally

*Nicely done. The photographer captured the energy of the rally and a perfect expression on the face of Ted Cruz.*

3rd Place

**Ted Fitzgerald**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Vigil Held for Orlando Victims

*This is a well composed photo with a lot of emotion. The eye travels through it easily flowing through the woman's outstretched arm to the candles and other attendees.*

## FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Mark Schultz**

The Durham News

Durham

All fired up for Hanukkah

*This photo caught my attention in a flash. Way to capture such a fleeting moment as a flame burst.*

2nd Place

**Laura Lewis**

The Brunswick Beacon

Shalotte

Happy Independence Day

*I love the sense of motion and emotion of fun this photo evokes! It kept making me smile and wish I was there!*

3rd Place

**Mark Schultz**

Chapel Hill News

Chapel Hill

In a carnival far, far away

## SPORTS FEATURE PHOTO

1st Place

**James Nix**

Independent Tribune

Concord

Muddy

*The final score didn't show the true battle that went on between both teams. The uniform, however, showed everything.*

2nd Place

**Michael Paul**

The Brunswick Beacon

Shalotte

How sweet it is

*The smile on the child's face says it all. The photo is a home run, even if the hit comes up short.*

3rd Place

**James Nix**

Independent Tribune

Concord

## Community newspapers over 10,000 circulation

The punch

*This is something that should never happen.*

*But the photographer was prepared and caught the fan in the act.*

## SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Donna Ford**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Pouring It On

*Excellent action, good composition - a job well done!*

2nd Place

**Andy G. Moore**

Wilkes Journal-Patriot

North Wilkesboro

Jared Wood catch

*There are lots of amazing moments that can be caught during a football game, and this is one of them. A very nice shot.*

3rd Place

**Ray Black III**

Cary News

Cary

Cary wrestlers win state wrestling titles

*You've got to love the emotion captured in these photos. The photographer tells a great story in these two shots. Well done.*

## PHOTO PAGE OR ESSAY

1st Place

**Ted Fitzgerald**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

A Day in the Life

*Beautiful package. Captured the art of pottery and the folks who work it by hand. Intriguing and excellent photos.*

2nd Place

**Dylan Baker Ray**

Carteret County News-Times

Morehead City

Time ripe for Bogue Sound Watermelons

*Very well done. Perfect pictures presented in a strong layout. People, place and product all combine to bring this local farm to life.*

3rd Place

**Ted Fitzgerald**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Emotions Run High at Robotics Challenge

*Lots of expressions and emotions in these photos of these students at their robotics challenge. Good job!*

## BEST VIDEO

1st Place

**Aaron Moody**

Eastern Wake News

Zebulon

Young Level Inc dancing purposefully

*A cool story of young people and their passion for dancing.*

## BEST MULTIMEDIA

### PROJECT

1st Place

**Steve Mitchell and Deonna Kelli**

**Sayed**

YES! Weekly

Greensboro

Out in the South

*Great series. Engaging photos. Love the multimedia component. Great podcasts. Unique idea to record the changing voice of the subject.*

2nd Place

**Steve Mitchell and Deonna Kelli**

**Sayed**

YES! Weekly

Greensboro

Thinking Outside the Coffin

*Interesting article. Nice photos to pull into story. Liked the list of additional resources.*

3rd Place

**Vanessa Infanzon, Lara Americo**

Creative Loafing

Charlotte

Home Sweet Home

*Very interesting topic. Like how author came across the story.*

## EDITORIALS

1st Place

**Staff**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Penalty Raises Questions, Disgraceful Action, and Dempsey's Stand

*Wow. These editorials are impressive. They were an easy first-place choice. The writing is clear, powerful, and engaging. The pieces are beautifully crafted, and left me wanting to read more from this paper.*

2nd Place

**Gary Scott**

Duplin Times

Kenansville

Editorials

*These entries do a good job addressing issues that are important to readers. Good work.*

3rd Place

**Jackie Torok**

The Brunswick Beacon

Shalotte

No excuse for cruelty ... ; Better, new

dental care access ... ; SB 875 ...

*These entries cover a broad range of subjects and do a good job explaining their importance to the reader.*

# DIVISION C

## LIGHTER COLUMNS

1st Place

**Garrett K. Woodward**  
Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville

This Must Be The Place

*These rose to the top. The writing flowed well and gave the reader a sense of being there with him. The writing is fun to read and I'd be happy to have this writer in my local paper. Outstanding job.*

2nd Place

**Andrew Warfield**  
Lake Norman Citizen  
Huntersville

Peaceful Easy Feeling on the Long Road out of Eden

*These columns were fun to read, and I enjoyed the Eagles song references woven through that piece. The pieces were concise and flowed well. Great job.*

3rd Place

**John Nagy**

The Pilot  
Southern Pines  
School of My Youth and Vacation Scoring

## SERIOUS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Bob Geary**

Indy Week  
Durham  
Citizen

*Powerfully but concisely written. Descriptive style and good use of quotes makes the subjects come alive. Choice of subjects is creative and brings a fresh approach.*

2nd Place

**Lee Sullivan**

Lake Norman Citizen  
Huntersville

The search for OM cause begins with some clarity

*Moves skillfully among wildly different subjects, uses the column to bring a needed eye to important subject, and has the prose chops to keep it readable and interesting.*

3rd Place

**Erin Tracy-Blackwood**

Creative Loafing  
Charlotte

Trouble Hunter

*Interesting reads! Each column has a unique twist that makes for a thought-provoking take on its subject.*

## SPORTS COLUMNS

1st Place

**C. Jemal Horton**

Independent Tribune  
Concord  
Sports Columns

2nd Place

**Bill Rollins**

Duplin Times  
Kenansville  
Sports Bill

3rd Place

**Jessika Morgan**

North Raleigh News  
Raleigh

We can learn from James Walker, etc.

## ELECTION/POLITICAL REPORTING

1st Place

**Barry Yeoman**

Indy Week

Durham

The Trump Show

*A rare piece of literature - well written and well edited with memorable characters and all. But what do I think by the end? The ending - the characters and visuals - make it the best thing in the contest - NUMBER ONE!!*

2nd Place

**Tammy Grubb**

Chapel Hill News  
Chapel Hill

Report: Bell got \$11K from developers and CHALT PAC changed ...

*Another good one. NOT afraid to point out a politician's missteps. This SHORT article shows a TON of background research and documentation. A TOP ENTRY, and with the companion article wow!*

3rd Place

**Brian Slattery**

The Brunswick Beacon

Shallotte

County ... ; Elections ... ; Election ... ;

State ... ; State ...

*Very clear what the issue here is and no words wasted on the implications. GOOD.*

## HEADLINE WRITING

1st Place

**Cory Vaillancourt**

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville

Fear and voting in Asheville

*The headline writer was not afraid to state the obvious.*

2nd Place

**Abbi Overfelt**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Backyard Hens? Don't Count Those

Eggs Yet

*Submitted headlines show great attention to detail for drawing eyeballs.*

3rd Place

**Staff**

Carteret County News-Times

Morehead City

Headlines

*These headlines offered a whimsical way to invite the reader in.*

## SPORTS ENTERPRISE

### WRITING

1st Place

**Staff**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Pinecrest Football Punished for Violations

*A very long, detailed set of articles about a situation that was drawn out for a long time.*

*Very good work keeping up on the situation without appearing to "beat a dead horse".*

2nd Place

**Holly Kays**

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville

Pursuing the Pinnacle: Mountain bikers push to create new trail system in Sylva

3rd Place

**Jessika Morgan**

North Raleigh News

Raleigh

Nontraditional students are turning to sports

## EDITORIAL PAGE

1st Place

**Steve Bouser**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

Dishonesty Reigns, Again I ask, and

Online Comments Can Be Tricky To

Monitor

*The design was bright and welcoming with strong cartoons and thoughtful typography. A great mix of the issues of the day with strong, local editorials that doled out praise and criticism equally made this newspaper the clear winner.*

2nd Place

**Gary Scott**

Duplin Times

Kenansville

Editorial Pages

*A wealth and variety of opinion content, artfully displayed, made this newspaper a strong candidate.*

3rd Place

**Scott Bolejack and Staff**

Clayton News-Star

Clayton

Clayton News-Star Editorials June 5, 12 & 19, 2016

*Good writing and clean layout. A mix of issues of local, regional and national concern*

## Community newspapers over 10,000 circulation

## GENERAL EXCELLENCE FOR WEB SITES

1st Place

**Staff**

North Raleigh News

Raleigh

newsobserver.com/news/local/community/north-raleigh-news/

*Fantastic use of large photos. All pages just pop. Great mix of content and multi-media. Sections are clearly marked. Minimal ads make them more effective. Great site.*

2nd Place

**Staff**

Wilkes Journal-Patriot

North Wilkesboro

JournalPatriot.com

*Very functional website. Plenty of content and multi-media.*

3rd Place

**Travis Bumgardner**

Smoky Mountain News

Waynesville

smokymountainnews.com

## APPEARANCE & DESIGN

1st Place

**Staff**

Duplin Times

Kenansville

*A clear winner in this category. Nicely designed, excellent use of color. Nice strong standing heds without getting too cute. Ads well designed and placed. Good balance on pages.*

## SPORTS COVERAGE

1st Place

**Michael Paul**

The Brunswick Beacon

Shallotte

*Parents and fans of the teams this paper covers must race to pick up the paper for the photos alone. Golf and fishing columns add nice diversity to high school coverage.*

2nd Place

**D. Clay Best & Staff**

Clayton News-Star

Clayton

*Great front page photo by Johnny Johnson. Lots of emotion conveyed through both photos and the writing. I like the constant tie-ins to the website, with mentions of videos and additional photos. This one stood out.*

3rd Place

**Staff**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

*Nice big section with lots of variety. Clearly this community loves golf and this paper covers the local scene very well, with lots of photos of potential readers!*

# DIVISION C

## NEWS COVERAGE

1st Place

### Staff

Mooreville Tribune  
Mooreville

2nd Place

### Staff

Chapel Hill News  
Chapel Hill

3rd Place

### Staff

Wilkes Journal-Patriot  
North Wilkesboro

## BEST COMMUNITY COVERAGE

1st Place

### Staff

Duplin Times  
Kenansville

2nd Place

### Staff

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville

3rd Place

### Staff

Mountain Xpress  
Asheville

## BEST NICHE PUBLICATION

1st Place

### Staff

Duplin Times  
Kenansville  
SENC Summer 2016  
*This is the kind of publication you want to flip through slowly on a Sunday morning while you drink your coffee on the front porch.*

2nd Place

### Staff

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Haywood Chamber  
*An all-encompassing guide to the area with good stories and a good design.*

3rd Place

### Staff

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Beverly Hanks  
*Well designed with a plethora of stories and features.*

## CITY/COUNTY

### GOVERNMENT REPORTING

1st Place

### Staff

Cory Vaillancourt  
Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Food Fight: Anthony's mad at Waynes-

ville

*The writing was outstanding in telling the detailed story of the controversial trailer, as well as weaving in the big picture from this one issue.*

2nd Place

### Tammy Grubb

Chapel Hill News  
Chapel Hill  
Loan program growing businesses, jobs in Orange County  
*Wonderful information about businesses that have used the program as well as the history of the program*

3rd Place

### Becky Johnson

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Shooting range under fire  
*By immediately getting residents involved in the story the paper helped inform the community and shape the decision.*

## BEAT NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

### Jessi Stone

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
TVA houseboats  
*Thorough, balanced, coverage of a local community crisis and the process of review and questioning.*

2nd Place

### David Sinclair

The Pilot  
Southern Pines  
Agreement Preserves Shop Patio  
*Info was presented well, follow-up was fine. Told the story of community interest from beginning to end. Nice.*

3rd Place

### Max Hunt

Mountain Xpress  
Asheville  
Toxic legacy  
*Very thorough background, anecdotes draw you in.*

## BEAT FEATURE REPORTING

1st Place

### Holly Kays

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Hike your own hike: A.T. hikers aim for Maine after crowded start  
*Such a great read! The message: Hike your own hike, comes through loud and clear. I also really appreciated the first-person sidebar.*

2nd Place

### Holly Kays

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Hiking for Hope: Robbinsville man

raises \$70,000 for children with A.T.

hike

*Again, this style of writing is so clean and easy. This story made us root for Mr. Claxton.*

3rd Place

### Becky Johnson

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
The comeback kid, Hazelwood's back in the saddle  
*Nice, well-rounded approach to the reasons Hazelwood is doing so well. It makes me want to visit!*

## BEST LEDE

1st Place

### Holly Kays

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Holly Kays best lede entry  
*You did an excellent job of quickly introducing me to the people, the suspense, the issue. Nice job all-around.*

2nd Place

### Garret K. Woodward

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Garret K. Woodward  
*These are thoughtful pieces, and the ability to introduce them as such is what makes the leads most effective. Very enjoyable to move into these different worlds.*

3rd Place

### J.J. Smith

Carteret County News-Times  
Morehead City  
It's amazing what a little iron can do  
*Each story brings a little more of the personal into the sports stories, something that is valuable beyond the final score. Very lively introductions to these athletes.*

## PHOTOGRAPHY, SPOT

1st Place

### Dylan Baker Ray

Carteret County News-Times  
Morehead City  
Eight hours later standoff ends

2nd Place

### Glenn Sides

The Pilot  
Southern Pines  
Head Over Heels

3rd Place

### Glenn Sides

The Pilot  
Southern Pines  
Winter Angler

## RELIGION & FAITH REPORTING

1st Place

### Holly Kays

Smoky Mountain News  
Waynesville  
Silence-filled service puts a unique frame on spirituality  
*Beautiful lead, almost like prose. Calmly written with anticipation. Holly Kays draws us to the edge of the river, closes the door and explains the quietness of worship, then leads us into tranquility. This is a masterful story without equal. The writer is indeed a master of words. Well done Holly Kays.*

2nd Place

### Rachel Robles

The Mountaineer  
Waynesville  
Becoming 'more than a conqueror'  
*The lead was a masterpiece. Then you led me through his life, making me want to read the next paragraph. So well written...*

3rd Place

### Mark Plemmons

Independent Tribune  
Concord  
In God's Hands  
*Wonderful quote in lead ... "His hand prints are all over the pieces of our lives." Wow! You were brave enough to use a great quote in the lead. You wrote it so beautifully I couldn't wait for the next paragraph. This is a masterpiece. BRAVO!"*

## USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

### Staff

The Pilot  
Southern Pines  
Nov. 1 and 29, 2015

2nd Place

### Staff

Wilkes Journal-Patriot  
North Wilkesboro  
Nov. 9 and 23, 2015

3rd Place

### Staff

Carteret County News-Times  
Morehead City  
Feb. 17 and 19, 2016

## SPECIAL SECTION

1st Place

### Staff

Independent Tribune  
Concord  
Cabarrus Game Night  
*An outstanding preview section. Beautifully laid out. Wonderfully creative photography. Love the use of sidebars and team logos. Solid sports writing. A great effort overall*

# SPECIAL AWARDS

## Media and the Law Awards

*Best Newspaper Article*

**Michael Gordon**

Charlotte Observer, Charlotte  
Clerk goes after racial bias in local institutions

*Best Series*

**Holly Kays**

Smoky Mountain News, Waynesville  
Tribal members sue over allegedly illegal pay raises

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## Public Notice Award

*Community Newspapers*

**Tammy Dunn**

Montgomery Herald, Troy  
Union County wanting water  
*Thorough reporting both by Ms. Dunn and with editorial backup. Bravo!*

*Daily Newspapers*

**Olivia Neeley**

The Wilson Times, Wilson  
County residents fighting Verizon on cell tower

---

## Henry Lee Weathers Freedom of Information Award

*Under 20,000 circulation*

**Tammy Dunn**

Montgomery Herald, Troy  
Columns and Editorials on Open Meetings  
*The Herald continued to be a persistent champion of open meetings despite being stonewalled by various government bodies. Even though a sanitary district doesn't sound like much, it can have an impact on everyday life.*

*Over 20,000 circulation*

**Elizabeth Cook**

Salisbury Post, Salisbury  
Tell-Tale Travel Records  
*Interesting series that was also very educational. I'm sure many of the readers were unaware of this.*

# SPECIAL AWARDS

## Duke University/Green-Rossiter Award for Distinguished Newspaper Work in Higher Education

*Community Division*

**Staff**

The Sylva Herald and Ruralite, Sylva  
Work in Higher Education

*Love the scope of the package. Love the resources devoted to the issue.*

*Daily Division*

**Jane Stancill**

News & Observer, Raleigh  
Higher Education Coverage

*Outstanding coverage of a tumultuous time in higher education in North Carolina. Great work.*

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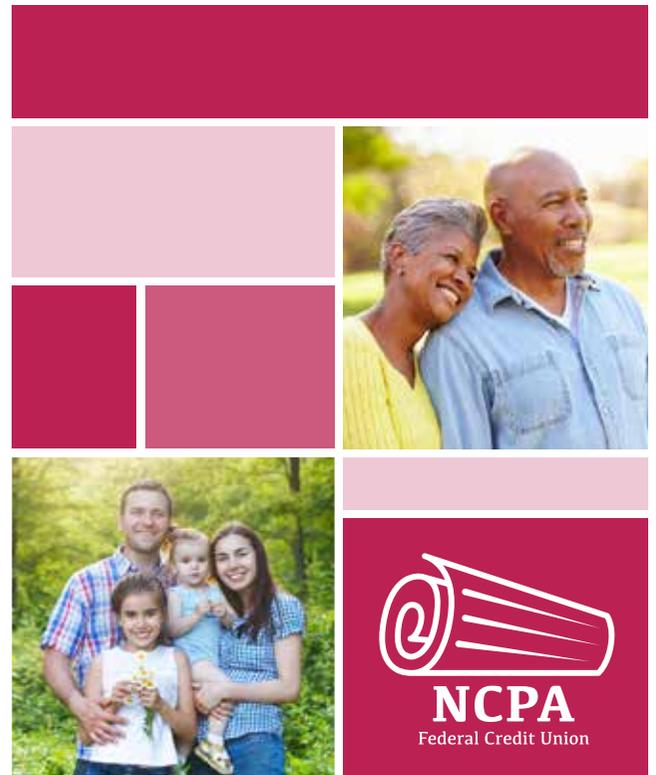
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ocracoke observer



A 2016 <sup>NCPA</sup>  
*Editorial*  
winner:

Headline writing | Feature writing  
Entertainment reporting | Profile feature

In print, monthly on Ocracoke Island and online at:  
**OcracokeObserver.com**

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D. DREW GETMAN, JR., CFP®, ChFC  
Vice President - Financial Advisor  
[www.drewgetman.com](http://www.drewgetman.com)



RBC Wealth Management

**Congratulations  
2016 Contest  
Winners!**

**Cheers** to the 2017  
winners and the NCPA  
membership for  
honoring **free press  
rights** and improving  
**open government**  
through their efforts!

**BUSSIAN LAW FIRM**

PROTECTING MEDIA AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Wells Fargo Capitol Center | Raleigh, North Carolina

The North Carolina Bar Association  
Congratulates the 2016 Recipients of the  
**NCBA Media and the Law Awards**

BEST SERIES

**HOLLY KAYS**

Smoky Mountain News

BEST ARTICLE

**MICHAEL GORDON**

The Charlotte Observer

**NORTH CAROLINA  
BAR ASSOCIATION**  
SEEKING LIBERTY & JUSTICE

# COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS

## COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS



**1st Place**  
**Renee Spencer**  
 The State Port Pilot  
 Southport  
 Addiction and Loss  
*This comprehensive piece, which leaves no stone unturned, was a fascinating and informative read that not only required a lot of hard work by Ms. Spencer, but likely saved more than one life. Excellent work.*

**2nd Place**  
**Erin Kidd**  
 Independent Tribune  
 Concord  
 Save the MaC Home  
*The reporter skillfully told the story of the MaC and its clients, but more importantly, the value of the program to the community. Had the newspaper decided against the project, the \$100,000 matching donation likely would not have been received and the facility would have closed. Excellent work.*

**3rd Place**  
**Bill Moss**  
 Hendersonville Lightning  
 Hendersonville  
 Hendersonville High School

## DAILY NEWSPAPERS UNDER 25,000 CIRCULATION



**1st Place**  
**Staff**  
 Statesville Record & Landmark  
 Statesville  
 Old Davis Hospital investigation  
*A great example of how local journalism can work the literal health of the community. No level of government was left alone here, and that's a good thing.*

**2nd Place**  
**Staff**  
 The Shelby Star  
 Shelby  
 Connect, Commit to Change  
*They say newspapers are dying because they don't connect with its community. This is an example of how that sentiment is wrong.*

## DAILY NEWSPAPERS OVER 25,000 CIRCULATION



**1st Place**  
**Mandy Locke, Travis Long**  
 News & Observer  
 Raleigh  
 Deadly Force  
*This series shines a stark light on the fact that these kind of issues that are capturing headlines in cities feel just as at home in rural areas, and in fact may find more comfortable accommodations there.*

**2nd Place**  
**Greg Barnes**  
 Fayetteville Observer  
 Fayetteville  
 Poverty's Price  
*A great look into the roots of a problem that spiderwebs through some of our biggest challenges. The series skates a line of objectivity and empathy without judgment.*

**3rd Place**  
**Gavin Off, Adam Bell**  
 The Charlotte Observer  
 Charlotte  
 Against the odds  
*A watchdog story on an area few watchdogs would think to investigate. Great work.*

# Breaking news. Great writing. Photography. Enterprise reporting. General excellence.

GateHouse Media newspapers across  
North Carolina offer in-depth coverage of  
their communities and give readers a voice  
for what matters to them.

In the 2016 NCPA contest, those efforts  
resulted in 159 awards.



## DIVISION A

### North Carolina Lawyers Weekly

2nd General News Reporting / Ambien Defense ..... Phillip Bantz

### The Havelock News

3rd Education Reporting / Degrees of Debt ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 3rd Sports Feature Writing / Sermons recalls baseball's golden era ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 3rd Photography, General News / Active shooter drill ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 3rd Photography, Feature / SPARKS FLY ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 3rd Best Video / Craven Community College high altitude balloon payload drop test ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 3rd Best Multimedia Project / Emerging Engineers ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 3rd Lighter Columns / My guilty pleasure...; Here's one solution...; Seeing Christmas ..... Barry Fetzer  
 2nd Profile Feature / Suffering in silence ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 2nd Sports News Reporting / Proposed cuts ..... Ken Buday  
 2nd Sports Feature Photo / Game Night ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 2nd Photography, Sports / Sharing the catch ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 2nd Photo Page or Essay / Tball ..... Ken Buday  
 2nd Serious Columns / Fighting wrong war...; Everybody has a story...; After 33 years ..... Barry Fetzer  
 2nd Sports Coverage / Havelock News ..... Staff  
 2nd News Coverage / Havelock News ..... Staff  
 2nd Photography, Spot / Newport man in wreck later found unconscious from alleged overdose ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 1st Photography, General News / Rotor heads ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 1st Photography, Feature / Beautiful ..... Ken Buday  
 1st Sports Feature Photo / FLYING HIGH ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 1st Photography, Sports / Rams turn back White Oak ..... Ken Buday  
 1st Best Video / Gator in the Garage ..... Drew C. Wilson  
 1st Sports Columns / Sun did rise ..... Ken Buday  
 1st General Excellence for Newspaper Websites / HaveNews.com ..... Staff  
 1st Appearance and Design / Havelock News ..... Staff  
 1st Best Community Coverage / Havelock News ..... Staff  
 1st Photography, Spot / Blaze burns bedroom of Havelock home ..... Drew C. Wilson

## DIVISION D

### The Courier-Tribune — Asheboro

3rd News Feature Writing / I know he's there ..... Chip Womick  
 3rd Lighter Columns / Gasp! Single men sleep on dirty sheets; Secrets of the night;  
 His legacy went beyond his tools ..... Larry Penkava  
 3rd Serious Columns / Serious columns, April 24, Aug. 21, Sept. 18 ..... Ray Criscoe  
 2nd Serious Columns / Serious columns, June 1, July 13, Sept. 7 ..... Sharon Womick  
 1st Investigative Reporting / Local state legislators respond to HB2 questions ..... JD Walker

### Times-News — Hendersonville

3rd Profile Feature / Dana woman reflects on 90 years ..... Derek Lacey  
 3rd Arts and Entertainment Reporting / Answering the call ..... Stephen Kindland  
 3rd Business Writing / Curtains close on banner year ..... Derek Lacey

3rd Sports Feature Writing / Two Roads .....  
 3rd Photography, Feature / Not forgotten .....  
 3rd News Section Design .....  
 3rd Beat News Reporting / Blackberries gain traction .....  
 2nd Election/Political Reporting / Mayoral candidate bucks the statu .....  
 2nd Beat News Reporting / Farmers turn over new leaves .....  
 2nd Beat Feature Reporting / St. James Ministry .....  
 1st News Feature Writing / Dead Ends .....  
 1st Feature Writing / Never a dull moment .....  
 1st Profile Feature / 'Mayor of Green River' garners admiration .....  
 1st News Enterprise Reporting / Abuse hard to prosecute .....  
 1st Sports Columns / Sports Commentary: On the sidelines .....  
 1st General Excellence for Newspaper Websites / BlueRidgeNow.co .....  
 1st City/County Government Reporting / Council weighs options .....  
**The Free Press — Kinston**  
 3rd Best Video / Fan reaction to #Baseball's back in #Kinston at His .....  
 2nd Photography, General News / A search for justice .....  
 1st Appearance and Design / Kinston Free Press .....  
 1st News Section Design / Kinston Free Press .....  
 1st Special Section / Brandon Ingram special section .....  
**The Dispatch — Lexington**  
 3rd Online Breaking News Coverage / Thomasville Chamber of Com .....  
 3rd Sports Columns / What a seventh inning it was; Griffin was an ob .....  
 2nd Photography, Feature / Going Up .....  
 2nd Best Video / Hope for Harris .....  
 2nd Sports Columns / Dwight Davis Sports Columns .....  
 2nd Photography, Spot / Fire displaces husband and wife .....  
**Sun Journal — New Bern**  
 2nd Photo Page or Essay / At the rodeo .....  
 2nd Appearance and Design / April 24-25, 2016 .....  
 2nd Special Section / High School Football Preview Friday, Aug. 19, 2 .....  
 1st Sports Feature Photo / Nail-biter in Greenville .....  
 1st Photography, Sports / Best in the state! .....  
 1st Lighter Columns / Lighter columns .....  
**The Shelby Star**  
 3rd Education Reporting / 'Expectation' Graduation .....  
 3rd Appearance and Design — Newspapers Only / Shelby Star .....  
 2nd Deadline News Reporting / Shelby Officer's condition critical .....  
 2nd Sports Feature Photo / 3 at home, Shelby on the road .....  
 2nd Best Multimedia Project / Fighting the Night .....  
 2nd Best Niche Publication / American Legion World Series official p .....  
 1st Online Breaking News Coverage / Officer Brackeen shooting and .....  
 1st Sports Feature Writing / A Mother's Love .....  
 1st Photography, Feature / Competition and camaraderie .....  
 1st Best Multimedia Project / Travel in the Carolinas .....  
 1st Sports Coverage / The Star .....  
**DIVISION E**  
**The Times News — Burlington**  
 3rd Arts and Entertainment Reporting / Gaffigan's comedy relatable .....  
 3rd Photography, Sports / Interception attempt in traffic .....  
 3rd Photo Page or Essay / Fresh from farm to table .....  
 3rd City/County Government Reporting / EMS billing service a pain .....  
 2nd News Enterprise Reporting / The fight continues .....  
 1st Deadline News Reporting / Jurors see discovery site .....  
 1st Feature Writing / Resting place .....  
 1st Investigative Reporting / How safe is our water? .....  
 1st Lighter Columns / 1-3, Swearing by or at collards; 2-7, Primed fo .....  
 1st Editorial Page / Editorial page .....  
 1st Beat News Reporting / Shootings and mayhem in Burlington .....  
**Gaston Gazette**  
 3rd General News Reporting / Keith Scott shooting series .....  
 3rd Profile Feature / The Iris Lady .....  
 3rd Business Writing / These guys are on the make .....  
 3rd Photography, Feature / Visitors unearth fun at the Schiele .....  
 3rd Appearance and Design / Gaston Gazette .....  
 3rd Special Section / Panthers Super Bowl Section .....  
 2nd Education Reporting / What students miss when teachers are al .....  
 2nd Sports Columns / Richard Walker Sports Columns .....  
 2nd General Excellence for Newspaper Websites / GastonGazette.co .....  
 2nd Election / Political Reporting / Campaign cash .....  
 2nd Beat News Reporting / Freightliner series .....  
 2nd Beat Feature Reporting / Old Killings .....

Joey Millwood  
 Andrew Mundhenk  
 Staff  
 Derek Lacey  
 Derek Lacey  
 Beth De Bona  
 Derek Lacey  
 Stephen Kindland  
 Stephen Kindland  
 Abigail Margulis  
 Dean Hensley  
 Staff  
 Derek Lacey

Historic Grainger Stadium  
 Janet S. Carter  
 Zach Frailey  
 Staff  
 Staff  
 Junious Smith III, Richard Clark, Staff

Commerce announces embezzlement investigation ...  
 Mat Batts  
 Previous choice; Stepping down with the crown ...  
 Mike Duprez  
 Donnie Roberts  
 Donnie Roberts  
 Dwight Davis  
 Donnie Roberts

Todd Michalek  
 Staff  
 2016  
 Adam Thompson and Richard Clark  
 Todd Michalek  
 Todd Michalek  
 Randy Foster

Elise Franco  
 Staff  
 Joyce Orlando  
 Brittany Randolph  
 Nick Dumont  
 Staff  
 Joyce Orlando, Kevin Ellis, Elise Franco  
 Gabe Whisnant  
 Brittany Randolph  
 Staff  
 Staff

Charity Apple  
 Steven Mantilla  
 Steven Mantilla  
 Anna Johnson  
 Anna Johnson  
 Natalie Allison Janicello  
 Michael D. Abernethy  
 Anna Johnson  
 Jay Ashley  
 Staff  
 Natalie Allison Janicello

Wade Tyler Millward, Adam Lawson, Eric Wildstein  
 Will MacDonald  
 Wade Tyler Millward  
 Mike Hensdill  
 Staff  
 Staff  
 Eric Wildstein, Allison Bradshaw  
 Richard Walker  
 Gazette staff  
 Kevin Ellis  
 Wade Tyler Millward  
 Kevin Ellis

1st General News Reporting / Jordyn Dumont series ..... Kevin Ellis and Adam Lawson  
 1st Photography, General News / A First for Everyone ..... Mike Hensdill  
 1st Photo Page or Essay / Running for our Community ..... Mike Hensdill  
 1st Feature Section Design / Feature Section Design ..... Staff

**The Daily News – Jacksonville**

2nd News Section Design / The Daily News ..... Staff  
 1st Sports Feature Writing / Deaf wrestler ..... Rick Scoppe  
 1st Sports Columns / Again? Cards win another incredible final; ECCC had its stars;  
 Wrestling in Onslow may be best ever ..... Rick Scoppe  
 1st General Excellence for Newspaper Websites / JDNews.com ..... Staff  
 1st Sports Coverage / The Daily News ..... Staff  
 1st Best Community Coverage / The Daily News ..... Staff

**StarNews – Wilmington**

3rd Education Reporting / HB2 in the hallways ..... Cammie Bellamy  
 3rd Illustration / Photo Illustration / Cool cups ..... Paul Stephen  
 3rd Best Multimedia Project / Our ship: Battleship North Carolina at 75 ..... Stacie Greene Hidek, Jeff Hidek, Ben Steelman  
 3rd Headline Writing / Flounder fracas; Fishing for answers; It's a small world ..... Gareth McGrath  
 3rd General Excellence for Newspaper Websites / www.StarNewsOnline.com ..... Staff  
 3rd Sports Coverage / Jan. 27-28 ..... Staff  
 3rd Beat Feature Reporting / Food of the soul ..... Paul Stephen  
 3rd Best Lede / Beyonce; Shane Simpson; The Bounce Squad ..... Hunter Ingram  
 2nd Deadline News Reporting / Storm claims last house on Lea Hutaff Island ..... Julian March  
 2nd Feature Writing / Family-run diners feel the squeeze ..... Paul Stephen  
 2nd Profile Feature / Man with a plan ..... Alex Riley  
 2nd Business Writing / With mall foreclosure, is face-lift in future? ..... Ashley Morris  
 2nd Best Multimedia Project / Shipwrecks of North Carolina ..... Tammy Miller  
 2nd Feature Section Design / Aug. 10-11, 2016 ..... Staff  
 2nd Special Section / Eat, Drink, Be Merry ..... Paul Stephen, Pam Sander, Julie Frady, Emily Marcom  
 2nd Best Lede / Donna Andrews; Will Rogers Follies; Star Wars mania ..... Ben Steelman  
 2nd Photography, Spot / Johnny Small visits gravesite ..... Mike Spencer  
 1st Online Breaking News Coverage / Abducted girl found alive  
 Fran Norton, Hannah Delacourt, Ashley Morris, Makenzie Holland and Paul Stephen  
 1st Arts and Entertainment Reporting / 'The Choice' ..... Hunter Ingram  
 1st Education Reporting / Guns in schools ..... Hannah DelaCourt and Ashley Morris  
 1st News Enterprise Reporting / Brunswick Boom ..... Adam Wagner  
 1st Best Multimedia Project / Azalea Festival: A to Z ..... Elizabeth Montgomery, Jeff Hidek  
 1st Appearance and Design / April 16-17, 2016 ..... Staff  
 1st News Section Design / June 12-13, 2016 ..... Staff  
 1st Special Section / 2016 Football Guide ..... Tim Hower, Alex Riley, Michael Brown, Sean Quarles  
 1st Best Niche Publication / Vanity Fur ..... Tammy Miller, Jennifer Schaeffer  
 1st Sports Enterprise Writing / Treading water ..... Alex Riley  
 1st City/County Government Reporting / County versus city ..... Hunter Ingram  
 1st Best Lede / Well-seasoned; Incredible journey; Finding refuge ..... Hannah DelaCourt

**DIVISION F**

**Fayetteville Observer**

3rd Profile Feature / IT TAKES A VILLAGE ..... Greg Barnes  
 3rd Sports Feature Writing / Dreams Die Hard Here ..... Stephen Schramm  
 3rd Illustration / Photo Illustration / Battle In Full Swing ..... Mariano Santillan  
 3rd Best Multimedia Project / Becoming American ..... Amanda Dolasinski; Andrew Craft; Hrisanthi Kroi  
 3rd Lighter Columns / 'Uncle Frank looks good, don't he?' ..... Bill Kirby  
 3rd Serious Columns / Racist message on VanStory Hills door ..... Myron Pitts  
 2nd Deadline News Reporting / Haymount Grill Gutted By Fire ..... Chick Jacobs  
 2nd Feature Writing / Becoming American ..... Amanda Dolasinski  
 2nd Profile Feature / I Kew I Would Get Home Paul Dallas ..... Chick Jacobs  
 2nd Photography, Sports / Diving Touchdown ..... Andrew Craft  
 2nd Lighter Columns / Baby girl changes the game; steals hearts ..... Myron Pitts  
 2nd Sports Columns / Westover graduate savors 'frozen moment' with Ali ..... Bret Strelow  
 2nd General Excellence for Newspaper Websites / FayObserver.com ..... Staff  
 2nd Photography, Spot / Waters Rise ..... Andrew Craft  
 1st General News Reporting / BEYOND THE BOULEVARD ..... Greg Barnes  
 1st Online Breaking News Coverage / Sept. 28 flooding ..... Staff  
 1st Investigative Reporting / Why did Rylan die? ..... Greg Barnes  
 1st Photography, Feature / Clarkzilla ..... Andrew Craft  
 1st Sports Coverage / 'SUPER PIRATE' ..... Staff  
 1st Beat News Reporting / 440th Airlift Wing ..... Drew Brooks



# DIVISION D

## Daily newspapers under 12,500 circulation

### GENERAL NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Sharon McBrayer**

The News Herald  
Morganton

Clark murder investigation

*A most thorough job of taking this case from a body being found to a suspect being arrested and indicted, to the feds taking over because of the accused's suspected terrorist connections.*

2nd Place

**Staff**

The News Herald  
Morganton

Bomb Threats

*This story was well-reported through multiple sources from start to finish. The reporter properly included the impact of the bomb threats on manpower and on real people who were threatened, all the while keeping the readers up to date on the investigation.*

3rd Place

**William R. Toler**

Richmond County Daily Herald  
Rockingham

Chicken farm cruelty

*A good job hitting all the angles of this developing story of animal cruelty at a chicken farm.*

### DEADLINE NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Corey Friedman**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Man dies in fire

*Great reporting on a heartbreaking incident.*

2nd Place

**Joyce Orlando**

The Shelby Star  
Shelby

Shelby Officer's condition critical

*Strong reporting on a tight deadline. Also describes well why this officer was such an asset to the community.*

3rd Place

**Olivia Neeley**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Homeowner kills intruder

*Good interview with the family created an interesting story.*

### ONLINE BREAKING NEWS

1st Place

**Joyce Orlando, Kevin Ellis, Elise Franco**

The Shelby Star  
Shelby

Officer Brackeen shooting and suspect capture

26

2nd Place

**Amanda Higgins**

The News Herald  
Morganton  
Body Found

3rd Place

**Mat Batts**

The Dispatch  
Lexington

Thomasville Chamber of Commerce announces embezzlement investigation

### NEWS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Derek Lacey**

Times-News  
Henderson  
Dead Ends

2nd Place

**Robert E. Lee**

Statesville Record & Landmark  
Statesville

Callicutt

3rd Place

**Chip Womick**

The Courier-Tribune  
Asheboro

I know he's there

### FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Stephen Kindland**

Times-News  
Hendersonville

Never a dull moment

*Well done enterprise story. Felt like I got to know the coffee bar and some of its patrons. Good story telling.*

2nd Place

**Nina Mastandrea**

Statesville Record & Landmark  
Statesville

Eddie

*Extraordinary story, well told by many sources. Well written and inspiring.*

3rd Place

**Lisa Boykin Batts**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Working at age 95

*I like the folksy way the story was told and the reporter's effort to put other voices in the piece.*

### PROFILE FEATURE

1st Place

**Stephen Kindland**

Times-News  
Hendersonville

'Mayor of Green River' garners admiration

*An excellent portrait of a North Carolina farm*

*family, husband and wife. Good detail and quotes. The reader feels he's in the room with the couple.*

2nd Place

**Brie Handgraaf**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Never feel forgotten

*A strong profile of a woman and the man she has loved. Nicely done.*

3rd Place

**Derek Lacey**

Times-News  
Hendersonville

Dana woman reflects on 90 years

*This profile contains all the information of a thorough profile. It's interesting.*

### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING

1st Place

**Cindy Beamon**

The Daily Advance  
Elizabeth City

Art takes Studio Gals to unexpected places

2nd Place

**Cindy Beamon**

The Daily Advance  
Elizabeth City

Goin' freaky: Makeup artist Roache creates ghoulish faces

3rd Place

**Stephen Kindland**

Times-News  
Hendersonville

Answering the call

### EDUCATION REPORTING

1st Place

**Kelsey Padgett**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

From Beijing to Wilson

*This one had a writer's touch, and the topic was off the beaten track. It was a pleasant read.*

2nd Place

**Chris Berendt**

The Sampson Independent  
Clinton

A tribute to Sallie, Hardison honored  
*Just a nice feature story about an unsung hero who was given her due.*

3rd Place

**Elise Franco**

The Shelby Star  
Shelby

'Expectation' Graduation

*In a group of feature stories, this was one of the rare news entries that really dove into the*

*topic and explored it in detail.*

### NEWS ENTERPRISE REPORTING

1st Place

**Abigail Margulis**

Times-News  
Hendersonville

Abuse hard to prosecute

*A community whose newspaper does this kind of reporting is well-served. Overall it's well-reported and solidly written, full of information that would make people think about what, if anything, can be done about the issues.*

2nd Place

**Bill Horner**

Sanford Herald  
Sanford

On getting a handgun

*A very unconventional news enterprise piece, given that it's done in first-person. But this is an example of where first-person can work: The writer uses his experience to deliver important information and to shed light on a decision and an action that often is derided or too quickly labeled. There is some myth-busting going on here, and that's a good thing.*

3rd Place

**Olivia Neeley**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

49 year fight: 'I don't give up'

*Well-researched, detailed piece that delivers good explanatory journalism about the process. Importantly, the story feels independent, not as though the writer is cheerleading (a flaw that pops up in some stories like this).*

### INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

1st Place

**J.D. Walker**

The Courier-Tribune  
Asheboro

Local state legislators respond to HB2 questions

### BUSINESS WRITING

1st Place

**Corey Friedman**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Historic building burns; 'Where boutique once stood, a charred shell remains'

*An evocative opening leads to a very good hard news/breaking news story. The piece has detail, imagery and history. This is real local news reporting, well beyond event coverage.*

2nd Place

**Shawn Taylor**

Sanford Herald  
Sanford

Soccer complex plan stirs concern

*This is a pretty thoroughly reported piece and*

# DIVISION D

it feels like each side gets a fair shake. There is good conflict in the story that the writer uses to advantage. This is an even-handed look at the issue.

3rd Place

**Derek Lacey**

Times-News

Hendersonville

Curtains close on banner year

An interesting story, with the numbers you'd want, on one of the organizations that defines a community.

## SPORTS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Gabe Whisnant**

The Shelby Star

Shelby

A Mother's Love

Most sports feature stories are about the athletes, of course, and there's obviously nothing wrong with that. And this story is, too. But it's a "larger" story, and that makes it transcendent. Whisnant's mothers' (plural) love story inspires, the way the best feature stories do. Fine work.

2nd Place

**John Brasier**

The News-Topic

Lenoir

Standing tall through faith

Overcoming-adversity themes are a common feature story type, but this one stands out for the writing quality and the way the writer helps the reader feel they know Tanner pretty well by the time we finish the story. Job well done.

3rd Place

**Joey Millwood**

Times-News

Hendersonville

Two Roads

Millwood's work here is touching without being emotional, and makes what could be a sappy story into a nice, compact family feature that is as appealing to sports fans as it is to parents and people who just like a good story. Writing is clear and straightforward. Good job!

## GENERAL NEWS

### PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Ryan Revock**

Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

Infant Mortality

The image has great story-telling power with plenty of relevant context. Technically, the shot is above average under difficult lighting.

2nd Place

**Zach Frailey**

The Free Press

Kinston

A search for justice

This photographer took the time to probe the scene and come up with an interesting juxta-

position of the poster and the child. It shows an eye for news.

3rd Place

**Ryan Revock**

Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

Mooresville Protest

I like the secondary image of the woman with her fist in the air. It adds emotion that the wide shot cannot hope to convey, and it is technically superior under difficult lighting.

## FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Brittany Randolph**

The Shelby Star

Shelby

Competition and camaraderie

It is all in the eyes. I think this girl is really into the competition. You can feel it. Depth of field is perfect for this. Great Job!

2nd Place

**Donnie Roberts**

The Dispatch

Lexington

Going Up

Color is great, Composition good, it is almost like it is in flight. It really pops off the page.

3rd Place

**Andrew Mundhenk**

Times-News

Hendersonville

Not forgotten

A sweet moment that made this Vet's day.

## SPORTS FEATURE PHOTO

1st Place

**Todd Michalek**

Sun Journal

New Bern

Nail-biter in Greenville

Great angles capturing the game.

2nd Place

**Brittany Randolph**

The Shelby Star

Shelby

3 at home, Shelby on the road

Awesome moment to capture the crowd.

3rd Place

**Ryan Revock**

Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

Bike Race Balloon

Excellent job capturing colors.

## SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Todd Michalek**

Sun Journal

New Bern

Best in the state!

In this image the three facial expressions

completely tell the story of the young wrestler's achievement.

2nd Place

**Josh McKinney**

The Daily Courier

Forest City

Coming Home: East Rutherford wins

Game 1 of regional title series photos

This more genteel home plate jubilation scene was nicely captured by the photographer. It is a visual delight and so unlike the pile of celebrating players you expect to see.

3rd Place

**Ryan Revock**

Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

Wake Surfing

Well handled, the moment perfect and the surfer's talent and effort captured.

## PHOTO PAGE OR ESSAY

1st Place

**Ryan Revock**

Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

Rodeo

Loved this entry...the photograph of the rider on the bull and the way the bull is looking at the camera is amazing as are the action shots, especially how you captured the bull with all four legs in the air. Never been to a rodeo and now I don't have to go...feel like I was there!!

2nd Place

**Todd Michalek**

Sun Journal

New Bern

At the rodeo

Great shots...love the variety of angels you used and how you captured the action...well done.

3rd Place

**Vail Stewart Rumley**

The Washington Daily News

Washington

Week of the Young Child

Very cute...great to get that many people on one page...always a plus!

## ILLUSTRATION/PHOTO

### ILLUSTRATION

1st Place

**Jason Scott**

The Washington Daily News

Washington

Profile 2016

Really loved how the illustrations reflected the portraits. Text was used in a clever way, too.

2nd Place

**Paul Durham**

The Wilson Times

Wilson

Fantastic Four

Good concept and execution. A lot of fun to look at.

## BEST VIDEO

1st Place

**Chelsey Alder, Jonathan Weaver**

Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

Introduction to South Statesville

This video was very technically sound - great visuals and great audio. It is a concise and compelling story with locals explaining the area in which they live as compared to the stigma that is attached to their area by outsiders.

2nd Place

**Donnie Roberts**

The Dispatch

Lexington

Hope for Harris

This video had a great mix of the main interview and extra footage of the basketball event. The video does well at standing on its own - telling the whole story behind Hope for Harris.

3rd Place

**Janet S. Carter**

The Free Press

Kingston

Fan reaction to #Baseball's back in #Kinston at Historic Grainger Stadium

There was a good mix of interviews and extra footage from the event. Interviews from various community members conveyed the happiness they have that baseball is back in their area.

## BEST MULTIMEDIA

### PROJECT

1st Place

**Staff**

The Shelby Star

Shelby

Travel in the Carolinas

Intriguing layout. Love the embedded videos. Interesting graphics. Beautiful photos.

2nd Place

**Nick Dumont**

The Shelby Star

Shelby

Fighting the Night

Unusual layout for news article online, but I like it. Like the embedded video. Beautiful photos and video.

3rd Place

**Staff**

The News Herald

Morgantown

Operation Blue Christmas

Like the embedded video at the bottom of online article. Like that print article directs readers online to see video.

# DIVISION D

## Daily newspapers under 12,500 circulation

### EDITORIALS

1st Place

**Corey Friedman**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Bulson; animal fine; knowing rules  
Clear and punchy writing. Each piece contained strong and well-argued opinions that come across up front. Kudos all around.

2nd Place

**Guy Lucas**

The News Topic  
Lenoir

Apartments, Tax rate, Fear  
Lively, thoughtful and engaging opinions. Clear and concise. Well done.

3rd Place

**Lisa Wall**

The News Herald  
Morganton

Collection of Editorials  
Strong and forceful writing. The editorials were thoughtful and well written. Nice job.

### LIGHTER COLUMNS

1st Place

**Randy Foster**

Sun Journal  
New Bern

Lighter columns  
With crisp writing and a level of detail that's almost photographic, these columns pull you into the stories they tell and don't let go. Those who can relate will, and those who can't, will imagine. Great stories of one man and his family's triumphs and travails. Did the next drone fare better?

2nd Place

**Sanda Baucom Hight**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Birthdays; reunions; porch  
The writer has great memories of her childhood and is skilled at sharing them, in direct, to-the-point language.

3rd Place

**Larry Penkava**

The Courier-Tribune  
Asheboro

Gasp! Single men sleep on dirty sheets; Secrets of the night; His legacy went beyond his tools  
The writer is an excellent storyteller whose brevity and rhythm can make for a quick read, though there's always some message to absorb. He does fun and light (sheets) as well as deep and nostalgic (tools).

### SERIOUS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Kara Fohner**

The News-Topic  
Lenoir

Assault, Mother, Death

*This writer kept me interested and made me care about her story.*

2nd Place

**Sharon Womick**

The Courier-Tribune  
Asheboro

Serious columns, June 1, July 13, Sept. 7  
Nice storyteller. She kept me interested.

3rd Place

**Ray Criscoe**

The Courier-Tribune  
Asheboro

Columns, April 24, Aug. 21, Sept. 18  
Important and smart discussion of the subject matter.

### SPORTS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Dean Hensley**

Times-News  
Hendersonville

Sports Commentary: On the sidelines  
Very well written. Great leads.

2nd Place

**Dwight Davis**

The Dispatch  
Lexington  
Dwight Davis Sports Columns  
Great topics. Nicely written.

3rd Place

**Mike Duprez**

The Dispatch  
Lexington

What a seventh inning it was, Griffin Was an obvious choice, Stepping down with the crown

### ELECTION/POLITICAL REPORTING

1st Place

**William R. Toler**

Richmond County Daily Journal  
Rockingham

Bond to fund RCC expansions  
Bond stories are never sexy but they are very important to taxpayers. Well done coverage.

2nd Place

**Derek Lacey**

Times-News  
Hendersonville

Mayoral candidate bucks the status quo  
Great job of not discounting the democratic and story value of gadflies.

3rd Place

**Corey Friedman**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Newton defends; Newton blasts; Schools weigh HB2  
Nice package of stories.

### HEADLINE WRITING

1st Place

**Corey Friedman**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Rail hub on track; A golden opportunity;  
Red light for Greenlight  
Creative use with tight specs.

2nd Place

**Matt Harrelson**

Richmond County Daily Journal  
Rockingham

Breakfast, lunch and thinner, Life's a stitch, David's Produce pulls up roots  
"Breakfast, lunch and thinner" offers such a great lead in.

3rd Place

**Mike Voss**

The Washington Daily News  
Washington

Switching hour, Whew!, It's a calling  
Good use of tight specs.

### SPORTS ENTERPRISE WRITING

1st Place

**Paul Durham**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Reclaiming their pot of gold  
I love the quotes from the athletes and the word-play. I especially like the "knee-buckling" comment.

2nd Place

**Paul Durham**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

The Home Team  
Interesting article about a situation that isn't common across the U.S.

3rd Place

**Jimmy Lewis**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

CBA ready to turn on the Jets  
Love the headline.

### EDITORIAL PAGE

1st Place

**Corey Friedman and Allison Moore Pridgen**

The Wilson Times  
Wilson

Cast your vote; Teenage taunts; No-fly list  
This paper gets the nod for its clean layout, strong writing, and engaging mix of longer form opinion content with shorter attention grabbers.

2nd Place

**Bill Horner, Shawn Stinson, Logan Martinez**

Sanford Herald

Sanford

Editorial pages

Very strong editorial writing in this entry.

3rd Place

**Staff**

The Daily Advance

Elizabeth City

Editorial pages

Loved how the editorials were enhanced with attention grabbers that spelled out the issue in brief.

### GENERAL EXCELLENCE FOR WEB SITES

1st Place

**Staff**

Times-News

Hendersonville

BlueRidgeNow.com

Very nice website. Good mix of stories. Great use of photos. Responsive design works well. Great use of white space--page is open and airy, very inviting. Loved, loved, loved the mugsots.

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Wilson Times

Wilson

WilsonTimes.com

Well put together website. Sections are clearly delineated. Good visuals throughout. Really liked the reproduction of the print ads, hope that's a package deal!

3rd Place

**Staff**

Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

Statesville.com

Very open and airy. White background works really well. Love the row of photo galleries at top of homepage.

### APPEARANCE & DESIGN

1st Place

**Staff**

The Free Press

Kinston

2nd Place

**Staff**

Sun Journal

New Bern

April 24-25, 2016

3rd Place

**Staff**

The Shelby Star

Shelby

### SPORTS COVERAGE

1st Place

**Staff**

The Shelby Star

# DIVISION D

## Shelby

Very thorough coverage of a sporting event that is obviously huge in this community. Even an outsider can appreciate the story.

## 2nd Place

### Paul Schenkel, Justin Epley

The News Herald  
Morganton

Good variety of sports covered. Good layout and photo placement.

## 3rd Place

### Staff

The Wilson Times

Wilson

Nice assortment of articles and photos.

## NEWS SECTION DESIGN

### 1st Place

#### Staff

The Free Press

Kinston

Consistently strong design and terrific typography makes the Free Press a pleasure to read and enhances reader understanding.

### 2nd Place

#### Lisa Wall and Robert Jordan

The News Herald

Morganton

### 3rd Place

#### Staff

Times-News

Hendersonville

## FEATURE SECTION DESIGN

### 1st Place

#### Jason Scott

The Washington Daily News

Washington

WDN features section design

Cutout and headline font color catches the line (not to mention the wording itself...)

## BEST COMMUNITY COVERAGE

### 1st Place

#### Staff

The Daily Advance

Elizabeth City

Community coverage, Feb. 7, Feb. 21

The close coverage of hyperlocal politics is what community newspapers should do, and the story on the road law is a good example of showing the effect of a state law on the local community, and also provided readers with the possibility of a remedy. Good work.

### 2nd Place

#### Staff

The McDowell News

Marion

Editions from Feb. 26 and 28, 2016

The fulsome candidate profiles in the primary coverage was very impressive and reflected a lot of work.

### 3rd Place

#### Staff

Sanford Herald

Sanford

Sanford Herald Community coverage The Sanford Herald deserves recognition for its local coverage, and Shawn Taylor deserves a special shout out for his yeoman's work. His story on local black politicians was interesting, the mom-daughter leap-year 11th b-day story was charming, and I like how he localized the Oscars.

## SPECIAL SECTION

### 1st Place

#### Junious Smith III, Richard Clark, Staff

The Free Press

Kinston

Brandon Ingram special section Really nice section. Strong columns. Good recaps. Nice breakouts. Good idea letting people wish the future NBA star well and running their photos. This was very well done overall.

### 2nd Place

#### Adam Thompson and Richard Clark

Sun Journal

New Bern

High School Football Preview Friday

Aug. 19, 2016

Attractively designed with great breakouts and was a true preview of the season. The typography and graphic elements were first-rate.

### 3rd Place

#### Staff

The Washington Daily News

Washington

Election guide 2015, Gridiron guide 2016 and Profile 2016.

The Election and Gridiron Guides were well-organized and easy to follow. Good reader service on both.

## BEST NICHE PUBLICATION

### 1st Place

#### Staff

The News Herald

Morganton

Burke at Work

Awesome package of insightful stories, active images and informative graphics!

### 2nd Place

#### Staff

The Shelby Star

Shelby

American Legion World Series program

The combination of clever features and quick-read items, along with fan-friendly design, really made this one stand out.

### 3rd Place

#### Staff

The Washington Daily News

Washington

Washington the Magazine (May-June)

This one stood apart with great use of art and

white space, creative headlines and an eye toward useful information for readers.

## CITY/COUNTY GOVERNMENT REPORTING

### 1st Place

#### Derek Lacey

Times-News

Hendersonville

Council weighs options

Lacey provides complete, accurate and timely coverage of an issue near and dear to readers: their safety. Excellent.

### 2nd Place

#### Corey Friedman

The Wilson Times

Wilson

Town demands cash for copies of its

rulebook

Taking action to right a wrong is a fundamental obligation of a local newspaper. Even when difficult personalities are involved, a town can't pick and choose who receives open records. This coverage showed that.

### 3rd Place

#### Brie Handgraaf

The Wilson Times

Wilson

Red light for Greenlight; Severed connection

When a court squabble leaves a group of Internet users in limbo, complete coverage like this keeps everyone informed. Great coverage of what was obviously a topic of high community interest.

## BEAT NEWS REPORTING

### 1st Place

#### Kara Fohner, Christopher Cole, Guy Lucas

The News-Topic

Lenoir

Murphy trial

Shows commitment to covering a bizarre court case, zeroing in on key developments and finding opportunities to include out-of-court interviews. Understanding of the beat is evident throughout.

### 2nd Place

#### Derek Lacey

Times-News

Hendersonville

Farmers turn over new leaves

A keen understanding of the agriculture beat allows this writer to explain changes in the industry in a highly readable fashion, incorporating human dimension as well as data.

### 3rd Place

#### Derek Lacey

Times-News

Hendersonville

Blackberries gain traction

With data, historical context and clear storytelling, this writer explains the economics and

logistics of blackberry production. The authoritative writing shows expertise with the beat.

## BEAT FEATURE REPORTING

### 1st Place

#### Melonie A. McLaurin

Richmond County Daily Journal

Rockingham

From the Porch to 'The Pit'

I really, really loved this story, I think mostly because you let the active players tell it in their own voice. Nicely done.

### 2nd Place

#### Beth De Bona

Times-News

Hendersonville

St. James Ministry

These stories make me smile. Church-based groups are often the unsung, quiet heroes in making a difference in the community. The amount of money the TTS has generated for other causes is humbling — and all in 4.5 hours a week!

### 3rd Place

#### Olivia Neeley

The Wilson Times

Wilson

'She can rest in peace'

This is a bittersweet follow-up to a story that for most people is already over. Well done.

## BEST LEDE

### 1st Place

#### William R. Toler

Richmond County Daily Journal

Rockingham

Murder, Helmet Law, K-9 Retires

Very much in the moment writing. The reader feels the issue, rather than hears about it. Excellent grasp of what makes a powerful introduction to a story

### 2nd Place

#### Brie Handgraaf

The Wilson Times

Wilson

Cattle range; slayings; groomer

The writer does a good job seeking out the common human emotion evoked by the story and conveying it through the lead. The reader is immediately introduced to the story.

### 3rd Place

#### Corey Friedman

The Wilson Times

Wilson

Kenly firefighter; Walston; Memorial Day Remembering people through personal anecdotes is the most respectful way to honor them. This writer has found a way to tell the story and honor their legacy by bringing readers immediately into their life stories.

## PHOTOGRAPHY, SPOT

### 1st Place

#### William R. Toler

[Continued p. 44](#)

# Congratulations

to the entire Wilson Times newsroom on



## North Carolina Press Association Editorial Contest Awards



MORE THAN A NEWSPAPER - A COMMUNITY INSTITUTION SINCE 1896

### **First Place**

Deadline news reporting — Corey Friedman  
Education reporting — Kelsey Padgett  
Business writing — Corey Friedman  
Editorials — Corey Friedman  
Headline writing — Corey Friedman  
Sports enterprise writing — Paul Durham  
Editorial page — Allison Moore Pridgen and Corey Friedman  
Religion and faith reporting — Brie Handgraaf

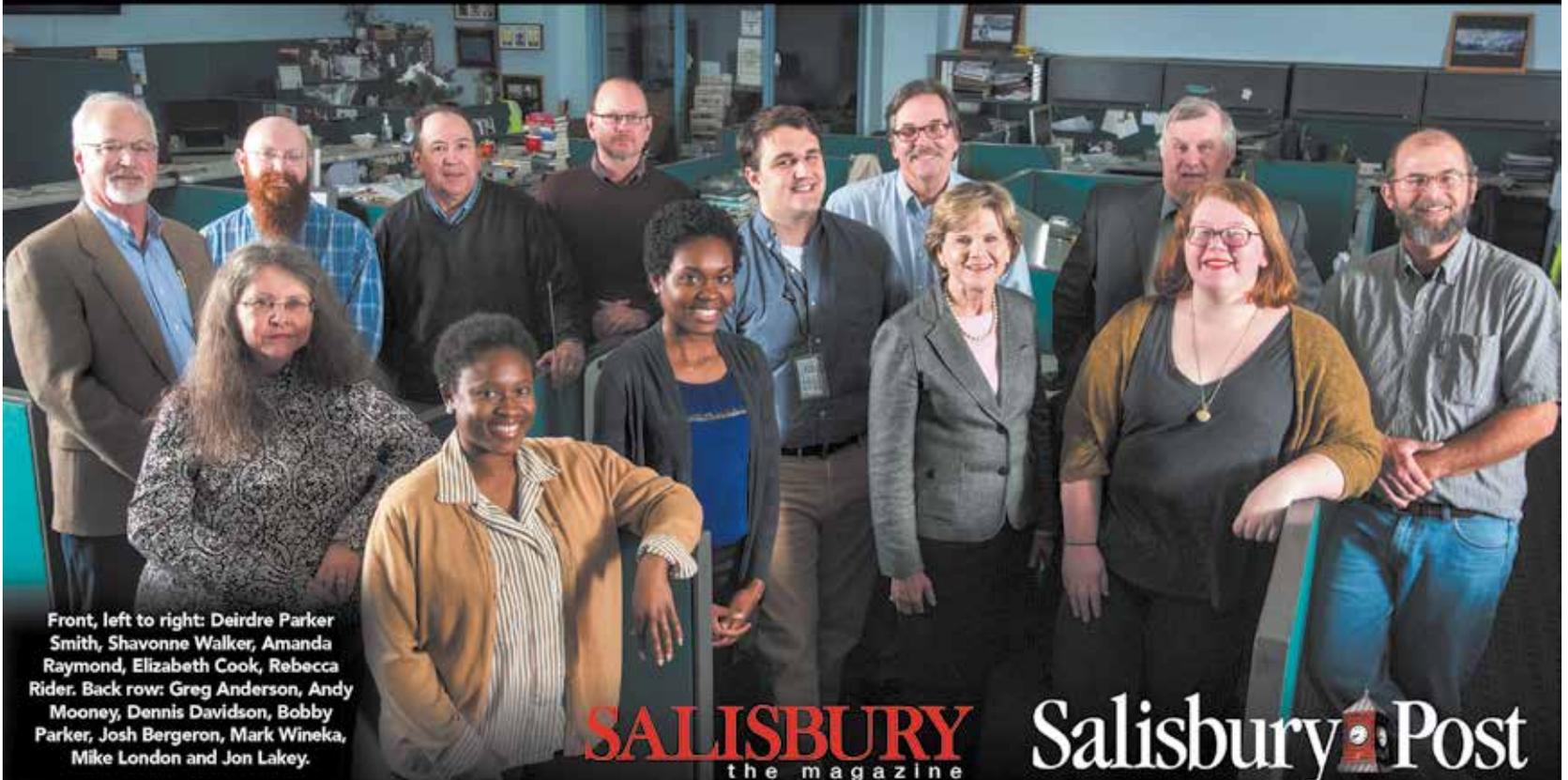
### **Second Place**

Profile feature — Brie Handgraaf  
Photo illustration — Paul Durham  
Lighter columns — Sanda Baucom Hight  
Sports enterprise writing — Paul Durham  
General excellence for newspaper websites — Staff  
City/county government reporting — Corey Friedman  
Best lede — Brie Handgraaf

### **Third Place**

Deadline news reporting — Olivia Neeley  
Feature writing — Lisa Boykin Batts  
News enterprise reporting — Olivia Neeley  
Election/political reporting — Corey Friedman  
Sports enterprise writing — Jimmy Lewis  
Sports coverage — Staff  
City/county government reporting — Brie Handgraaf  
Beat feature reporting — Olivia Neeley  
Best lede — Corey Friedman

## Congratulations to the newsroom of the Salisbury Post on 14 NCPA awards.



Front, left to right: Deirdre Parker Smith, Shavonne Walker, Amanda Raymond, Elizabeth Cook, Rebecca Rider. Back row: Greg Anderson, Andy Mooney, Dennis Davidson, Bobby Parker, Josh Bergeron, Mark Wineka, Mike London and Jon Lakey.

**SALISBURY**  
the magazine

Salisbury Post

# DIVISION E

Daily newspapers 12,500-35,000 circulation

## GENERAL NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Kevin Ellis and Adam Lawson**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

Jordyn Dumont series

*Strong and uncluttered news writing characterized the stories about this missing person case-turned-murder case. Easy reads enhanced by good detail. Really good newspaper work.*

2nd Place

**Kristin Zachary, Tony Castleberry**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Mirra's death deals shock to community

*Good choice of material to start a story about a suicide, and an even better choice of material to end the first-day story. Well written and comprehensive in offering views on what essentially was a community tragedy.*

3rd Place

**Wade Tyler Millward, Adam Lawson, Eric Wildstein**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

Keith Scott shooting series

*These are well-crafted stories that come at a law enforcement tragedy from different angles.*

## DEADLINE NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Natalie Allison Janicello**

The Times News

Burlington

Jurors see discovery site

*Great detail from the homeowners, and a very interesting look at a unique trial.*

2nd Place

**Julian March**

StarNews

Wilmington

Storm claims last house on Lea Hutaff

Island

*Excellent description of the scene, and good quotes throughout.*

3rd Place

**Paul B. Johnson**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

Green Resigns as GCS head

*Very informative story, especially considering the tight deadline. It showed the superintendent's impact well.*

## ONLINE BREAKING NEWS

1st Place

**Staff**

StarNews

Wilmington

Abducted girl found alive

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Quadruple murder on Grovement Drive

3rd Place

**Amelia Harper**

Rocky Mount Telegram

Rocky Mount

Missing fisherman

## FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Michael D. Abernethy**

The Times-News

Burlington

Resting place

*Overflowing with information that doesn't overwhelm, it inspires the reader to visit the site with new eyes and lasting respect.*

2nd Place

**Paul Stephen**

StarNews

Wilmington

Family-run diners feel the squeeze

*Dense with information and insights; balanced reporting on the competition for customers, with a simple but potent timeline sidebar that gives even more gravity to the main article.*

3rd Place

**Katie Jansen**

The Herald-Sun

Durham

Games for visually impaired showcased

at Maze Day

*Strong photos and captions, along with multiple interviews, provide the reader with fascinating details while presenting the participants in an empathetic but professional manner.*

## PROFILE FEATURE

1st Place

**Kim Grizzard**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Seeds of change

*In a category with lots of great contenders, this one rose to the top for its uplifting message.*

2nd Place

**Alex Riley**

StarNews

Wilmington

Man with a plan

*An uplifting story about a kid who seems to have it all together. Packed with detail about his life, hopes and dreams, as a reader, I felt like this stranger became someone I now know.*

3rd Place

**Will MacDonald**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

The Iris Lady

*The descriptive lead to this story lured me into the life of Shirley Spoon Knox and I was intrigued. The reporter did a wonderful job capturing Knox's personality. Great work!*

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING

1st Place

**Hunter Ingram**

StarNews

Wilmington

'The Choice'

2nd Place

**Jimmy Tomlin**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

On Cloud Nine

3rd Place

**Charity Apple**

The Times-News

Burlington

Gaffigan's comedy relatable to all ages

## EDUCATION REPORTING

1st Place

**Hannah DelaCourt and Ashley Morris**

StarNews

Wilmington

Guns in schools

*Startling presentation--but a startling story. Many reporters would have stopped at "court documents are sealed." But these reporters used it as an opportunity to take a close look at the issue, and to provide insight into the way schools address it.*

2nd Place

**Eric Wildstein, Allison Bradshaw**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

What students miss when teachers are absent

*A good, thorough examination of an interesting question.*

3rd Place

**Camie Bellamy**

StarNews

Wilmington

HB2 in the hallways

*Tough issue, but very well-told here.*

## NEWS ENTERPRISE REPORTING

1st Place

**Adam Wagner**

StarNews

Wilmington

Brunswick Boom

2nd Place

**Anna Johnson**

The Times-News

Burlington

The fight continues

3rd Place

**Jimmy Tomlin**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

11: A Tribute to our Veterans

## INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

1st Place

**Anna Johnson**

The Times-News

Burlington

How safe is our water?

*It's clear a lot of effort was put into investigating testing records to inform readers of the state of their water. The research was wide-ranging and also included helpful information for those residents owning private wells. Well done and informative.*

2nd Place

**Shavonne Walker**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

On hold

*This set of stories put the focus on spending in jails and questioned the status quo in the county in a clear and concise manner. The reporting clarified for readers a manner in which their tax dollars were being spent, and forced officials to explain their practices. Nice work.*

3rd Place

**Rebecca Rider**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Landis, elected officials and travel

*It's always good practice to elicit explanations on how money is spent, particularly when it's on things perhaps not directly related to governing. Good investigative work by collecting receipts and reimbursement info, as well as forcing change within the system.*

## BUSINESS WRITING

1st Place

**Josh Bergeron, Amanda Raymond**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Freightliner layoffs

*Great job thoroughly reporting an evolving story that had large effects on so many people. Tough story to report, but well done.*

2nd Place

**Ashley Morris**

StarNews

Wilmington

With mall foreclosure, is face-lift in future?

*I really enjoyed this story. Well reported.*

# DIVISION E

Daily newspapers 12,500-35,000 circulation

3rd Place

**Wade Tyler Millward**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

These guys are on the make

*A compelling piece of enterprise reporting.*

*The reporter compiled data to present to the reader information on patents in this county and then used the personal stories of several inventors to bring the story to life. A fun read throughout.*

## SPORTS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Jimmy Tomlin**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

A Purple Heart

1st Place

**Rick Scoppe**

The Daily News

Jacksonville

Deaf wrestler

*Like the way the writer explains how difficult it is to know what the coaches are saying, shows what he has overcome.*

2nd Place

**Mike London**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

A timeless hero: Klutz survived the battlefield to play baseball again

3rd Place

**Jonathan Byrn**

The Robesonian

Lumberton

Knowing Ali when he was Clay

## GENERAL NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Mike Hensdill**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

A First for Everyone

*This shot has overall balance and composition, and it also has the facial expressions that tell a lot about how much fun shooting really is.*

2nd Place

**Joe Pellegrino**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Drill Helps officials prepare

*The photographer worked hard to get this shot. An exercise like this always takes in a lot of territory, so a shooter has to be discerning about shooting station, light, action. It all comes together here.*

3rd Place

**Casey Mozingo**

Goldsboro News-Argus

Goldsboro

Courtroom outburst

*A good job of capturing the decisive moment. You could not predict or expect this to happen; this is the work of a pro.*

## FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Rhett Butler**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

A home filled with love

*You don't have a doubt of what this picture is about.*

2nd Place

**Stephanie Butzer**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

Jim Suits, owner of J&S Jewelers

*Great face, focus and light.*

3rd Place

**Mike Hensdill**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

Visitors unearth fun at the Schiele

*Love the light, the face on the Dino and that he is "bad to the bone!"*

## SPORTS FEATURE PHOTO

1st Place

**Kaitlin McKeown**

The Herald-Sun

Durham

Antawn Jamison basketball camp

*Great job of using a different angle to tell the story.*

2nd Place

**Rhett Butler**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Competition fosters friendship

*Perfect angle and placement to create a photo story.*

3rd Place

**Rhett Butler**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Can you hear me howl?

*Great shot capturing the emotion.*

## SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Casey Mozingo**

Goldsboro News-Argus

Goldsboro

Three step sweep

*This is a very strong and well executed sports action image. It shows the effort, the reactive moment and the ball, all in visual harmony.*

2nd Place

**Casey Mozingo**

Goldsboro News-Argus

Goldsboro

Comeback at the swamp

*The photographer's editing was smart here in picking the smiling runner's eye contact with her teammates. Her expressive reaction to scoring is so perfectly captured.*

3rd Place

**Steven Mantilla**

The Times-News

Burlington

Interception attempt in traffic

*This is a solid action photo showing a receiver preventing an interception. It was worth the good cover display the layout artist gave it.*

## PHOTO PAGE OR ESSAY

1st Place

**Mike Hensdill**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

Running for our Community

*Great shots...love the runners taking selfies! Photos capture the spirit of the run and look like a big deal in your community.*

2nd Place

**Rhett Butler**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Clinic is saving lives, one spay at a time  
*Great shots, emotional pictures that really tell a story.*

3rd Place

**Steve Mantilla**

The Times-News

Burlington

Fresh from farm to table

*Well done.*

## ILLUSTRATION/PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

1st Place

**Ross Chandler**

Rocky Mount Telegram

Rocky Mount

Fans left waiting

2nd Place

**Laura Greene**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

The Paddler

*This was a tough story to illustrate but we thought this was good way to approach it. It made us want to read the story.*

3rd Place

**Paul Stephen**

StarNews

Wilmington

Cool cups

*We appreciated the attention to detail on this photo. The cut out at the top of the frame was a nice touch.*

## BEST VIDEO

1st Place

**Joe Pellegrino**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

'It's all about people'; Martin Luther

King Day: Marchers rally for justice

*This video is a great documentation of an event. There are good interviews and shots.*

*The beginning is especially attention grabbing.*

*This video was a great compliment to the article provided, it brought the print version of the story alive.*

2nd Place

**John McCann**

The Herald-Sun

Durham

But Mama

*The singing at the beginning was attention grabbing and a good way to start the video.*

*There was a good use of photo and video. The reporter's voiceover is very well written.*

3rd Place

**Josh Bergeron**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Salisbury Black Lives Matter unity

march

*This video was good documentation of an event. It got the point and purpose of the event across to viewers. The video was concise and used the passionate parts of the demonstration well.*

## MULTIMEDIA PROJECT

1st Place

**Elizabeth Montgomery, Jeff Hidek**

StarNews

Wilmington

Azalea Festival: A to Z

*Fun take on article. Embedded event listing, animated gifs and video clips, embedded links to other articles and websites. Interesting way of doing things.*

2nd Place

**Tammy Miller**

StarNews

Wilmington

Shipwrecks of North Carolina

*Fun, interactive slideshow with small bites of info but links to more photos, other more in-depth articles, etc. Very interactive.*

3rd Place

**Stacie Greene Hidek, Jeff Hidek, Ben Steelman**

StarNews

Wilmington

Battleship North Carolina at 75

*Great photos and video (embedded). Interactive quiz.*

# CONGRATULATIONS!

We're proud of the journalists at The Charlotte Observer and the McClatchy Newsdesk East in Charlotte, who won 39 awards this year from the North Carolina Press Association. It's the 20th consecutive year in which we've won at least 20 awards from the NCPA. More importantly, it continues a tradition of journalism that not only distinguishes The Charlotte Observer and charlotteobserver.com, but also connects day after day with our communities and readers.



## First Place:

**Staff:** Deadline News Reporting, Violent protests return as city seeks answers

**Pam Kelley:** News Feature Writing, White people in Biddleville

**Karen Garloch:** Feature Writing, Mother was devastated by son's suicide. Then she met the woman he saved.

**Theoden Janes:** Arts and Entertainment Reporting, The book of Emily

**Ann Doss Helms:** Education Reporting, CMS student reassignment and turn-around challenges

**Bruce Henderson:** News Enterprise Reporting, Our water: an uncertain future

**Deon Roberts:** Business Writing, Foreign workers replacing Americans in tech positions

**Scott Fowler:** Sports Feature Writing, He did more than survive, he thrives

**Davie Hinshaw:** Photography, General News, Man voting

**Jeff Siner, Diedra Laird:** Photo Page or Essay, Protesters march for sixth day

**Gary Schwab:** Sports Enterprise Writing, The girl who never wanted to leave the game

**Staff:** Editorial Page

**Staff:** Appearance and Design

**Staff:** News Section Design

**Staff:** Best Niche Publication, Carolina Bride (July/September 2016)

**Kathleen Purvis:** Beat Feature Reporting, Cornbread: the great divide

**Jeff Siner:** Photography, Spot, Fatal police shooting

**David Perlmutter:** Religion & Faith Reporting, This Easter their message is mercy

## Second Place:

**Mark Price:** News Feature Writing, Myth vs fact: how Charlotte's bathroom law was born at a bakery

**Ann Doss Helms:** Education Reporting, Thunderbird Preparatory academy

**Diedra Laird:** Illustration/Photo Illustration, 9 lives

**Jeff Siner, Doug Miller:** Best Video, Roy's road to Rio

**Elizabeth Leland, Todd Sumlin, David Puckett:** Best Multimedia Project, Death by the river: the fisherman's defense

**Theoden Janes:** Serious columns

**Jim Morrill:** Election/Political Reporting, Nikki Haley's year under the hot lights

**Kathleen Purvis:** Beat Feature Reporting, It's not easy being Gwyneth

## Third Place:

**Mark Price:** General News Reporting, Controversial arrests net Charlotte immigrant teens

**Adam Bell, Ames Alexander, Katherine Peralta:** Deadline News Reporting, Rare amoeba infection blamed in death of teen

**Rick Rothacker:** Feature Writing, Rockfall on Rainier

**Rick Rothacker, Katherine Peralta:** Business Writing, How Charlotte business leaders scrambled to keep all star game

**John D. Simmons:** Photography, General News, Daughter moves wedding

**Todd Sumlin:** Best Video, Staying power: Maurice Williams' hit song celebrates 55 years

**Peter St. Onge:** Editorials

**Doug Miller:** Sports Enterprise Writing, Charlotte swimmer in the race of his life

**Staff:** General Excellence for Newspaper Websites: CharlotteObserver.com

**Staff:** Special Section, Super Bowl 50

**Theoden Janes:** Beat Feature Reporting, Did Joel give us the best show this year?

**Jeff Siner:** Photography, Spot, Protester kicks tear gas canister

**Tim Funk:** Religion & Faith Reporting, Graham's tour will try to rally conservative Christian voters

**The Charlotte Observer**  
charlotteobserver.com

# DIVISION E

Daily newspapers 12,500-35,000 circulation

## EDITORIALS

1st Place

**Donnie Douglas**

The Robesonian

Lumberton

Editorials

Nice collection of three powerful editorials. Eloquent writing. Thoughtful opinion. Well argued. Kudos!

2nd Place

**Vince Wheeler**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

Collection of editorials

Sardonic and lively editorials that hit readers like a punch to the face. Old school. Well done.

3rd Place

**Josh Bergeron**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Uncomfortable conversations, coal ash, student declines

Smart, thoughtful and well written. Good job.

## LIGHTER COLUMNS

1st Place

**Jay Ashley**

The Times-News

Burlington

1-3, Swearing by or at collards; 2-7, Primed for kickoff; 4-3, Inside the men's room

These are great pieces with flair that put you in the room with the writer, whether it's the kitchen, den or public bathroom. The writing is always clean — and full of wit.

2nd Place

**Al Clark**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Crayons, golf balls and laughter...; How to live in the present...; Recalling a life... plant magic beans

This writer makes you feel what he felt with style. Nostalgia is peppered with just the right amount of humor for each subject, ones you get to know very well.

3rd Place

**Rebecca Rider**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

The Rebecca Rider column

Many will relate to these and they are finely written. They mix past and present well, and the one on a school test packs extra punch, given the debate over standardized exams.

## SERIOUS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Elizabeth Cook**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

A wedding, Billie broke ground, Not an

either-or question

Her stories moved me. Everything I want in a newspaper column.

2nd Place

**Mark Wineka**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

A gift, one day after the funeral; A mother remembered; Maggie dies in the arms of a friend

He captured my attention and kept it. I loved his stories.

3rd Place

**Al Clark**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Looking to learn hard lessons...; Nightmare on 10th Street...; Coach's last lesson ...

Nice storytelling. Important stories.

## SPORTS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Rick Scoppe**

The Daily News

Jacksonville

Again? Cards win another incredible final; ECCC had its stars; Wrestling in Onslow may be best ever

Nice mix of sports and local focus. Good writing, too.

2nd Place

**Richard Walker**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

Richard Walker Sports Columns

Good topics. Nice writing. Also nice job carrying the main point through to the end of each column.

3rd Place

**Rodd Baxley**

The Robesonian

Lumberton

Sports columns

The Sam Mills column was excellent. All are nicely written.

## ELECTION/POLITICAL REPORTING

1st Place

**Mark Wineka**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Flowers for Suzanne: Trump proved gallant in defeat after losing to spunky actress

I loved this election. Different, thoughtful, insightful.

2nd Place

**Kevin Ellis**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

Campaign cash

I love this story concept. So much said in graphics.

3rd Place

**Josh Bergeron**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Coal ash controversy in NC

Well-written, hard-biting daily story.

## HEADLINE WRITING

1st Place

**Tony Castleberry**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Can you hear me howl?; Uncommon drive; A remarkable leap year

2nd Place

**Nathan Summers**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Nate Summers headlines

Great use of banner headlines.

3rd Place

**Gareth McGrath**

StarNews

Wilmington

Flounder fracas; Fishing for answers; It's a small world

## SPORTS ENTERPRISE WRITING

1st Place

**Alex Riley**

StarNews

Wilmington

Treading water

Excellent article!

2nd Place

**John McCann**

The Herald-Sun

Durham

FLEXING ON 'EM | UNC football players game changers before Mizzou movement

Excellent article comparing a student-athlete's social activism now compared to twenty-some years ago.

3rd Place

**John McCann**

The Herald-Sun

Durham

UNC tackling track & fields

Good job trying to present both sides of the argument.

## EDITORIAL PAGE

1st Place

**Staff**

The Times-News

Burlington

Editorial page

This is a really enjoyable editorial page, complete with a variety of voices from the newspaper staff and the community. Classically designed and easy to read, this is a paper that gives its readers something to chew on every Sunday morning. Great job.

2nd Place

**Elizabeth Cook**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Oct. 4, 11 & 20, 2015, Opinion pages

The voice of this paper is different from many. Not only does it comment on community issues with a clear and strong editorial voice, but it highlights remarkable people and stories in the community in a wonderful column by the newspaper's editor. Well done.

3rd Place

**Michael Abramowitz**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Justice and fairness...; A Father's Day conversation...; Tale of two creeks

Strong editorial voice that is willing to take controversial stands. A nice mix of voices.

## GENERAL EXCELLENCE FOR WEB SITES

1st Place

**Staff**

The Daily News

Jacksonville

JDNews.com

Well designed website--shared by all the top entries in this group. Good solid stories and photos. Sections clearly defined. Good use of multi-media.

2nd Place

**Staff**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

GastonGazette.com

Like its sister publications, this website is very solid, offering a plethora of news and multi-media content. Nice use of graphics--the Hurricane Matthew infographic was impressive.

3rd Place

**Staff**

StarNews

Wilmington

StarNewsOnline.com

Consistent with its sister publications, very strong design, content choices.

## APPEARANCE & DESIGN

1st Place

**Staff**

StarNews

Wilmington

April 16-17, 2016

# DIVISION E

Daily newspapers 12,500-35,000 circulation

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Daily Reflector  
Greenville

Eating healthy for less; Death, Anthony sentenced in triple homicide case

3rd Place

**Staff**

Gaston Gazette  
Gastonia

## SPORTS COVERAGE

1st Place

**Staff**

The Daily News  
Jacksonville

Sports coverage

Very good variety of activities. Well written and well designed.

2nd Place

**Dennis Davidson, Mike London**

Salisbury Post  
Salisbury

Sports coverage: World Series times two

Good coverage of a wide variety of sports.

3rd Place

**Staff**

StarNews  
Wilmington

Sports Coverage, Jan. 27-28

Nice layout, photos, and variety of sports coverage.

## NEWS SECTION DESIGN

1st Place

**Staff**

StarNews  
Wilmington

**Staff**

June 12-13, 2016

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Daily News  
Jacksonville

3rd Place

**Staff**

The Daily Reflector  
Greenville

Houses by chancellor's residence....;  
Sentenced to death....

## FEATURE SECTION DESIGN

1st Place

**Staff**

Gaston Gazette  
Gastonia

Gazette Features Section

What made this a clear winner was the design on the inside pages. Even the icons and overall design on the classifieds page is eye-catching. Great job!

2nd Place

**Staff**

StarNews  
Wilmington

Aug. 10-11, 2016

I love your front design. It's clean and really easy to read. The use of color added to the overall design and the sidebar on the front adds to the page. I also like the different sizes of photos used on the front and throughout the entire section. Great job!

## BEST COMMUNITY COVERAGE

1st Place

**Staff**

The Daily News  
Jacksonville

The Daily News

The candidate profiles, as well as the coverage of the building moratorium and the dangerous proposed detour, were examples of the sort of intensive, granular local coverage that only a community paper can provide. This is why community newspapers exist.

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Daily Reflector  
Greenville

Mirra dead of apparent suicide; Petey Pablo's 'Carolina Colors'...

The Mirra suicide coverage was an excellent example of how a community paper can dig into a local story and show its broader context and significance.

3rd Place

**Staff**

The Robesonian  
Lumberton

The Robesonian: July 30 and 31

The Robesonian provided a good mix of local news and features that captured the flavor of the coverage area.

## SPECIAL SECTION

1st Place

**T. Hower, A. Riley, M. Brown, S. Quarles**

StarNews

Wilmington

2016 Football Guide

Extremely well done. Smartly and elegantly designed. Great use of photo pages. The section looked forward at the season and not backward. Breakouts were attractive and informative. Carried the theme well without trying too hard.

2nd Place

**P. Stephen, P. Sander, J. Frady, E. Marcom**

StarNews

Wilmington

Eat, Drink, Be Merry

A foodie's dream. What a great section. Loved the "new" fish story and graphics, the hog and

the beer, among other stories. Terrific design. This is a must-have for area restaurants. Bravo!

3rd Place

**Staff**

Gaston Gazette  
Gastonia

Panthers Super Bowl Section

Nice section. These are tough because they always are last-minute to put together. Well designed, and good look at the season and the upcoming game.

## BEST NICHE PUBLICATION

1st Place

**Tammy Miller, Jennifer Schaeffer**

StarNews

Wilmington

Vanity Fur

Thorough and fun coverage of a true niche.

Great, intuitive design; strong art, useful features, equal parts expertise and whimsy. Can you tell I love this magazine?

2nd Place

**Natalie Sayewich**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Her Magazine

Really exemplary use of complimentary color here rather than color for color's sake. Solid writing, top-notch visuals.

3rd Place

**Staff**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Salisbury the Magazine (April)

It's really, really hard to stand out as a community lifestyle magazine in this category but this one did with a really compelling mix of visuals and eye-catching headlines.

## CITY/COUNTY

### GOVERNMENT REPORTING

1st Place

**Hunter Ingram**

StarNews

Wilmington

County versus city

What an easy-to-read, yet detailed approach to what could have been a dreadfully boring topic. Ingram breaks down the pro and cons of living in Wilmington vs. a neighboring county in an easily digested manner. Leading with a neighborhood that experienced both worlds was a "hits-home" way of introducing the topic.

2nd Place

**Lindell John Kay**

Rocky Mount Telegram

Rocky Mount

Board leader chided overs schools split Reporter Lindell John Kay does an excellent job following the various twists and turns of this saga and making them easy for readers to understand.

3rd Place

**Anna Johnson**

The Times News

Burlington

EMS billing service a pain for patients Who hasn't experienced a "runaround" when it comes to billing for medical services? This article puts a human face on a problem affecting many others in Alamance County. Well written and well done.

## BEAT NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Natalie Allison Janicello**

The Times News

Burlington

Shootings and mayhem in Burlington

The reporter goes beyond the basic police report, using data to shine light on problem and following up as community responds. We see evidence of strong source development in this compelling entry.

2nd Place

**Wade Tyler Millward**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

Freightliner series

This mix of spot news and enterprise reporting explores human impact, economic significance and national/global context. Good sourcing.

3rd Place

**Sharieka Breeden, Beth Velliquette**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Slayings came after suicide attempt

From arrest report to prayer service, this is a clear, thorough and well-sourced report of tragic killings.

## BEAT FEATURE REPORTING

1st Place

**Kim Grizzard**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Prom made exceptional

It's easy to make these stories a bit saccharine, but this was nicely done.

2nd Place

**Kevin Ellis**

Gaston Gazette

Gastonia

Old Killings

Nothing like crime and history to draw a reader in; nice job of making it "current," considering the crimes are generations old!

3rd Place

**Paul Stephen**

StarNews

Wilmington

Food of the soul

Nicely done. I appreciated the way the back stories of these chefs influence their styles of cooking.

*Continued page 45*

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# DIVISION F

Daily newspapers over 35,000

## GENERAL NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Greg Barnes**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

Beyond the boulevard

*Bravo! Vivid writing, a strong sense of history and lots of quotes transform this news piece about a road closure into a lively but timely portrayal of a storied part of the community. Very well done.*

2nd Place

**Beth Walton**

Asheville Citizen-Times  
Asheville

Senior Care's lawsuit settled: Company to change policies due to pregnancy discrimination case

*This story of a victory for pregnant women in the workplace unfolds nicely into a strong read. Loved the way the writer started with a crucial moment a few years in the past and deftly built the story around it.*

3rd Place

**Mark Price**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Controversial arrests net Charlotte immigrant teens

*A well-structured and timely snapshot of an important national issue, this story works in part because of the writer's choice of starting with a dramatic moment -- the disappearance of a teenager.*

## DEADLINE NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Staff**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Violent protests return as city seeks answers  
*Very complete reporting job, looking at all angles of a major story, and in a way the reader can easily digest.*

2nd Place

**Chick Jacobs**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

Haymount Grill Gutted By Fire

*Great look into why this restaurant meant so much to the owners and to the community, and why it's loss will be felt so deeply.*

3rd Place

**Adam Bell, Ames Alexander, Katherine Peralta**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Rare amoeba infection blamed in death of teen

*Thorough reporting on a complicated case that I'm sure concerns many.*

## ONLINE BREAKING NEWS

1st Place

**Staff**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

Sept. 28 flooding

2nd Place

**Eddie Wooten**

News & Record  
Greensboro

Paul Chelimo at the Olympics

3rd Place

**Staff**

News & Observer  
Raleigh

LGBT protections end as NC governor signs bill

## NEWS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Pam Kelley**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

White people in Biddleville

*This thorough account of the changing demographics of Charlotte's oldest African-American community is handled in a very comprehensive fashion. The writer does a great job engaging the reader with each community member's story.*

2nd Place

**Mark Price**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Myth vs fact: how Charlotte's bathroom law was born at a bakery

*The writer did a great job capturing the drama of how Charlotte's bathroom law unfolded and breaking down complex issues behind the legislation. Nice layouts and use of pull quotes.*

3rd Place

**Josh Shaffer, Thomasi McDonald**

News & Observer  
Raleigh

Akiel Denkins: A Life of Frustrated Potential

*The story behind this man's life is beautifully illustrated. The feature is very captivating and the writer does a good job transitioning between different parts of this man's past, as well as highlighting how others helped him straighten out his life before his death.*

## FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Karen Garloch**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Mother was devastated by son's suicide. Then she met the woman he saved.  
*An extremely powerful story that provides a lot of depth.*

2nd Place

**Amanda Dolasinski**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

Becoming American

*The writer does a great job sharing each immigrant's story. The photography and layout also provide depth to this dramatic tale about why they decided to leave their countries and defend the United States.*

3rd Place

**Rick Rothacker**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Rockfall on Rainer

*The story's beginning, dramatic layout and stunning photos beautifully captures a group of climbers recent journey. The author provides necessary context in a meaningful fashion.*

## PROFILE FEATURE

1st Place

**Dale Neal**

Asheville Citizen-Times  
Asheville

Sheriff of legend

*This reporter has a knack for story telling.*

2nd Place

**Chick Jacobs**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

I Kew I Would Get Home Paul Dallas

*What an incredible story of a World War II veteran, filled with details so unimaginable. I felt like I was there during the interview.*

3rd Place

**Greg Barnes**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

It takes a village

*The reporter did excellent work in researching Wallace's life and sharing the details in a story that flowed well.*

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING

1st Place

**Theoden Janes**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

The book of Emily

*I really like this story. It's interesting without being tabloid-y. It gives the reader new information about someone we think we know about.*

2nd Place

**Hayley Benton**

Asheville Citizen-Times  
Asheville

Stephaniesid talks about personal struggles, last show  
*Gripping lede.*

3rd Place

**Dawn DeCwikiel-Kane**

News & Record  
Greensboro

Wizard Magic

*I really like the lede and Wizard of Oz references. Clever, without being too cute.*

## EDUCATION REPORTING

1st Place

**Ann Doss Helms**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

CMS student reassignment and turnaround challenges

*Really exceptional writing and reporting. What sets her two entries apart, and this one in particular, is an effort to get behind the headline and find the STORY. She also has a wonderful way with storytelling that gives the articles a flow and depth. Good, thorough exploration of an important story.*

2nd Place

**Ann Doss Helms**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Thunderbird Preparatory academy  
*Another excellent entry from a reporter who is covering her beat exceptionally well, finding the story behind the story.*

3rd Place

**Marquita Brown**

News & Record  
Greensboro

They hear no to say yes

*A complicated story to tell, but it's well-told and important. Well presented in print, lots of good sidebar information to back up the story.*

## NEWS ENTERPRISE REPORTING

1st Place

**Bruce Henderson**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Our water: an uncertain future

2nd Place

**Staff**

Asheville Citizen-Times  
Asheville

Growing Pains: Exploring Asheville's Future

3rd Place

**Bertrand M. Gutierrez**

Winston-Salem Journal  
Winston-Salem

Coal ash in NC pollutes water, dilutes public trust in government agencies

## INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

1st Place

**Greg Barnes**

# DIVISION F

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

Why did Rylan die?

*This one was outstanding, weaving together many, many sources to paint a picture of a system in serious crisis.*

2nd Place

**Joseph Neff, Ames Alexander, Craig Jarvis**

News & Observer

Raleigh

Something in Return

*This pay-to-play investigation skillfully used internal memos and a tremendous amount of other correspondence to peek behind the curtain at the inner workings of government dealings. It also appeared to have significant impact. Watchdog journalism at its finest.*

3rd Place

**Dan Kane**

News & Observer

Raleigh

Carolina's Blind Side

*The amount of time and effort put into this -- years, really -- is admirable and well worth a deeper look.*

## BUSINESS WRITING

1st Place

**Deon Roberts**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

Foreign workers replacing Americans in tech positions

*An in-depth explanation into a visa program that has large connections to the community this newspaper serves. The information here is presented in a clear and concise format. Supporting infographs help reader digest the facts. The secondary story shows how many readers reached out to the newspaper to share personal stories. A well deserved first place award in a competitive category.*

2nd Place

**John Murawski**

News & Observer

Raleigh

Blue Cross Blue Shield billing/enrollment problems

*This reporter has done a fantastic job detailing the saga of Blue Cross and its botched enrollment for customers that ultimately led to a top executive resigning. The reporter uses internal documents to reveal how the number of customers affected is greater than advertised. The reporter explores how the delays have hampered doctors. Excellent job all around.*

3rd Place

**Rick Rothacker, Katherine Peralta**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

How Charlotte business leaders scrambled to keep all star game

*These writers do a great job going behind the scenes to detail for readers how businesses*

*banded together to try to keep the All-Star game. The reporters pounded the pavement with interviews and a secondary story shows how the paper obtained emails to further reveal details. A great use of FOIA to shed light on an important topic.*

## SPORTS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Scott Fowler**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

He did more than survive, he thrives  
*Subject matter was unique. The story kept the reader's interest. The grandmother's commitment was heart warming and inspirational.*

2nd Place

**Andrew Carter**

News & Observer

Raleigh

Breast cancer can't break this runner's stride

*This was a captivating and motivational piece. A sporting subject that does not often get publicity mixed with one woman's drive to keep doing what she loves despite physical challenges that are hard to imagine.*

3rd Place

**Stephen Schramm**

Fayetteville Observer

Fayetteville

Dreams Die Hard Here

*Well written story. Shows the often not seen side of the struggle to make it on the grid iron.*

## GENERAL NEWS

### PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Davie Hinshaw**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

Man voting

*Sometimes a good news photo involves waiting and watching, and then when the moment arises, putting things into a balanced composition.*

2nd Place

**John D. Simmons**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

Daughter moves wedding

*Access was everything for this touching, competent photo.*

## FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Andrew Craft**

Fayetteville Observer

Fayetteville

Clarkzilla

*This shows absolute awareness of the scene. I am sure the soldiers the General was speaking to thought the photographer was nuts. What a shot!*

2nd Place

**Andrew Krech**

News & Record

Greensboro

Folk Fest Mist

*Amazing composition and light.*

3rd Place

**Chuck Liddy**

News & Observer

Raleigh

Two heads are better than one

*Where does it end?*

## SPORTS FEATURE PHOTO

1st Place

**Walt Unks**

Winston-Salem Journal

Winston-Salem

Just Awesome

*Excellent job of captioning the background in order to tell the story.*

2nd Place

**Lauren Carroll**

Winston-Salem Journal

Winston-Salem

Late goal lifts Wake

*Great framing of both players.*

3rd Place

**Andrew Krech**

News & Record

Greensboro

Club Bite

*Excellent photo that portrays all of his emotions.*

## SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Andrew Krech**

News & Record

Greensboro

One Shoe Finish

*I haven't seen an unexpected moment like this, captured so cleanly and timed so perfectly. It is a rare and memorable sports action photo.*

2nd Place

**Andrew Craft**

Fayetteville Observer

Fayetteville

Diving Touchdown

*Good low angle, nice afternoon lighting and an intent expression highlights this player's effort to score the touchdown.*

3rd Place

**Andrew Krech**

News & Record

Greensboro

Woods Blur

*Smart anticipation of good lighting made a mundane moment really beautiful. Very smartly planned.*

## Daily newspapers over 35,000

### PHOTO PAGE OR ESSAY

1st Place

**Jeff Siner, Diedra Laird**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

Protesters march for sixth day

*Photos capture the emotion of the protesters... especially like the way you mixed in the quotes with the photos...good layout*

2nd Place

**Staff**

Winston-Salem Journal

Winston-Salem

A day in the snow

*Good community shots...a lot of people on one page... I'm sure the photographs are hanging on many refrigerators in your community!*

3rd Place

**Andrew Dye, Walt Unks**

Winston-Salem Journal

Winston-Salem

The Working Life

*Nice Layout, good composition.*

### ILLUSTRATION/PHOTO

#### ILLUSTRATION

1st Place

**Tim Rickard**

News & Record

Greensboro

Skull Sessions

*Original concept that was captivating and informative. It really drew us into the story.*

2nd Place

**Diedra Laird**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

9 lives

*Nice energy and was a fun photo.*

3rd Place

**Mariano Santillan**

The Fayetteville Observer

Fayetteville

Battle In Full Swing

*We think anyone would love to have an illustration like this in their paper this election season. A fun way to illustrate this story.*

### BEST VIDEO

1st Place

**Jill Knight**

News & Observer

Raleigh

Abbey's world, inside the life of an autistic teenager

*The story was emotional and the narrative about life with Abbey was understandable and compelling.*

2nd Place

**Jeff Siner, Doug Miller**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

# DIVISION F

Daily newspapers over 35,000

Roy's road to Rio

*Great visuals. There was a good collection of footage to cover all areas of Roy's story - from his childhood, to his injury, and to his training for the Olympics.*

3rd Place

**Todd Sumlin**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Staying power: Maurice Williams' hit song celebrates 55 years

*An interesting story. It shows how the song as adapted by others in the past and how it still has power with an audience today. There was also a great mix of music, photographs, old and new video.*

## MULTIMEDIA PROJECT

1st Place

**Staff**

News & Record  
Greensboro

A Scream in the Dark

*Glad to see the directive at the top of the printed articles and in callouts in the story to see more photos, interactive graphics, and video online. Great documentary series. Lots of interactive elements.*

2nd Place

**Elizabeth Leland, Todd Sumlin, David Puckett**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Death by the river: The fisherman's defense

*Many-faceted documentary series is very thorough. Lots of videos and photos in addition to the variety of articles.*

3rd Place

**Amanda Dolasinski; Andrew Craft; Hrisanthi Kroi**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

Becoming American

*Great overall article with a very nice collection of profiles. Like the embedded interview files. Beautiful layout online and in print. Great photos.*

## EDITORIALS

1st Place

**John Railey**

Winston-Salem Journal  
Winston-Salem

John Railey, editorials entry

*Innovative, powerful and poignant approach in listing all the names of the mass shooting victims. Lyrical send off for Harper Lee. Very nice. Excellent provocative take on NC's new March Madness. Great writing. Kudos!*

2nd Place

**Allen Johnson**

News & Record  
Greensboro

40

Allen Johnson Editorials

*A punchy and powerful collection of editorials. Lively and well written with a clear point of view. Nice job!*

3rd Place

**Peter St. Onge**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Collection of editorials: Peter St. Onge  
*This clear and concise collection of editorials covers the sweep of events from HB2, to the voter law and the protests. Well done.*

## LIGHTER COLUMNS

1st Place

**Susan Ladd**

News & Record  
Greensboro

3 Lighter Columns - Susan Ladd  
*This writer's work has just about everything: social commentary, family, even some sports history. And it's all from the heart: You know this writer after reading her columns; you know her very well. Bravo.*

2nd Place

**Myron Pitts**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

Baby girl changes the game; steals hearts

*These bring you in, right in. Full of great turns of phrase and revealing anecdotes, the stories are ones that'll keep you nodding along in recognition, or teach you something you didn't know but should. And they always end with flair.*

3rd Place

**Bill Kirby**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

'Uncle Frank looks good, don't he?'  
*Talk about variety. These columns recognize no boundaries and they're always snappy, surprising and a great read.*

## SERIOUS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Barry Saunders**

News & Observer  
Raleigh

Saunders serious

*A lot of great entries in this category. This one stood out for me. Smartly written and engaging.*

2nd Place

**Theoden Janes**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Collection of columns: Theoden Janes  
*Great writing. This man moved me with his words.*

3rd Place

**Myron Pitts**

Fayetteville Observer

Fayetteville

Racist message on VanStory Hills door  
*Great columnist. His readers are fortunate they get to read his column every week.*

## SPORTS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Jeff Mills**

News & Record  
Greensboro

Jeff Mills Sports Columns

*Nice columns. The writing is so nicely paced. Keeps the reader interested.*

2nd Place

**Bret Strelow**

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

Westover graduate savors 'frozen moment' with Ali

*Very well written columns. Great leads. Good topics, too.*

3rd Place

**Luke DeCock**

News & Observer  
Raleigh

Sports columns by Luke DeCock  
*Beautifully written.*

## ELECTION/POLITICAL REPORTING

1st Place

**Anne Blythe**

News & Observer  
Raleigh

Courts are roadblocks to N.C. lawmakers' right turn

*Stunning compilation of failed bills by GOP-led legislature.*

2nd Place

**Jim Morrill**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Nikki Haley's year under the hot lights  
*Great story.*

3rd Place

**Richard Craver**

Winston-Salem Journal  
Winston-Salem

House Bill 2

*Good package of economic and political stories focused on bathroom bill.*

## HEADLINE WRITING

1st Place

**Staff**

News & Record  
Greensboro

Headline Writing

*Creative headlines, especially "Weapons of mass discussion" and "Looking to a higher power."*

## SPORTS ENTERPRISE

### WRITING

1st Place

**Gary Schwab**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

The girl who never wanted to leave the game

*A very detailed story about a very serious problem in sports.*

2nd Place

**Luke DeCock**

News & Observer  
Raleigh

From worst game to Stanley Cup champs

*It's nice to see someone paying attention to a less-popular pro sport in the area.*

3rd Place

**Doug Miller**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Charlotte swimmer in the race of his life

## EDITORIAL PAGE

1st Place

**Staff**

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

*A thoughtful and comprehensive display of a wide variety of opinions on a host of issues ranging from the very local to the global. This is an opinion section you can really sink your teeth into.*

2nd Place

**Ned Barnett, Jim Jenkins, Burgetta Wheeler**

News & Observer  
Raleigh

*Bolstered by great local columnists who provide the type of analysis of issues that is lacking far too often in mid-sized newspapers.*

3rd Place

**Staff**

News & Record  
Greensboro

*A very solid opinion section with strong, local editorials and a columnist that clearly has his fingers on the community's pulse.*

## GENERAL EXCELLENCE FOR WEB SITES

1st Place

**Staff**

News & Observer  
Raleigh

NewsObserver.com

*Great site. Homepage is organized well and gives the reader many options. Sections are clearly defined. Lots of large photos help the page pop. Great job!*

2nd Place

# DIVISION F

Daily newspapers over 35,000

## Staff

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville  
FayObserver.com

*Love the large photo for the main image/story. Lots of solid local news. Good breaks between sections, great use of white space to do that. Photo galleries stand out.*

3rd Place

## Staff

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte  
CharlotteObserver.com

*Strong site. Good use of multimedia to make the stories pop. The full menu bar is effective. Responsive mobile site works well.*

## APPEARANCE & DESIGN

1st Place

## Staff

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

2nd Place

## Staff

Winston-Salem Journal  
Winston-Salem  
Oct. 13 and 14, 2016

3rd Place

## Staff

News & Record  
Greensboro

Appearance and Design June 2016

## SPORTS COVERAGE

1st Place

## Staff

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

'SUPER PIRATE'

*Great coverage of a wide variety of sports. Layout was attractive to the eye and easy to follow.*

2nd Place

## Staff

News & Record  
Greensboro

Sports Coverage August 2016

*Nice placement of articles and photos. Good variety of sports covered.*

3rd Place

## Staff

News & Observer  
Raleigh

N&O sports coverage

*Good thorough coverage of an assortment of topics.*

## NEWS SECTION DESIGN

1st Place

## Staff

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

2nd Place

## Staff

News & Record  
Greensboro

## FEATURE SECTION DESIGN

1st Place

## Staff

News & Record

Greensboro

November 2015

*The clear winner. The front is clean, simple, yet grabs the attention. The inside pages are great too. I love the two-page spread and the use of photos. Font choice is good too, as is use of color. The photos are placed well and do not compete with the ads. I also like the simple flag on top of each page that immediately tells the reader what type of story they are about to read. Great design.*

## BEST COMMUNITY COVERAGE

1st Place

## Staff

Asheville Citizen-Times  
Asheville

*The in-depth dissection of the bond issue is exactly the sort of coverage local communities depend on and community papers are uniquely placed to provide.*

## SPECIAL SECTION

1st Place

## Staff

News & Record

Greensboro

125th Anniversary: Through the Years

*Excellent section. N&R did a great job of getting writers to look back and give perspective.. The timeline was excellent and nicely designed. The whole section was nicely designed, with bold, historical photos. Well done.*

2nd Place

## Staff

News & Observer  
Raleigh

Year in Pictures

*Wow! What a great year in pictures. Extremely well edited and grouped. Readers got a treat. Usually, these are great sections for readers, but this one is special.*

3rd Place

## Staff

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Super Bowl 50

*Excellent section. Good breakdown of the game. Smartly designed, flows well.*

## CITY/COUNTY GOVERNMENT REPORTING

1st Place

## Joel Burgess

Asheville Citizen Times  
Asheville

Asheville 'banning the box'

*Excellent job in localizing this national issue. The story contains a creative lede and a clear explanation of Ban the Box as it pertains nationally and in North Carolina.*

2nd Place

## Joel Burgess

Asheville Citizen Times  
Asheville

Moneyball: Politics, Asheville style  
*Excellent analysis showing that, in politics, spending the most money doesn't always translate to votes. With strong reporting and excellent writing, reporter Joel Burgess delves into the data-driven strategy and hard work that proved successful for a City Council candidate who spent far less than his competition.*

3rd Place

## Paul A. Specht

News & Observer  
Raleigh

Protectors at odds with city over pay

*An excellent job presenting how low pay levels in Raleigh are driving some first responders from the community. The article is well researched and well written. Interviews with families dealing with the pay disparities really drive the topic home for readers.*

## BEST NICHE PUBLICATION

1st Place

## Staff

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Carolina Bride: July/September 2016

*The depth of personal stories throughout set this true niche publication apart in a category full of beautiful looking magazines.*

2nd Place

## Staff

News & Observer  
Raleigh

Walter magazine

*Insightful writing and storytelling to complement a smooth-looking package.*

3rd Place

## Staff

News & Record  
Greensboro

1808 August 2016

*Excellent use of photography, white space and typography throughout.*

## BEAT NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

## Drew Brooks

Fayetteville Observer  
Fayetteville

440th Airlift Wing

*Ambitious, aggressive, thorough and revela-*

*tory. It's clear that source development was crucial.*

2nd Place

## Mackensy Lunsford

Asheville Citizen-Times  
Asheville

Recipe for trouble: Restaurant employees feel pressure to work sick  
*Well-sourced with supportive data and multiple perspectives on an employment/health issue that could be addressed with legislation. This story is tightly written, easy to read.*

3rd Place

## Bertrand M. Gutierrez

Winston-Salem Journal  
Winston-Salem

Bertrand M. Gutierrez: beat coverage  
*Clear explanations of a complex topic bring together voices of courts, politicians and nonprofit community. Solid beat coverage that touches all the bases.*

## BEAT FEATURE REPORTING

1st Place

## Kathleen Purvis

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Cornbread: the great divide

*This story was fascinating to this Northerner, from the fact that there even ARE differences to the reasons why. So interesting, and well-written.*

2nd Place

## Kathleen Purvis

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

It's not easy being Gwyneth

*I was totally prepared to not like this story. But the reporter's experiment was not only a clever review, her writing style is clever, as well. I laughed several times, but also appreciated the information she shared. Nicely done!*

3rd Place

## Theoden Janes

The Charlotte Observer  
Charlotte

Did Joel give us the best show this year?

*This entire category surprised me; my family will be stunned to learn I scored a feature about a live concert higher than one about a solved crime. This reviewer stepped away from the "solidly performed all the stand-bys..." and gave us an entertaining assessment of not only Billy Joel, but his fans, as well. I loved this.*

## BEST LEDE

1st Place

## Richard Craver

Winston-Salem Journal  
Winston-Salem

Hunt carried burden

*To the point, impactful.*

*Continued p. 45*

# DIVISION O

## GENERAL NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Catherine Kozak**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Catfish Blues: Rules Threaten Native Species

*Well-written, informative and compelling. A strong effort.*

2nd Place

**Rose Hoban, Taylor Sisk**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

Coverage of NC's Heroin Epidemic. Stories give a wide-ranging look at the opioid drug crisis. The writing is clear and takes readers right into the heart of the subject matter.

3rd Place

**Lisa Sorg**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Small Polluters Could Get Pass

*A complex subject, related well.*

## NEWS FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Taylor Sisk**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

Those Days are Over, So What Lies Ahead for a Rural Hospital?

*Story is told in a very meaningful way. Bravo!*

2nd Place

**Thomas Goldsmith**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

Cone Hospital Apologizes for Segregation Case

*A well-written and important story. Great work.*

3rd Place

**Rose Hoban**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

Petting Zoos Becoming a Thing of the Past At NC State Fair

*All angles of the petting zoo ban are covered. Nicely done.*

## FEATURE WRITING

1st Place

**Brad Rich**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Sad Little Boat Tells Story of Courage

*The writer captures the mystery about this boat very well.*

2nd Place

**Connie Leinbach**

Ocracoke Observer

Ocracoke

Mark Justice: On call for emergencies

*Nice inspirational story about volunteerism.*

3rd Place

**Connie Leinbach**

Ocracoke Observer

Ocracoke

Someday soon Seymour suddenly will bloom

*An enjoyable read with a fun lede.*

## PROFILE FEATURE

1st Place

**Rose Hoban**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

Davies: State Public Health Workers

Lack Confidence in Health Director

2nd Place

**Pat Garber**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Coastal Sketch: The Oyster Ladies of Ocracoke

3rd Place

**Peter Vankevich**

Ocracoke Observer

Ocracoke

State Senate candidate Futrell has strong Ocracoke roots

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

1st Place

**Peter Vankevich**

Ocracoke Observer

Ocracoke

Heard on Ocracoke: Todd Hoke

2nd Place

**Connie Leinbach**

Ocracoke Observer

Ocracoke

Martin and Friends weave musical magic in Coyote Den

## EDUCATION REPORTING

1st Place

**Billy Ball**

N.C. Policy Watch

Raleigh

Education and HB2

2nd Place

**Billy Ball**

N.C. Policy Watch

Raleigh

School Choice

## NEWS ENTERPRISE REPORTING

1st Place

**Mark Hibbs**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Navassa: A Century of Contamination

2nd Place

**Billy Ball**

N.C. Policy Watch

Raleigh

Racial disparities in school districts

2nd Place

**Billy Ball**

N.C. Policy Watch

Raleigh

Cecil Staton; new ECU chancellor

## FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

1st Place

**Jared Lloyd**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Great egret at Rachel Carson Reserve

2nd Place

**Sam Bland**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Nap time

3rd Place

**Sam Bland**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Sam's Field Notes: Painted Buntings

## SERIOUS COLUMNS

1st Place

**Rob Schofield**

N.C. Policy Watch

Raleigh

Rob Schofield - Serious Columns

*Carrying out the very important job of holding his state accountable.*

## HEADLINE WRITING

1st Place

**Connie Leinbach**

Ocracoke Observer

Ocracoke

The roller coaster ride called ferry tolls hits a corkscrew

*A creative way to infuse a light-hearted look at the issue.*

## APPEARANCE & DESIGN

1st Place

**Staff**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

CoastalReview.org

*Coastal Review is a very attractive, well organized, functional and informative site. Easily navigable and well edited.*

## CITY/COUNTY

## GOVERNMENT REPORTING

1st Place

## Online-only publications

**Trista Talton**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Terminal Groins: Easement Needed

2nd Place

**Catherine Kozak**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Critics Charge Ill Wind Blows From

Raleigh

3rd Place

**Kirk Ross**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

Legislators Fund New UNC Policy

Center

## BEAT FEATURE REPORTING

1st Place

**Jared Lloyd**

Coastal Review Online

Newport

The Ocean: Calming a Stormy Mind

*Very expertly written, using a shocking story to draw the reader in; using a curious calm, and finally, bringing in the "answer." Really beautifully done.*

2nd Place

**Rose Hoban**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

Epidemiologist Resignation Points to Bigger Problems in State Departments

*Good for you for exposing the dirty politics.*

3rd Place

**Rose Hoban**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

NC State Lab Pursues Bed Bug Bait

*Nice job on a seemingly timeless topic.*

## BEAT NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Catherine Clabby**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

New Drinking Water Threat Concerns Scientists and Officials

2nd Place

**Rose Hoban**

NC Health News

Chapel Hill

NC Child Welfare System Failing Children, Families, Reports Say

3rd Place

**Lisa Sorg**

N.C. Policy Watch

Raleigh

Jeffery Warren

# North Carolina Media Lawyers

## We have you covered!

### OPEN GOVERNMENT

- ✓ public records
- ✓ open meetings
- ✓ open courts and judicial proceedings

### LIBEL

- ✓ prepublication/prebroadcast review
- ✓ strategic planning and response
- ✓ litigation defense

### SUBPOENAS

- ✓ anticipatory response to avoid issuance
- ✓ objections and motions to quash
- ✓ Reporter's shield law

### ONLINE COUNSELING

- ✓ terms of use/terms of service
- ✓ privacy policies
- ✓ response to take-down demands
- ✓ Communications Decency Act, DMCA planning, management and response

### ADVERTISING

- ✓ contract drafting and review
- ✓ content review
- ✓ political ad compliance
- ✓ statutory and regulatory compliance



Hugh Stevens



Amanda Martin



Matt Vaughn



Mike Tadych



**stevens martin vaughn & tadych, PLLC**  
attorneys at law

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www.smv.com | @ncmedialaw | www.ncmedialaw.com

## DIVISION C cont.

2nd Place

**Staff**

The Pilot

Southern Pines

City Report

*A terrific community section. Would love to have such a section if I were moving into this area. Nice use of photography. Solid writing. Well-researched. Great job.*

3rd Place

**Staff**

Carteret County News-Times

Morehead City

Big Rock Daily Line

*Great photography, nicely laid out. This section paints an excellent portrait of the event at hand.*

## DIVISION D cont.

Richmond County Daily Journal

Rockingham

'I thought it was gonna blow'

*Very dramatic shot!*

2nd Place

**Donnie Roberts**

The Dispatch

Lexington

Fire displaces husband and wife

*These photos are tough to take but news is news. Well done.*

3rd Place

**Ryan Revock**

Statesville Record & Landmark

Statesville

Motorcycle Accident

*After almost 40 years in the business, I cringe when I see a MVA victim's face in a news photo. But these tell the story well.*

## RELIGION & FAITH REPORTING

1st Place

**Brie Handgraaf**

The Wilson Times

Wilson

'Light always overcomes'

*Good lead! Really good photos to go with it. Liked the hands holding photo. Liked, "Grace always bats last and light overcomes darkness." Very nice writing.*

2nd Place

**Tammie Gercken**

The News Herald

Morganton

Redeeming Love

*Nice writing and you told a great story. You wove everything together very well.*

3rd Place

**Zach Potter, Shawn Taylor**

Sanford Herald

Sanford

Parents divided on school's policies

*Like the quote boxes that made it easy to see what people were saying. Also liked the fact the pastor said parents should take their kids to the place where they could share their values. Very well written.*

## SPORTS NEW REPORTING

1st Place

**Paul Schenkel**

The News Herald

Morganton

Perfection

*Story gets to the heart of the sacrifices needed to achieve a perfect season. Great use of photography. Excellent layout. Nice use of sidebars.*

2nd Place

**Justin Epley**

The News Herald

Morganton

Wild Bunch Wins

*Solid writing. Great lead photo. Nice use of graphic elements. Great job.*

3rd Place

**Sarah Bloom**

The Daily Herald

Roanoke Rapids

Rebound; February 21, 2016

*Excellent storytelling. Great portrait photo. Nicely laid out. Very nice.*

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STAFF

## TWO THOUSAND SIXTEEN NC PRESS ASSOCIATION NEWS, EDITORIAL AND PHOTOJOURNALISM AWARDS

### FIRST PLACE

- Education Reporting
- News Enterprise Reporting
- Investigative Reporting
- Lighter Columns
- Headline Writing
- City/County Government Reporting
- Beat News Reporting
- Beat Feature Reporting
- Best Lede
- Religion & Faith Reporting

### SECOND PLACE

- Education Reporting
- Sports Enterprise Writing
- Best Community Coverage
- Best Niche Publication
- Beat Feature Reporting
- Best Lede

### THIRD PLACE

- News Feature Writing
- Education Reporting
- General Excellence for Newspaper Websites - Newspapers Only
- Best Niche Publication
- City/County Government Reporting
- Beat Feature Reporting

Smoky Mountain **news**

COVERING HAYWOOD, JACKSON,  
MACON & SWAIN COUNTIES

# DIVISION E cont.

## BEST LEDE

1st Place

**Hannah DelaCourt**

StarNews

Wilmington

Well-seasoned; Incredible journey;

Finding refuge

Some delightful stories, with leads very reflective of the tone of the story -- the reader knows what is coming, and is invited in to read. Very enticing introductions.

2nd Place

**Ben Steelman**

StarNews

Wilmington

Donna Andrews; Will Rogers Follies; Star Wars mania

These leads are short, sweet, and to the point. The writing is entertaining, and the leads are appropriate gateways to the stories.

3rd Place

**Hunter Ingram**

StarNews

Wilmington

Beyonce; Shane Simpson; The Bounce Squad

Engaging stories, introduced with engaging leads. The writer has chosen carefully what to emphasize, and the lead is reflected in the story.

## PHOTOGRAPHY, SPOT

1st Place

**Casey Mozingo**

Goldsboro News-Argus

Goldsboro

Comfort in response

These scenes can be challenging to shoot but this is well done and does not prey on the victim.

2nd Place

**Mike Spencer**

StarNews

Wilmington

Johnny Small visits gravesite

Great photo used prominently on page.

3rd Place

**Rhett Butler**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Trial witness arrested after chase

Very emotional.

## RELIGION & FAITH REPORTING

1st Place

**Kim Grizzard**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

From fear to friendship

Loved the lead ... felt like I knew Brian Becker immediately. His flight into five countries story was exceptional. Author is a very good story

teller who doesn't let the subject get in the way of her writing. Very nice job!

2nd Place

**Kim Grizzard**

The Daily Reflector

Greenville

Refugee response

Great start with the quote about the command being Biblical. This was a compelling story, well-written with a great use of quotes. It goes right to the heart of the people in need. I was moved. Tremendous writing job!

3rd Place

**Natalie Stewart**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

Stewart\_Religion

Very well done. The story hooked me and I wanted to know this man. Thanks ... well done!

## SPORTS NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Greer Smith**

High Point Enterprise

High Point

Decker builds lead; Hanzel sets pace;

Hanzel captures crown

Excellent storytelling. Very nice layout. Great use of photos. Overall, an excellent package.

2nd Place

**John McCann**

The Herald-Sun

Durham

BIG-TIME PLAY: Trubisky TD toss to Howard lifts UNC past Pitt in final 2 ticks

Great use of verbs to draw the reader in. Solid writing. Great photography.

3rd Place

**Dennis Davidson**

Salisbury Post

Salisbury

Season over for Salisbury, North Rowan

Solid lead. Well-written. Great photography that captures the emotion of the moment. Nice use of box scores. Very nice.

# DIVISION F cont.

2nd Place

**Nancy McLaughlin**

News & Record

Greensboro

McLaughlin Lede 3

Most people will never be at a crime scene -- or homeless --, so the writer's ability to transport the reader there in a few sentences lends the most value to these stories. Powerful introductions to difficult subjects.

3rd Place

**Jeff Mills**

News & Record

Greensboro

Jeff Mills Lede 3

Sports ledes are that much harder -- to avoid the cliché while conveying the action. These ledes humanize the sport and the people who are part of it, making them enjoyable and relevant to all readers, not just those who usually visit the sports pages.

## PHOTOGRAPHY, SPOT

1st Place

**Jeff Siner**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

Fatal police shooting

This entry was the clear winner. Photographer went to great lengths to capture an emotional time and record history.

2nd Place

**Andrew Craft**

Fayetteville Observer

Fayetteville

Waters Rise

Classic spot news image.

3rd Place

**Jeff Siner**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

Protester kicks tear gas canister

Dangerous situation that was well documented.

## RELIGION & FAITH REPORTING

1st Place

**David Perlmutter**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

This Easter their message is mercy

Great Photos. Great quote about, "They rely on Faith to navigate .....Fantastic lead. I loved this ... "We reached a point where we couldn't process any more grief -- so we turned to faith." Now that's good writing. Also loved, "Be still and know I am God." Loved the story of man who caused the boys deaths and how the couple witnessed to him. WHAT FAITH! SUPER WRITING!

2nd Place

**Jonnelle Davis**

News & Record

Greensboro

Soul Revival

Loved the fact the pastor gave no sermon, just asked a question. GREAT LEAD IN A TIME WHEN GREAT LEADS ARE MINIMAL. Loved the quote, "I love watching God work and people getting saved." Photos were fantastic and helped tell story. I loved reading this piece. Really nice work.

3rd Place

**Tim Funk**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

Graham's tour will try to rally conservative Christian voters

Many wondered why Franklin Graham was doing this. You told us and had great depth. I liked, "By shadowing the presidential contenders ..." A nice example of areas where Graham agreed with Donald Trump.

## SPORTS NEWS REPORTING

1st Place

**Powell Latimer**

News & Record

Greensboro

The face of the program

Excellent lead that drew me into the story. Nice use of verbs. Thoughtful profile. Photography and layout add to an already excellent story.

2nd Place

**Luke DeCock**

News & Observer

Raleigh

Knightdale's Ash stumbles with bronze within reach

Wonderfully told story, with searing details that bring you into the middle of the action and give the reader a keen sense of the emotion of the moment.

3rd Place

**Joseph Person**

The Charlotte Observer

Charlotte

Crushed: Colo. Avalanche buries Newton with 6 sacks

A well-told account of a stunning Super Bowl defeat. Excellently reported. Great layout. Great photography.

**HUGH MORTON PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR**

**Daily Newspaper Winner**

**ANDREW KRECH**

**News & Record**  
Greensboro

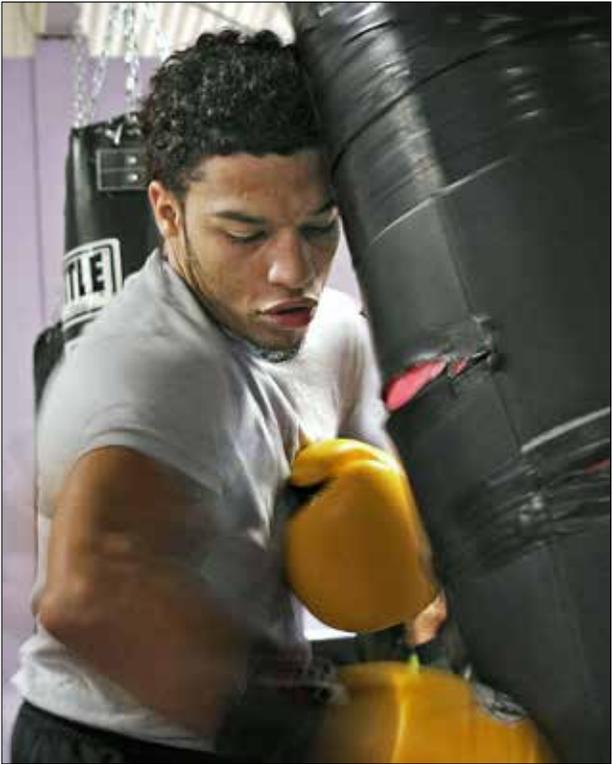


HUGH MORTON PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Community Newspaper Winner

**MARK SCHULTZ**

The Durham News  
Durham





# Jobs well done

The News & Observer Publishing Company is proud to salute the journalists recognized by the NCPA for their excellent work.

## The News & Observer

- 1st Place, serious columns, **Barry Saunders**
- 1st Place, election/political reporting, "Courts are roadblocks to N.C. lawmakers' right turn," **Anne Blythe**
- 1st Place, general excellence for newspaper websites, **Staff**
- 1st Place, best video, "Abbey's world, inside the life of an autistic teenager," **Jill Knight**
- 2nd Place, investigative reporting, "Something in Return," **Joseph Neff, Ames Alexander, Craig Jarvis**
- 2nd Place, business writing - dailies only, "Blue Cross Blue Shield billing/enrollment problems," **John Murawski**
- 2nd Place, sports feature writing, "Breast cancer can't break this runner's stride," **Andrew Carter**
- 2nd Place, sports enterprise writing, "From worst game to Stanley Cup champs," **Luke DeCock**
- 2nd Place, editorial page, **Ned Barnett, Jim Jenkins, Burgetta Wheeler**
- 2nd Place, special section - newspapers only, Year in Pictures, **Staff**
- 2nd Place, best niche publication, Walter magazine, **Staff**
- 3rd Place, online breaking news coverage, "LGBT protections end as NC governor signs bill," **Staff**
- 3rd Place, news feature writing, "Akiel Denkins: A Life of Frustrated Potential," **Josh Shaffer and Thomas McDonald**
- 3rd Place, investigative reporting, "Carolina's Blind Side," **Dan Kane**
- 3rd Place, feature photography, "Two heads are better than one," **Chuck Liddy**
- 3rd Place, sports columns, **Luke DeCock**
- 3rd Place, sports coverage - newspapers only, **Staff**
- 3rd Place, city/county government reporting, "Protectors at odds with city over pay," **Paul A. Specht**

## The Cary News

- 3rd Place, sports photography, "Cary wrestlers win state wrestling title," **Ray Black III**

## Chapel Hill News

- 2nd Place, election/political reporting, "Report: Bell got \$11K for developers and CHALT PAC changed," **Tammy Grubb**
- 2nd Place, news coverage - community only, August 14 and 28 issues, **Staff**
- 2nd Place, city/county government reporting, "Loan program growing businesses, jobs in Orange County," **Tammy Grubb**
- 3rd Place, feature photography, "In a carnival far, far away," **Mark Schultz**

## Clayton News-Star

- 2nd Place, sports coverage - newspapers only, **Clay Best and staff**
- 3rd Place, editorial page, June 5, 12, and 19, **Scott Bolejack and staff**

## The Durham News

- 1st Place, general news photography, "Sheriff: If this makes a difference of one or two," **Mark Schultz**
- 1st Place, feature photography, "All fired up for Hanukkah," **Mark Schultz**
- 2nd Place, feature writing, "Teen who needs heart makes special request," **Mark Schultz**
- 3rd Place, sports feature writing, "Fighter trades the streets for the ring," **Ryan Wilusz**

## Eastern Wake News

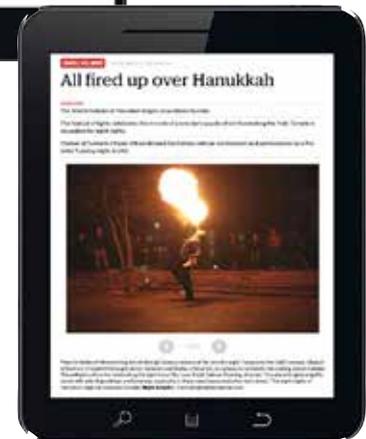
- 1st Place, best video, "Young Level Inc. dancing purposefully," **Aaron Moody**

## Garner-Cleveland Record

- 3rd Place, sports news reporting, "So long, for now, old friend," **Clay Best**

## North Raleigh News

- 1st Place, general excellence for newspaper websites, **Staff**
- 2nd Place, sports feature writing, "Senior reliever finds way to cope with tough loss," **Jessika Morgan**
- 3rd Place, sports columns, "What we can learn from Sanderson's James Walker," **Jessika Morgan**
- 3rd Place, sports enterprise writing, "Nontraditional students are turning to sports," **Jessika Morgan**



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