

2005 Alabama Associated Press Association Award Winners

CLASS I

Newswriting

- 1st Place Best Deadline Reporting: Mobile Register, News Staff, "Katrina's Wrath"
Judges' Comments: The Mobile Register's comprehensive coverage of Hurricane Katrina was a tough one to beat. The newspaper had it all – from putting the sheer magnitude of the event into perspective to including all the little details their readers wanted (and needed) to know: Where could they get ice? Was the water safe to drink? How could they help? They captured the damage. The human drama. They looked at what's ahead. And they also helped the reader navigate through all the coverage with the index.
- 2nd Place Best Deadline Reporting: The Birmingham News, News Staff, "Scrushy verdict"
- Honorable Mention – Deadline Reporting: Montgomery Advertiser, Jannell McGrew, Dan Way, "Rosa Parks dies"
- 1st Place Best Non-Deadline Reporting: The Birmingham News, Thomas Spencer, Jeff Hansen, Kim Bryan, "Asbestos in Alabama"
Judges' Comments:
- 2nd Place Best Non-Deadline Reporting: Mobile Register, Bill Finch, Ben Raines, "Offshore rigs not built for strong storms"
- Honorable Mention – Non-Deadline Reporting: The Birmingham News, News Staff, "Sex Offenders"
- 1st Place Best Newfeatures: The Birmingham News, Dave Parks, "In the heart of AIDS 'War Zone'"
Judges' Comments: This was an important story, well told through the eyes of an Alabama doctor. The storytelling and heartbreaking details made us care about a devastating problem – half a world away.
- 2nd Place Best Newsfeatures: Mobile Register, George Talbot, "Ocean Springs"
- Honorable Mention - Newsfeatures: The Huntsville Times, Mike Marshall, "Child support, need for money led to murder-for-hire scheme"
- 1st Place Best Lifestyle Features: The Birmingham News, Kathy Kemp, "Beth Twitty"
Judges' Comments: Kathy Kemp made a tired story fresh again with her writing and reporting on Beth Holloway Twitty. She accomplished the nearly impossible by making a relatively long story feel very tight. Right from her lede: "Beth Holloway Twitty tends to hug reporters." This judge knew he was in for a special treat.
- 2nd Place Best Lifestyle Features: The Huntsville Times, Mike Marshall, "Traveling back in time"
Judges Comments: Mike Marshall's reporting on Alabama 75 made me want to take a road trip. He did an excellent job bringing me to this world without turning it into a cartoon or caricature. The people who live in the small towns along this road were not violated by Marshall's writing, they were revealed.
- Honorable Mention - Lifestyle Features: Mobile Register, Casandra Andrews, "Steven's Struggle"
Judges' Comments: Casandra Andrews' report on Steven McBride did a very nice job of what happens when an ordinary man faces extraordinary circumstances. It was the "normalness" of his life that really brought me. It was his very brave reaction to his "death sentence" that inspired. Ms. Andrews did a good job of walking readers through the process.
- 1st Place Best Business News: Mobile Register, Bill Finch, Ben Raines, Sallie Owen, "Natural Gas Prices"
Judges' Comments: The series of stories combined the best of investigative and pocketbook journalism. The reporters dug into data overlooked by state regulators to show that consumer natural gas prices and company returns were higher than anywhere

- else in the region. The stories surprised the politicians, presented all sides fairly and had true impact on the community.*
- 2nd Place Best Business News: Montgomery Advertiser, News Staff, "From concept to completion"
 - Honorable Mention - Business News: The Birmingham News, Russell Hubbard, "The Scrushy Memo"
 - 1st Place Best Education News: Montgomery Advertiser, News Staff, "Millbrook school vote"
Judges' Comments: A comprehensive look at Millbrook voters possibly creating their own school district. The stories smartly looked a variety of angles: the costs, how it affects students and another city that took a similar path. The stories were nicely written and well researched. Nice work by the staff to give readers, and more importantly voters, information on an election that would have significant impact on their lives.
 - 2nd Place Best Education News: Mobile Register, Rena Havner, Virginia Bridges, Elizabeth Stuart, "Mixed Messages in schools report"
 - Honorable Mention - Education News: Mobile Register, Jeff Amy, "Quietly opening doors"
 - Honorable Mention - Education News: Montgomery Advertiser, Antoinette Konz, "Purcell's plan"
 - **NEWS SWEEPSTAKES:** The Birmingham News, Thomas Spencer, Jeff Hansen, Kim Bryan, "Asbestos in Alabama"
Judges' Comments: The two-day series put into focus for Alabama readers now a decades-old national issue is still plaguing its residents. The report examined the deadly effects of asbestos on Alabama workers as much as 40 years after exposure, and showed how communities and whole families were being affected by the silent killer. The series gave a clear picture on how asbestos attacks the lungs and how years later the disease can take several forms. With that, The Birmingham News put the legal history of the issue into perspective, showing how thousands of litigants were pushing for businesses to compensate them, while on the other side, a small-business owner became one of many named as a litigant and forced to give up his business. The outstanding research by the newspaper showed through in the well-written series. The newspaper tracked down dozens of workers affected by one particular plant, and documented their illnesses, deaths and other statistical information to give readers a clear snapshot of how one plant's use of asbestos in the 1960s and '70s is still devastating a community.

Sportswriting

- 1st Place Best Sports Deadline Reporting: The Birmingham News, News Staff, "Iron Bowl Coverage"
Judges' Comments: Complete, colorful coverage of the Iron Bowl. Special touches stood out such as the buzz items on the stock reports. Columns hit the mark. First rate.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Deadline Reporting: Montgomery Advertiser, Sports Staff, "Iron Bowl 2005"
- Honorable Mention - Sports Deadline Reporting: Montgomery Advertiser, Sports Staff, "Sugar Rush"
- 1st Place Best Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: The Birmingham News, News Staff, "Praying and Playing"
Judges' Comments: Just a fabulous piece of journalism. You tackled a sensitive and potentially controversial topic and offered readers a balanced, measured report that was newsy and will make people think.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: The Huntsville Times, Mark McCarter, "Sports in a Slump: A 3-Day Special Report"
- Honorable Mention - Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: Montgomery Advertiser, Sports Staff, "Price of Success"
- 1st Place Best Sports Feature: Montgomery Advertiser, Lori Dann, "Without Bounds"
Judges' Comments: Wonderfully inspirational tale of a young man who won't let his loss of legs slow him down one bit. Well structured and reported story.

- 2nd Place Best Sports Feature: Montgomery Advertiser, Tom Ensey, "Beating the Buzzer"
- Honorable Mention - Sports Feature: Mobile Register, Mike Herndon, "The battle of Murder Creek"
- 1st Place Best Sports Column Writing: The Birmingham News, Kevin Scarbinsky, "Kevin Scarbinsky Columns"
Judges' Comments: Terrific mix of strong opinion, solid reporting and a consistent writing style that engages the reader.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Column Writing: The Huntsville Times, Mark McCarter, "Logan Young trial, Women's touch packs musale & George Twitty"
- Honorable Mention - Sports Column Writing: Mobile Register, Randy Kennedy, "Sideline view"
- 1st Place Best Participatory Sports Story: Mobile Register, Renee' Busby, "The Natural"
Judges' Comments: This story is a gem. Jacob just jumps off the page and into the reader's heart. Nice detailed description of his game experiences. The clincher is the unexpected twist of the coach's child's disease. Nice job.
- 2nd Place Best Participatory Sports Story: The Birmingham News, Mike Bolton, "Unhooked"
- Honorable Mention - Participatory Sports Story: The Huntsville Times, Bruce McLellan, "In the Long Run"
- **SPORTS SWEEPSTAKES:** The Birmingham News, News Staff, "Praying and Playing"
Judges' Comments: You should be proud of the work done here. You addressed all the relevant points and answered all the questions. You got people to speak candidly and you offered something for everyone. Excellent work.

Photography

- 1st Place Best Spot News: Montgomery Advertiser, David Bundy, "Remembering Rosa"
Judges' Comments: Wow ! Beautiful image conveying the mourner's respect during sad occasion.
- 2nd Place Best Spot News: The Birmingham News, Mark Admond, "Flooded Car"
- Honorable Mention - Spot News: The Huntsville Times, Bob Gathary, "Heavy Fire Damage"
- 1st Place Best Feature Photo: The Birmingham News, Joe Songer, "Foggy Fishing"
Judges' Comments: Good job hunting down this strong feature, a good moment.
- 2nd Place Best Feature Photo: Montgomery Advertiser, David Bundy, "Cooling Off"
- Honorable Mention - Feature Photo: The Huntsville Times, Mike Mercier, "Rocket Girl"
- 1st Place Best Portrait/Personality: Mobile Register, G.M. Andrews, "Volunteer Pilot"
Judges' Comments: The lines and posture capture well his personality.
- 2nd Place Best Portrait/Personality: Montgomery Advertiser, Julie Bennett, "All American Kid"
- Honorable Mention - Portrait/Personality: The Birmingham News, News Staff, "Senior Mardi Gras Parade"
- 1st Place Best Picture Story: Montgomery Advertiser, Mickey Welsh, "Jessie"
Judges' Comments: Good job making a portrait assignment a picture story. Good work!
- 2nd Place Best Picture Story: Montgomery Advertiser, "Photo Staff", "Saying goodbye to Rosa Parks"
- Honorable Mention - Picture Story: The Birmingham News, Bernard Troncale, "Zambia: Living in an AIDS war zone"
- 1st Place Best Photo Illustration: Montgomery Advertiser, David Bundy, "Ghost Stories"
Judges' Comments: Very interesting photo to illustrate difficult subject matter
- 2nd Place Best Photo Illustration: The Birmingham News, Charles Nesbitt, "Acoustically Inclined"
- Honorable Mention - Photo Illustration: Mobile Register, John David Mercer, "Fast pitch softball"
- 1st Place Best Humorous Moments: The Birmingham News, Steve Barnette, "Lunch dog"
Judges' Comments: If I was the editor, I'd love to have the image in my paper. Great moment.

- 2nd Place Best Humorous Moments: The Birmingham News, Bernard Troncale, “Salvation Army cut-outs”
- Honorable Mention - Humorous Moments: Montgomery Advertiser, Karen S. Doerr, “Silver-haired legislature”
- 1st Place Best Sports Action Photo: The Huntsville Times, Eric Schultz, “Miracle Catch”
Judges’ Comments: Nice moment – a different angle on sports action.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Action Photo: The Birmingham News, Jerry Ayres, “Mountain bike race”
- Honorable Mention - Sports Action Photo: Mobile Register, John David Mercer, “Croyle sacked again”
- 1st Place Best Sports Feature Photo: Montgomery Advertiser, Mickey Welsh, “Dale’s Fans”
Judges’ Comments: Great unusual aspect of sport whwere all photos look the same.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Feature Photo: The Huntsville Times, Eric Schultz, “Cotton trail Riders”
- Honorable Mention - Sports Feature Photo: The Birmingham News, Tamika Moore, “Montgomery Biscuits Baseball”
- 1st Place Portfolio: Montgomery Advertiser, David Bundy, “2005 Portfolio”
Judges’ Comments: A solid collection of work – judges were impressed with your work.
- 2nd Place Portfolio: The Birmingham News, Bernard Troncale, “Troncale Portfolio”
- Honorable Mention - Portfolio: Montgomery Advertiser, Mickey Welsh, “Portfolio of Mickey Welsh”

Makeup

- 1st Place Best Deadline Page Design: The Birmingham News, News Staff, “Deadline Page design entry two”
Judges’ Comments: The breadth of this entry shows a lot of energy given to dramatic presentation of important news.
- 2nd Place Best Deadline Page Design: Mobile Register, Chris Hall, “The A Front”
- Honorable Mention - Deadline Page Design: The Huntsville Times, Design Staff, “42 reasons to observe Memorial Day, Welcome home, This is our tsunami, This is just insanity, Rites & wrongs & A bloody night”
- 1st Place Best Non-Deadline Page Design: The Birmingham News, News Staff, “Non-deadline page design entry two”
Judges’ Comments: A nice, creative mix that hooked readers without getting in the way of content.
- 2nd Place Best Non-Deadline Page Design: The Birmingham News, News Staff, “Non-deadline page design entry one”
- Honorable Mention - Non-Deadline Page Design: The Huntsville Times, Design Staff, “A taste of flight, Winning views, The egg man, A journey with Emma, Every drop helps, Willy Wonka’s back”
- 1st Place Best Headlines: Mobile Register, Mark Heim, “Headline selection”
Judges’ Comments: This is a craftsman at work – wonderful witty approaches that are groan-free and worth the price of the paper.
- 2nd Place Best Headlines: Montgomery Advertiser, Shannon Heupel, Scott Johnson, Beth Gribble, “Headlines”
- Honorable Mention - Headlines: The Huntsville Times, Steve Byers, Doug Mendenhall, Tiffani Patterson, “One-time retiree rolling in dough; Franchise isn’t all smoothie sailing; Head for them stereotypes; Rites & wrongs; Nobody really believes in; Shhh! What was that noise; No, sweetie, I distinctly said no”
- 1st Place Best News Graphics: Mobile Register, Jeff Darby, “RSA Cranes”
Judges’ Comments: Excellent rendering gives the reader a great feel for the scope of the project.
- 2nd Place Best News Graphics: The Birmingham News, News Staff, “News Graphics entry one”
- Honorable Mention - News Graphics: The Birmingham News, News Staff, “News Graphics entry two”

- 1st Place Best Illustrations: The Birmingham News, News Staff, "Illustrations Entry one"
Judges' Comments: Fun illustrations in a sophisticated style that work great in newspaper.
- 2nd Place Best Illustrations: The Birmingham News, News Staff, "Illustrations Entry two"
- Honorable Mention - Illustrations: The Huntsville Times, Dulcie Teesateskie, Kim Zehr, "Growth to put squeeze on area neighborhoods, Decent jobs, U.S. managers, The Valley's voice, Lesson of scandals past & cutting home heating costs"

Community Service

- 1st Place Best Community Service: Mobile Register, Bill Finch, Ben Raines, Sallie Owen, "McIntosh's Mercury Menace"
Judges' Comments: The Register sponsored testing that showed unsafe mercury levels in the small, South Alabama town of McIntosh. Through these efforts and its ongoing reporting of the story, the newspaper has put pressure on governmental agencies to extensive testing and to consider changing their standards.
- 2nd Place Best Community Service: The Birmingham News, Bob Blalock, Joey Kennedy, Robin DeMonia, Eddie Lard, "Choosing Life in a death penalty state"
- Honorable Mention Best Community Service: Montgomery Advertiser, News Staff, "Voices of the Bus Boycott"

Freedom of Information

- 1st Place Best Freedom of Information: Mobile Register, Steve Myers, Rena Havner, Gary McElroy, Brendan Kirby, Jane Nicholes, "Expugements"
Judges' Comments: The Mobile Register should be applauded for its aggressiveness and persistence in seeking public records through the FOI process.
- 2nd Place Best Freedom of Information: NO WINNER
- Honorable Mention - Freedom of Information: NO WINNER

CLASS II

Newswriting

- 1st Place Best Deadline Reporting: The Tuscaloosa News, Johnny Kampis, Mark Hughes Cobb, Robert Dewitt, April Wortham, "Gulf states to sell assets"
Judges' Comments: This is the hands-down winner! Breaking news, timeline, map, chart, history and reaction. A superb package on one-day's notice.
- 2nd Place Best Deadline Reporting: Times Daily, Bernie Delinski, Michelle Rupe Eubanks, Russ Corey, Todd Twilley, Dana Beyeck, "Howell Heflin"
- Honorable Mention - Deadline Reporting: The Decatur Daily, Ronnie Thomas, "Church-service assault"
- 1st Place Best Non-Deadline Reporting: The Anniston Star, Jessica Centers & Matthew Korade, "What's a Life Worth?"
Judges' Comments: Stellar reporting. A national, international issue in policy makers' sights brought home to Alabama in personal, profound stories of people and families suffering from exposure to asbestos.
- 2nd Place Best Non-Deadline Reporting: The Tuscaloosa News, Johnny Kampis, "Tennessee – Tombigbee Waterway"
Judges' Comments: Comprehensive reporting that was the work of a single reporter. Economic woes, prospects for the future contrast this subject with florid feature of towboat life on the river.
- Honorable Mention - Non-Deadline Reporting: The Decatur Daily, Eric Fleischauer, "Dangerous groundwater"

- Judges' Comments: Policy change after the discovery of a universal, silent danger with little public notification.*
- 1st Place Best Newsfeatures: Times Daily, Michelle Rupe Eubanks, "Forever Friends"
Judges' Comments: A well written & moving account of how two lives intersect in a moment and are changed forever.
 - 2nd Place Best Newsfeatures: Dothan Eagle, Lance Griffin, "The Last Days of Aunt Vassie"
 - Honorable Mention - Newsfeatures: Dothan Eagle, Lance Griffin & Lauren Champlin, "Evolving dilemma"
 - 1st Place Best Lifestyle Features: Times Daily, Terry Pace, "Live in '55"
Judges' Comments: I like the step-back-in-time quality of the story. It's great the writer found people who were actually at the Elvis concerts.
 - 2nd Place Best Lifestyle Features: The Decatur Daily, Emily McMackin, "Bond of Brothers"
 - Honorable Mention - Lifestyle Features: The Decatur Daily, Ronnie Thomas, "Reeling a Miracle"
 - 1st Place Best Business News: The Anniston Star, Brandy Warren, "Rural Boom"
Judges' Comments: It was a comprehensive analysis of a growth trend and all the implications, well written with numbers and anecdotes used to enhance the story and let the issue show itself.
 - 2nd Place Best Business News: The Gadsden Times, Kathy Roe & Bethany Collins, "Farms, farmers aging"
 - Honorable Mention - Business News: The Anniston Star, Tyler Greer, "Alabama's Ace in the Hole"
 - 1st Place Best Education News: The Anniston Star, Ben Cunningham, "School funding vote"
Judges' Comments: A tax story that knows how to bring down to the household and business level the impact of mill rates, with real people living in real houses and owning real businesses. Made the "stunning" results a lot more understandable to readers – and local leaders.
 - 2nd Place Best Education News: The Tuscaloosa News, Adam Jones, "Growing the Capstone"
 - Honorable Mention - Education News: The Decatur Daily, Holly Hollman, "Forbidden reading"
 - **NEWS SWEEPSTAKES** – The Anniston Star, Jessica Centers, Matthew Korade, "What's a Life Worth?"
Judges' Comments: Stood out in a very good field – the depth and breadth of the asbestos series were breathtaking – but so was the writing.

Sportswriting

- 1st Place Best Sports Deadline Reporting: The Tuscaloosa News, Christopher Walsh, "Culpepper new trial"
Judges' Comments: It was an informative story with a good lead – excellent imagery in a judge pushing a reset button. Good organization and backgrounding.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Deadline Reporting: The Decatur Daily, Kyle Veazey, "Sports recruiting trial"
- Honorable Mention - Sports Deadline Reporting: The Anniston Star, Creg Stephenson, "Alabama-LSU game story":
- 1st Place Best Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: The Tuscaloosa News, Tommy Deas, "Defying Gravity"
Judges' Comments: I liked the surprise of this story. The concept of blending sports and science was innovative and it was executed well. Instead of one long story, there were easily digestible short stories. It makes the reader think about sports in a new way.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: Times Daily, Sports Staff, "Bottom line"
- Honorable Mention - Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: Times Daily, Cody Whitlock, "Black and white"
- 1st Place Best Sports Feature: The Decatur Daily, Gentry Estes, "Parents, pride and productivity"

- Judges' Comments: Good lead and descriptive writing. I was in this kid's head from the very first sentence.*
- 2nd Place Best Sports Feature: The Decatur Daily, Gentry Estes, "Out of Africa"
 - Honorable Mention - Sports Feature: The Tuscaloosa News, Andrew Carroll, "Planning to live"
 - 1st Place Best Sports Column Writing: Times Daily, Gregg Dewalt, "From Harris lendor to last snap"
Judges' Comments: Whether praising an unsung hero who died too young or blasting a coach for lack of character. Dewalt is an engaging writer who grabs the reader early and doesn't let go.
 - 2nd Place Best Sports Column Writing: The Anniston Star, Jimmy Creed, "Jimmy Creed Columns"
 - Honorable Mention - Sports Column Writing: Dothan Eagle, Jon Johnson, "3 columns"
 - 1st Place Best Participatory Sports Story: Times Daily, Gregg Dewalt, "Ageless wonder"
Judges' Comments: Excellent descriptive: George Digby's love affair with golf began around the time he found out a person could get paid to lug a bag of sticks around something resembling a manicured pasture. After reading the story I felt as if I knew – and liked – George Digby.
 - 2nd Place Best Participatory Sports Story: The Tuscaloosa News, Robert Dewitt, "The lure of the rabbit"
 - Honorable Mention - Participatory Sports Story: The Tuscaloosa News, Anna Maria Della Costa, "Tennis, anyone?"
 - **SPORTS SWEEPSTAKES – The Tuscaloosa News, Tommy Deas, "Defying Gravity"**
Judges' Comments: I liked the surprise of this story. The concept of blending sports and science was innovative and it was executed well. Instead of one long story, there were easily digestible short stories. It makes the reader think about sports in a new way.

Photography

- 1st Place Best Spot News Photo: The Tuscaloosa News, Michael Palmer, "House Fire"
Judges' Comments: A great image – composition, technically sound, and "artsy". A solid photo!
- 2nd Place Best Spot News Photo: Dothan Eagle, Mike Lewis, "Katrina Survivor"
- Honorable Mention - Spot News Photo: Dothan Eagle, Jay Hare, "Grieving over lost pet"
- 1st Place Best Feature Photo: Times Daily, Matt McKean, "Closer than you think"
Judges' Comments: A true feature in every sense, which made an uninteresting assignment impactful.
- 2nd Place Best Feature Photo: The Gadsden Times, Tammy McKinley, "Chix Fea"
- Honorable Mention - Feature Photo: Times Daily, Jim Hannon, "Martn Roost"
- 1st Place Best Portrait/Personality: The Tuscaloosa News, Robert Sutton, "WWII Veteran"
Judges' Comments: Great use of light to bring out your subject. Very strong image.
- 2nd Place Best Portrait/Personality: The Gadsden Times, Tammy McKinley, "Painter"
- Honorable Mention - Portrait/Personality: The Gadsden Times, Sarah Berrett, "Robin"
- 1st Place Best Picture Story: The Gadsden Times, Tammy McKinley, "La Buena Vida"
Judges' Comments: Strong images – capturing emotion and arts.
- 2nd Place Best Picture Story: The Anniston Star, Trent Penny, "Hurricane Katrina"
- Honorable Mention - Picture Story: The Gadsden Times, Tammy McKinley, "Katrina comes to town"
- 1st Place Best Photo Illustration: The Tuscaloosa News, Robert Sutton, "Harry Potter"
Judges' Comments: Great work ! I wish I thought of this!
- 2nd Place Best Photo Illustration: The Gadsden Times, Marc Golden, "Expensive water"
- Honorable Mention - Photo Illustration: The Tuscaloosa News, Robert Sutton, "Bath Time"
- 1st Place Best Humorous Moments: Dothan Eagle, Mike Lewis, "Picking a Pumpkin"
Judges' Comments: Good job in finding humor during an everyday event.
- 2nd Place Best Humorous Moments: The Decatur Daily, Gary Cosby Jr., "Fishing delight"
- Honorable Mention - Humorous Moments: The Anniston Star, Stephen Gross, "Git R Done"

- 1st Place Best Sports Action Photo: Dothan Eagle, Danny Tindell, “Close Tag”
Judges’ Comments: Great action. Good to see an “atypical” action shot.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Action Photo: Birmingham Post-Herald, Jacquelyn Martin, “Backwards Bull”
- Honorable Mention - Sports Action Photo: The Gadsden Times, Tammy McKinley, “Sky Drive”
- 1st Place Best Sports Feature Photo: The Anniston Star, Stephen Gross, “Best Reward”
Judges’ Comments: Great moment – you captured the emotion – joy, wonder, envy and hoorah.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Feature Photo: The Gadsden Times, Bethany Collins, “Team spirit”
- Honorable Mention - Sports Feature Photo: The Gadsden Times, Tammy McKinley, “Swimmer”
- 1st Place Portfolio: The Gadsden Times, Tammy McKinley, “Portfolio”
Judges’ Comments: Your images really stood out over your competition. Great eye – time to ask for a pay raise!
- 2nd Place Portfolio: The Tuscaloosa News, Robert Sutton, “Robert Sutton’s portfolio”
- Honorable Mention - Portfolio: Time Daily, Matt McKean, “From fires to baseball”

Makeup

- 1st Place Best Deadline Page Design: The Decatur Daily, Richard McCann, Mitch Chase, Andrea Brunty, “Guard returns, an oath, terror, keys, fury, downtown”
Judges’ Comments: Your P.I. provides a nice variety in design and stories – compelling for the reader. Nice use of photos and graphics. Teasers provide enhancement without taking over the page. Good use of leads.
- 2nd Place Best Deadline Page Design: The Tuscaloosa News, Josh Jackson, Danny Dejarnette, Janet Sudnik, Amy Robinson, “LA pages under deadline”
- Honorable Mention - Deadline Page Design: Times Daily, John Pitts, “From high school to college football”
- 1st Place Best Non-Deadline Page Design: The Tuscaloosa News, Janet Sudnik, Tracy Cox, “Features Fronts”
Judges’ Comments: Beautifully designed pages that skillfully integrate good art with text to give readers a good reason to look more closely.
- 2nd Place Best Non-Deadline Page Design: The Tuscaloosa News, Mike Lowe, Anthony Bratina, David Wasson, “Game Day fronts”
- Honorable Mention - Non-Deadline Page Design: The Anniston Star, Tosha Jupiter, “Features section front page designs”
- 1st Place Best Headlines: The Tuscaloosa News, Mike Lowe, “Sports Headlines”
Judges’ Comments: Very creative, attention – grabbing and complete – Heads tell the story and draw the reader in.
- 2nd Place Best Headlines: The Tuscaloosa News, Josh Jackson, Danny Dejarnette, “Headlines”
- Honorable Mention - Headlines: The Decatur Daily, Barry Sublett, “Gettysburg, Hot, 24-carrot, cake, socks, sew”
- 1st Place Best News Graphics: The Tuscaloosa News, Anthony Bratina, “Graphics portfolio, Anthony Bratina, Graphics editor, Tuscaloosa News”
Judges’ Comments: Very attractive graphics conveys a lot of information without clutter.
- 2nd Place Best News Graphics: The Gadsden Times, Laura Catoe, David Clemons, “Iron Bowl Memories”
- Honorable Mention - News Graphics: The Anniston Star, Leilah Rampa, Bob Davis, “A timeline of U.S. Wars”
- 1st Place Best Illustrations: The Tuscaloosa News, Anthony Bratina, “Illustration Portfolio, Anthony Bratina, Graphics editor, Tuscaloosa News”
Judges’ Comments: Skilled, colorful illustrations that expand the story. They accompany even as they summarize the story. Well done.
- 2nd Place Best Illustrations: The Anniston Star, Leilah Rampa, “Illustration”

- Honorable Mention - Illustrations: Dothan Eagle, Andrew Small, "Evolving Dilemma"

Community Service

- 1st Place Best Community Service: The Anniston Star, Jessica Centers, Matthew Korade, "What's a Life Worth?"
Judges' Comments: Very thorough examination. A deadly problem close to home. A major effort to inform readers of a serious problem.
- 2nd Place Best Community Service: The Decatur Daily, Eric Fleischauer, "Water worries"
- Honorable Mention - Community Service: The Gadsden Times, Kim Craft, Laura Catoe, "Treading new ground"

Freedom of Information

- 1st Place Best Freedom of Information: The Tuscaloosa News, News Staff, "Freedom of Information"
Judges' Comments: Excellent work to open public records. This problem is all too familiar. Fortunately, such efforts pay dividends for the public in years to come.
- 2nd Place Best Freedom of Information: The Decatur Daily, Sheryl Marsh, "Sheriffs money"
- Honorable Mention - Freedom of Information: The Gadsden Times, Kim Craft, Donna Thornton, "Attalla mayor refuses to release city records"

CLASS III

Newswriting

- 1st Place Best Deadline Reporting: The News-Courier, Kelly Kazek, "It was quite a ride"
Judges' Comments: Nice job of taking what could have been a very tragic story and filling it with color and detail from those on the scene. Describing why the accident occurred, what happened and details about the dog being in safe custody made this story. Nice use of descriptions and filling it with eyewitness accounts. Took the extra steps from just an accident story to one that was interesting.
- 2nd Place Best Deadline Reporting: The Daily Home, Daniel Thompson, "Fishing Trip turns Tragic"
- Honorable Mention - Deadline Reporting: Fort Payne Time-Journal, Mark Harrison, "Teen steals, crashes plane"
- 1st Place Best Non-Deadline Reporting: The Daily Home, Amanda Casciaro, Kellie Long, Chris Norwood, Denise Sinclair, Jim Smothers, Gabe Carpenter, June Winters, Laura Nation-Atchison, David Atchison, Gary Hanner, Graham Hadley, Daniel Thompson, Saige Newton, "Methamphetamines – war on drugs at home"
Judges' Comments: Thoroughly researched, excellent package! Goes above and beyond to give the readers the answers to why the topic is so important and affects them every day. Great job !!
- 2nd Place Best Non-Deadline Reporting: Daily Mountain Eagle, Blaine Ney & Dan Whisenhunt, "Camp Mitnick"
- Honorable Mention - Non-Deadline Reporting: The Daily Home, Amanda Casciaro, "Pamela's Story"
- 1st Place Best Newsfeatures: The Daily Home, Amanda Casciaro & Evan Casey, "Innocence Lost: Devin's Story"
Judges' Comments: The story is a perfect example of taking a complex and sensitive subject and making it connect with the readers through good writing. The article evoked emotion without editorializing. It not only told a gripping story, it also was informative and called readers to action.
- 2nd Place Best Newsfeatures: The News-Courier, Kelly Kazek, "Surviving Murder"
- Honorable Mention - Newsfeatures: Opelika-Auburn News, Joe McAdory, "Terrell Owens: Family and friends speak out"

- 1st Place Best Lifestyle Features: Opelika-Auburn News, Joe McAdory, “County Road: Gimme some sugar”
Judges’ Comments: Joe McAdory’s crisp and clear writing takes the readers on a “journey” through Langdale Mill. It’s almost as if you’re right there with him as he talks to the people and goes to the places he’s visited in the town. He also connected the past to the future and just didn’t make this another travel story.
- 2nd Place Best Lifestyle Features: The News-Courier, Charlotte Fulton, “Bringing back Susie”
- Honorable Mention - Lifestyle Features: The News-Courier, Charlotte Fulton, “A vested interest: Local man’s WWII life vest found”
- 1st Place Best Business News: The Cullman Times, Stan Voit, Jimmy Simms, Richard McVay, Terri Brunck, Gail Crutchfield, “Where we’re Headed”
Judges’ Comments: This well-developed series covers a broad range of angles, provides a variety of sources and best of all, includes vivid color and description.
- 2nd Place Best Business News: Opelika Auburn News, Tamiko Lowery, “Opelika goes Private”
- Honorable Mention - Business News: The Daily Home, Amanda Casciaro, “Local Mills feel impact of Flood of Chinese Imports”
- 1st Place Best Education News: The News-Courier, Kelly Kazek, “Emotions running high at Brookhill”
Judges’ Comments: A unique and newsy story about a community’s conundrum of whether to close a school that might have been causing illness among the students. Informative and balanced. The writer shares many sides and emotional responses to the issue at hand. Good stuff.
- 2nd Place Best Education News: Opelika-Auburn News, Jack Stripling & Mitch Sneed, “Trustee Term Limits”
- Honorable Mention - Education News: The Cullman Times, Jimmy Simms, Lionel Green, David Mackey, Gail Crutchfield, “Ready for School”
- **NEWS SWEEPSTAKES:** The Daily Home, Amanda Casciaro, Kellie Long, Chris Norwood, Denise Sinclair, Jim Smothers, Gabe Carpenter, June Winters, Laura Nation-Atchison, David Atchison, Gary Hanner, Graham Hadley, Daniel Thompson, Saige Newton, “Methamphetamines – war on drugs at home”
Judges’ Comments: Clearly the first in its’ class.

Sportswriting

- 1st Place Best Sports Deadline Reporting: The News-Courier, Rex Greene, “Remembering No. 53”
Judges’ Comments: The reporter cast a wide net for sources who could explain how this newcomer’s death affected so many in the community.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Deadline Reporting: Opelika-Auburn News, Sports Staff, “Oh, What a Day”
- Honorable Mention - Sports Deadline Reporting: Fort Payne Times-Journal, Lew Gilliland, “Homecoming, a happy night for Valley Head”
- 1st Place Best Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: Daily Mountain Eagle, Russell Moore, “Beating the Heat”
Judges’ Comments: This story is well reported with local sources and national numbers and a tips box. Might have been worth talking to kids too as well as a doctor, sports medicine / trainer.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: Opelika-Auburn News, Mike Szvetitz, “Hottest ticket in Town”
- Honorable Mention - Sports Non-Deadline Reporting: The Daily Home, Heather Baggett, “Pressing On”
- 1st Place Best Sports Feature: Opelika-Auburn News, Tim Ritter, “A Different World”
Judges’ Comments: Mr. Ritter puts you in the stands and on the field with these student athletes.

- 2nd Place Best Sports Feature: Opelika-Auburn News, Mike Szvetitz, “Louisiana star shining bright among boys”
- Honorable Mention - Sports Feature: Daily Mountain Eagle, Russell Moore, “Brother to Brother”
- 1st Place Best Sports Column Writing: Opelika-Auburn News, Mike Szvetitz, “A view from the Lazy Boy”
Judges’ Comments: It’s a column, but could also stand as a featurized game story. Tolbert’s battle with illness and his longing for a state championship are clear. Glad a photo was included.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Column Writing: The Daily Home, Will Heath, “Smells like a winner”
- Honorable Mention - Sports Column Writing: The Daily Home, Will Heath, “Different from the ordinary”
- 1st Place Best Participatory Sports Story: Opelika-Auburn News, Mike Szvetitz, “The Chance”
Judges’ comments: Mike puts readers on the field and in the stands. Thank you, thank you for listing the players names.
- 2nd Place Best Participatory Sports Story: Daily Mountain Eagle, Blaine Ney, “Sixty Miles to a Miracle”
- Honorable Mention - Participatory Sports Story: The News-Courier, Kelly Kazek, “Special Olympics”
- **SPORTS SWEEPSTAKES:** Opelika-Auburn News, Mike Szvetitz, “The Chance”
Judges’ Comments: Powerful, engaging, descriptive storytelling. Mike’s writing made reader’s feel something – great enterprise.

Photography

- 1st Place Best Spot News: Opelika-Auburn News, Cliff Williams, “Soldier’s wife grieves”
Judges’ Comments: Great composition while covering a tough assignment. Image has great impact.
- 2nd Place Best Spot News: The Daily Home, Bob Crisp, “Man arrested”
- Honorable Mention - Spot News: The News-Courier, Kim Rynders, “Honoring their heroes”
- 1st Place Best Feature Photo: Opelika-Auburn News, Cliff Williams, “Playing chess”
Judges’ Comments: Nice light, strong graphic image. Show’s his intensity in the match.
- 2nd Place Best Feature Photo: The News-Courier, Alissa Clark, “Boogie’s Barber Shop”
- Honorable Mention - Feature Photo: Fort Payne Times-Journal, Dusty Plunkett, “Hillbilly Olympics”
- 1st Place Best Portrait/Personality: Opelika-Auburn News, Vasha Hunt, “Blacksmith”
Judges’ Comments: Good strong lines leading into image tells story well.
- 2nd Place Best Portrait/Personality: Opelika-Auburn News, Cliff Williams, “Child war protestor”
- Honorable Mention - Portrait/Personality: The Cullman Times, Amanda Shavers, “Clanton Crumbley, A true inspiration”
- 1st Place Best Picture Story: Daily Mountain Eagle, Blaine Ney, “Camp Mitnick”
Judges’ Comments: A very creative story. Well done considering you couldn’t show faces. Nice work!
- 2nd Place Best Picture Story: The Cullman Times, Amanda Shavers, “The Wheels on the Bus”
- Honorable Mention - Picture Story: The Cullman Times, Amanda Shavers, “Moments in Silence”
- 1st Place Best Photo Illustration: Opelika-Auburn News, Vasha Hunt, “Quitting smoking”
Judges’ Comments: Nice use of dramatic lighting for serious illustration.
- 2nd Place Best Photo Illustration: Opelika-Auburn News, Vasha Hunt, “Tumbling pass”
- Honorable Mention - Photo Illustration: The Daily Home, Jerry Martin, “Aldoholism”
- 1st Place Best Humorous Moments: The Daily Home, Bob Crisp, “Tweety Bird”
Judges’ Comments: Good capture of humorous moment.
- 2nd Place Best Humorous Moments: Opelika-Auburn News, Cliff Williams, “Apple sharing”

- Honorable Mention - Humorous Moments: Fort Payne Times-Journal, Dusty Plunkett, "Frosted highlights"
- 1st Place Best Sports Action Photo: The Cullman Times, Amanda Shavers, "No foul called"
Judges' Comments: Good job following the action and catching a great moment.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Action Photo: Daily Mountain Eagle, Ron Harris, "Over the top"
- Honorable Mention - Sports Action Photo: Opelika-Auburn News, Vasha Hunt, "Pain for gain"
- 1st Place Best Sports Feature Photo: The Cullman Times, Amanda Shavers, "Heartbreak"
Judges' Comments: Photo really captures emotion of team's heartfelt loss.
- 2nd Place Best Sports Feature Photo: Opelika-Auburn News, Vasha Hunt, "Bubbles"
- Honorable Mention - Sports Feature Photo: The News-Courier, Kim Rynders, "Much-needed extra point"
- 1st Place Portfolio: The Daily Home, Bob Crisp, "Portfolio"
Judges' Comments: Good well rounded example of your broad range of skill.
- 2nd Place Portfolio: Opelika-Auburn News, Cliff Williams, "Portfolio"
- Honorable Mention - Portfolio: The Cullman Times, Amanda Shavers, "Portfolio"

Makeup

- 1st Place Best Deadline Page Design: The Cullman Times, News Staff, "Clearing Out"
Judges' Comments: Design is clean, organized and easy to follow for the read. This paper also understands the use of dominant art and pictures.
- 2nd Place Best Deadline Page Design: Opelika-Auburn News, Copy desk, "Front pages"
Judges' Comments: Pages showed organization and efforts to capture the reader with centerpieces. Steady design on each front.
- Honorable Mention - Deadline Page Design: The News-Courier, Staff, "News-Courier pages"
Judges' Comments: Design shows efforts to make centerpiece package, such as "Waveland" and "John Doe" stories. But some pages don't define a dominant piece of art, such as "Boomtown" and "Waveland" designs, making the design not as strong as it could be.
- Honorable Mention – Deadline Page Design: The Daily Home, Graham Hadley, Sharon Kent, Janice Keith, "Daily Home racing pages"
Judges' Comments: The most striking page in this was the "winner" page with Dale Jarett. Had a strong piece of art and was clear and direct. I wish some of the other pages had been like that.
- 1st Place Best Non-Deadline Page Design: Opelika-Auburn News, Copy desk, "Feature fronts"
Judges' Comments: These designs show good use of type, dominant art and good spacing. The creativity of "Greens" and "Commercial Appeal" pages was refreshing. Good work.
- 2nd Place Best Non-Deadline Page Design: Opelika-Auburn, News, Copy desk, "Food and Features"
Judges' Comments: Designs showed good use of art and clean, easy-to-read looks. I think the best page of the bunch was the auto classics page. Good dominant art on it, good supplemental photos around it, making a strong package.
- Honorable Mention - Non-Deadline Page Design: The Daily Home, Jim Smothers, "Buen Provecho!"
Judges' Comments: I like the creative chance taken with this page in the form of the Mexican flag as a backdrop. Page also is cleanly designed – meaning it isn't too cluttered – and easy to read.
- 1st Place Best Headlines: Opelika-Auburn News, Copy desk, "Headlines"
Judges' Comments: What I liked about these headlines is that they had a subtle cleverness to them. The "gay book" ban headline shows this. The "buzz" head also was fun and relevant.
- 2nd Place Best Headlines: Opelika-Auburn News, Copy desk, "OA News Headlines"

- Judges' Comments: Surely done by similar staff to the first-place entry, the "knead" headline was nice, and the bridge headline was a good reference to something most people know.*
- Honorable Mention - Headlines: The News-Courier, Kelly Kazek, "Kelly's Headlines set 1"
Judges' Comments: Play on words in "see" headline was good. Others showed effort to be creative without being too far-reaching. Examples were "rock queries" and "about face".
 - 1st Place Best News Graphics: Opelika-Auburn News, Copy desk, "OA Graphics"
Judges' Comments: I felt that the selections of graphics in this entry better helped the reader understand the subjects being reports. The information gave the reader a breakdown of information that would have otherwise been lost in the stories. The art with the graphics, however, could be improved to be more eye-catching.
 - 2nd Place Best News Graphics: The Daily Home, Jim Smothers, "Magic Bullet"
Judges' Comments: Thought this graphic, which seems more like an illustration, helped go with the headline. And a bullet is an eye-catching image.
 - Honorable Mention - News Graphics: The Daily Home, Jim Smothers, "Knot in Birmingham"
Judges' Comments: Also an eye-catching graphic, it again seems like more of an illustration that goes along with the headline, and less in providing information to the reader.
 - 1st Place Best Illustrations: Opelika-Auburn News, Steven Barnett, "OA Illustrations"
Judges' Comments: The boxing illustration is beautiful, informational and eye-catching, capturing an old-time feel. Great work. Other pieces in this entry showed good creativity and helped the stories they were with, not hinder them.
 - 2nd Place Best Illustrations: The Daily Home, Graham Hadley, "Graham's Illustration"
Judges' Comments: I thought this entry was clever and eye-catching, helping a reader to get into a story. I wished it would have been played much bigger, though.
 - Honorable Mention - Illustrations: The Daily Home, Jim Smothers, "Sugar Cereal"
Judges' Comments: I thought this illustration was well done and shows creative thinking.

Community Service

- 1st Place Best Community Service: The Daily Home, Amanda Casciaro, Kellie Long, Chris Norwood, Denise Sinclair, Jim Smothers, Gabe Carpenter, June Winters, Laura Nation-Atchison, David Atchison, Gary Hanner, Graham Hadley, Daniel Thompson, Saige Newton, Bob Crisp, Jerry Martin and Carol Pappas, "Meth: A Deadly Epidemic"
Judges' Comments: Good and important subject, and good information. Series shows paper's dedication to shine light on matter and make a difference or impact in its community.
- 2nd Place Best Community Service: Opelika-Auburn News, Joe McAdory, "Capital Investments"
Judges' Comments: The paper shows that it is willing to respond to public surveys and give information that may not be known. It is hard to compile such information, and your efforts should be applauded.
- Honorable Mention Best Community Service: The News-Courier, Sonny Turner, Phil Willis and Nancy Glasscock, "Water board shaken up after public outcry"
Judges' Comments: I thought that following this subject was important. However, I didn't know what the paper's role was in this, other than following the story.

Freedom of Information

- 1st Place Best Freedom of Information: The Daily Home, Amanada Casciaro, "Talladega College audit investigation"
Judges' Comments: The pursuit of the public documents after the college rejected a request shows the paper's efforts to tell what was occurring and not allow officials to hide an issue. The paper seemed to be pushing the college toward open records with its access of records from a back-door method.

- 2nd Place Best Freedom of Information: Opelika-Auburn News, Mitch Sneed and News Staff,
“Ticket fixing”
Judges’ Comments: The paper did a good job of following up on information brought out in testimony. The details in a public record helped spell out the size of the ticket problem for all to see.
- Honorable Mention - Freedom of Information: Fort Payne Times-Journal, Mark Harris,
“Council’s meeting in question”
Judges’ Comments: The meeting was good to bring to the public’s attention. But I was curious how the situation played out later. Was the council found in violation and had to make corrections?