

## 2022 Arkansas Press Association BETTER NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL CONTEST RULES & CATEGORIES

**1. ELIGIBILITY:** Contest open to employees of Arkansas Press Association member newspapers in good standing. Entries must be submitted by the member newspaper, not by individuals. The current owner of any former APA member newspaper(s) that have ceased publication may submit qualifying entries for work complete during the contest eligibility time frame. Syndicated work of an employee may only be submitted from the newspaper of origin.

**2. CONTEST PERIOD:** All entries must have been published January 1 through December 31, 2021.

**3. DEADLINE:** Entries must be submitted by midnight on **April 25, 2022.**

**4. ALL ENTRIES** must be full-page pdf documents (including photo entries) and show date of publication. Be sure to send story continuations. For entries that require more than one story (Category 3 Series Reporting and Category 23-26 Coverage), save as one pdf document in a low resolution format before uploading. To help judges locate the correct story or photo, the name of the entry (e.g. Fire Destroys Business) and the pdf file name should be the same. Entries must be submitted exactly as they were published.

**5. LIMIT OF ENTRIES:** There is a LIMIT of entries per newspaper in each category, but it varies, so read the rule for each category. Most news categories have a **limit of three**, photo categories have a **limit of five**, and the coverage categories have a **limit of one** entry per newspaper.

**6. Cost to Enter:** The contest fee per newspaper is \$25 plus \$5 per individual entry. Once all entries are submitted and finalized, click "Billing." This will take you to a page where the entry fees are automatically generated. You will have an option to pay your total cost by credit card or to be invoiced.

**7. DIVISION PLACEMENT:** Your newspaper has been pre-assigned a division based on your paid circulation.

Div. 1-2 Daily circulation under 10,000  
Div. 3 Daily circulation 10,001 and over  
Div. 4 Non-Daily circulation 1,300 or less

Div. 5 Non-Daily circulation 1,301-2,600  
Div. 6 Non-Daily circulation 2,601 and over

**(A) Competing Up:** You may compete in a higher circulation division but not in a lower circulation division than your total paid circulation nearest filing from your October 2021 ownership statement. If you choose to compete "up" then you must compete "up" with all entries, not just a few or one. In other words, newspapers in Division 1 may compete in Division 2; Division 2 in 3, Division 4 in 5 and so forth, but larger circulation papers may not compete in smaller circulation divisions. If you choose to compete in a larger circulation division, you will need to contact Terri Cobb at the APA office.

**(B) To be FAIR** to smaller staffed, smaller circulation newspapers, multiple-ownership newspapers must submit entries in the division of their largest circulation newspaper. An exception will only be made if the entries are sent with a written statement from the publisher saying that no help from personnel at the larger circulation newspaper(s) was used in publishing the smaller circulation newspaper.

**(C)** If work is published in more than one newspaper in a group, the person may enter from only one newspaper and must compete in the larger circulation division.

### 8. JUDGING:

**(A)** For a category to be judged there must be at least three entries from three different newspapers. Otherwise those entries will be added to and judged with the next higher division.

**(B)** Judges will be asked to make comments on winning entries. Comments will be given to the newspaper after the awards ceremony.

**(C)** Awards will be made in first, second, and third place. Honorable mentions may be awarded at the judges' discretion. Decisions of judges will be final.

**9. GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD:** Winners of the General Excellence Award will be determined by compiling points received for first, second, third place and honorable mention awards won in all categories. First place awards are worth ten points; second place, six points; third place, three points; and honorable mention, one point.

**10. Announcement of winners** will be made on June 25 during the 2022 Tri-State Convention at the Sheraton Downtown, Memphis.

## LOGIN, UPLOAD & SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

**Step 1** – Acquire your login information from APA. Contact Terri Cobb at Terri@arkansaspress.org.

**Step 2** – Login at [www.newspapercontest.com/arkansas](http://www.newspapercontest.com/arkansas). You will see a page showing any entries you have already submitted. Complete rules for the contest are available on the website. Some browsers, such as Safari, will open the rules in a new window; others will require you to download the PDF file to your computer.

**Step 3** – Click on the “Add New Entry” link.

**Step 4** – On this page, select your newspaper name. A lot of information will autofill. If that information is incorrect, please contact APA. Your division will be selected for you based on your circulation. Fill in the preparer’s name. (The preparer is the person uploading the entry into the online contest platform, not the staffer that will be credited for any award.)

**Step 5** – Select the Newspaper Group from the drop-down menu for the contest you are entering. You must select Open, All Daily, All Weekly or Contests By Division.

**Step 6** – Select the contest category from the drop-down menu. When you select the category, special instructions will appear below it. If you don’t see the category you’re looking to enter, make sure you’ve selected the correct Newspaper Group (See Step 5). This field will clear each time you save an entry, so you must select a category for each new entry.

**Step 7** – Enter the title/cutline for your entry. When uploading full-page PDF files, make sure the entry name matches the headline on the page so the judges can find it easily.

**Step 8** – Include the name of the person or people who should be credited for any award. This is generally the writer, photographer, graphic artist, cartoonist, etc.

**Step 9** – Add your file or files. You can drag and drop files or use the “Add files” button to navigate your files.

**Step 10 – IMPORTANT:** When you have completed your submission, click the “Save” button. If you click the “Back to list” button, you will lose the entry you just completed. After clicking “Save,” you will be directed back to the list of your entries.

**Step 11** – To submit another entry, click “Add New Entry.” As long as you have not logged out of the system, your newspaper name will still be in place and you can simply start at Step 5 again. You may log out and log back in later to continue adding entries. You will need to select your newspaper name each time you log in.

**Step 12** – If you are done submitting entries, please review the list. You may not change an entry, but you may delete an entry and resubmit it. When done uploading all your entries, click the “Billing” button on the list page. This will take you to a page where the entry fees are generated. You may click the PayPal Link to pay by credit card or mail your payment to: APA Contest, 411 S. Victory St. Little Rock AR 72201. Once payment is made, we will mark your newspaper paid and complete.

## **CATEGORIES**

### **CATEGORY 1 — News Story**

For each entry, submit full-page document showing a single staff-written news story. Spot news and sidebar stories may be submitted. Judging will be based on community wide importance of event, timeliness, thoroughness of reporting, writing style and effectiveness of lead. **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 2 — Feature Story**

For each entry, submit full-page document showing a single staff-written feature story. Judges will consider writing style, originality and general interest. Portrait pieces may be included. **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 3 — Series Reporting**

For each entry, submit full-page documents showing all stories in a series on one single event or subject or news item. Minimum three (3) stories to qualify as a series. Judging will include depth of reporting, organization of material, writing style and reader interest. **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 4 — Investigative Reporting**

For each entry, submit full-page documents showing all stories written during the investigation. This category covers stories uncovering the abuse of power, influence or money by government and business officials. Each entry should include a cover letter (1) explaining the problem, (2) the focus, scope and method of the investigation, and (3) the subsequent results and impact following publication of the stories. Save all documents into one pdf file. All winning entries will be forwarded to compete for the IF Stone Award. The IF Stone award includes a \$100 prize and plaque. **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 5 — Beat Reporter**

For each entry, submit a minimum of three (3) articles from a single reporter covering a specific beat (courts, sports, outdoors, city council, etc.) Newspapers may submit three entries from three reporters. **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 6 — COVID Pandemic Beat Reporter**

For each entry, submit five (5) stories covering COVID Pandemic 2020. Newspaper may submit three (3) entries from three different reporters. **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 7 — Sports News Story**

For each entry, submit full-page document. Judges will consider originality, style, writing and reader interest. (Enter sports features in Category 8.) **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 8 — Sports Feature Story**

For each entry, submit full-page document. Judges will consider originality, style, writing and reader interest. (Enter sports news/game time stories in Category 7.) **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 9 — Sports Column**

For each entry, submit full-page document. Columns on sports should be entered. Judging will include writing style, originality and reader impact. Columns must have bylines or standing headings and must be regularly published in your newspaper. **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 10 — Editorial**

For each entry, submit full-page document. Must be original. Syndicated material is not eligible. Judging will be on local impact, reasoning, writing excellence and leadership shown by the editorial. An editorial represents the opinion of the newspaper. A column is NOT an editorial! **Limit 3 entries.**

### **CATEGORY 11 — News/Political Column**

For each entry, submit full-page document. Only columns on news issues or politics should be entered. Judging will include writing style, originality and reader impact. Columns must have bylines or standing headings and must be regularly published in your newspaper. **Limit 3 entries.**

**CATEGORY 12 — General Interest Column**

For each entry, submit full-page document. Columns on general interest, people or “slice of life” should be entered. Judging will include writing style, originality and reader impact. Columns must have bylines or standing headings and must be regularly published in your newspaper. **Limit 3 entries.**

**CATEGORY 13 — Humorous Column**

For each entry, submit full-page document. Column should be humorous in nature. Judging will include writing style, originality and reader impact. Columns must have bylines or standing headings and must be regularly published in your newspaper. **Limit 3 entries.**

**CATEGORY 14 — Freelancer Recognition**

The intent of this category is to recognize Arkansas freelance writers and non-syndicated writers. If a story is published in more than one paper, it should be entered in the largest circulation paper. For each entry, submit full-page document. Judges will consider writing style, originality and general reader interest. **Limit 3 entries.**

**CATEGORY 15 — Headline Writing**

For each entry, submit full-page document. Headlines over photos can be submitted. Judges will consider originality, creativity (graphic presentation), appropriateness (how well it relates to the story or photo), clever use of words, impact, attention-getting quality and humor. To help judges locate the entry, the headline and document title should have the same name. **Limit 5 entries.**

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

For each entry, submit full-page PDF. Computer created and composite photos may not be entered.  
Photos may be black and white or color.

**CATEGORY 16 — Single News Photograph**

Name of photographer must be given. Judging will include timeliness, impact and technical quality. Clearly name the photo to be judged. **Limit 5 entries.**

**CATEGORY 17 — Single Feature Photograph**

No sports photos. See category 18. Name of photographer must be given. Portrait photo may be included in this category. Judges will consider photographic excellence, reader appeal and technical quality. Clearly name the photo to be judged. **Limit 5 entries.**

**CATEGORY 18 — Single Sports Action Photograph**

Name of photographer must be given on entry form. Clearly name the single ACTION photo to be judged. Judges will consider action, newsworthiness and quality. (Sports feature photos should be entered in Category 18.)  
**Limit 5 entries.**

**CATEGORY 19 — Single Sports Feature Photograph**

Name of photographer must be given on entry form. Clearly name the photo to be judged. Judges will consider photographic excellence, reader appeal and technical quality. **Limit 5 entries.**

**CATEGORY 20 — Picture Page/Photo Essay**

Each entry consists of one full-page document. This is a contest for one best picture page OR photo essay. It may be produced by one person or a team. Judges will consider photo quality, layout, art work, reproduction, originality and text material. **Limit 3 entries.**

## PHOTO OF THE YEAR

All first-place photos from the photography categories 16-19 will be judged together to determine the Photo of the Year for Arkansas Press Association. Photo of the Year will receive a special plaque presented during the awards luncheon.

## LAYOUT & DESIGN

Categories 21-22 are package entries. The judges are looking at a body of work.  
Save all the pages as one pdf document before uploading.

### **CATEGORY 21 — Best Front Page**

Submit three (3) FRONT pages from three different issues. Judges will consider general news content with special emphasis on local coverage, design, news play and typography with regard to appropriateness, quality, impact, legibility, organization and creativity. Include all story continuations. Only one entry per newspaper. **Limit 1 entry.**

### **CATEGORY 22 — Graphic Design Portfolio**

Submit three (3) full-page pdfs (saved as one file) from a staff member showing effective use of design, graphics, artwork, graphics, charts, maps or other devices that provide, explain, or clarify information from a news story or feature. Newspaper may submit work from three (3) different individuals. Judging will be based on originality, craftsmanship and presentation of information only, not the accompanying story. **Limit 1 entry.**

### **Category 23 — Best Digital Presence & Audience Engagement**

For entry, submit the link to your website along with any username and password needed to view content. Include as well links and usernames to your social media you would like judged (ie Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). Include podcast or YouTube channel links you want to include. The judges will randomly visit all your sites between May 2-10, 2022. Judging will be based on content (quality of news, timeliness and organization); visual/design (layout, photos, color); and activity from readership. **Limit 1 entry per newspaper.**

## COMMUNITY COVERAGE

These categories show judges what a good job you do in covering various subjects in your community throughout the year.

Submit four different news/feature stories showing the various ways you present the subjects as one entry.

Material must be staff produced. Save all the pages as one pdf document before uploading.

### **CATEGORY 24 — Agriculture /Business Coverage**

Coverage to include all aspects of agriculture and business, with special emphasis on coverage of local farming, businesses and industries in your community.\* **Limit 1 entry per newspaper.**

### **CATEGORY 25 — Education Coverage**

Coverage to include all aspects of education, school boards and other school activities in your community.\* **Limit 1 entry per newspaper.**

### **CATEGORY 26 — Health/Medical Coverage (include COVID Pandemic coverage)**

Coverage to include original local and state health and medical features and news.\* **Limit 1 entry per newspaper.**