



*Nebraska
Press
Association*

*2018
Better
Newspaper
Contest*



Deadline: January 31, 2018



Daily and Weekly Newspaper Contest Rules

General Rules:

1. Entries accepted only from dues-paying members.
2. Entries must be submitted to www.newspapercontest.com/nebraska or postmarked by Midnight, Central time on Wednesday, January 31. Follow the onscreen instructions and register using your information. You will be asked for an "Association Code", please enter **NE2018**. Please be sure to read all online rules for each category. If you need clarification of the rules, contact Carolyn Bowman at 800-369-2850 or by email at cb@nebpress.com. Entries must be submitted online, as specified. Certain categories call for entries in print. They shall be placed in 9x12 envelope and affixed with appropriate label stapled to upper right hand corner. Print label from online entry. Only one entry per envelope. Use two labels per entry; label the actual entry AND the outside of entry envelope.
3. Entries should be **PDF files** showing the **full page tearsheet** (publication name and date must be showing). Online entries should be clearly identified by headline, topic, etc.
4. Semi-weeklies are considered weeklies. **Small dailies may be entered as weeklies in Division D.**
5. Deadline for postmark of print entries: **January 31, 2018. Mail marked contest material to: Nebraska Press Association, 845 "S" Street, Lincoln, NE 68508-1226. Entries must first be entered online & a label printed to affix to print entry.**
6. First, second, and third place winners will be awarded in all categories having qualified entries.
7. **All entries may be entered only once, regardless of publication or circulation category. (i.e., a feature story, advertisement, news photo or section may have been published in multiple newspapers, but that story, ad, photo or section cannot be entered in multiple contest categories or circulation divisions.) A COMMON SECTION WHICH APPEARS IN MORE THAN ONE NEWSPAPER SHOULD ONLY BE ENTERED IN THE LARGEST CLASS. NO TMC/SHOPPERS ALLOWED.**
8. **Individual staffers may win multiple awards in the same contest category, provided each entry is clearly marked with the staffer's name. Entry must have been created by a regular member of the newspaper staff, though not necessarily a full-time member.**
9. **Cover letters are not to be included with entries unless called for by the contest category or with prior approval from NPA staff. For online categories calling for cover letters, they should be saved as a pdf & entered with the entry.**

SPECIAL ALL-CLASS AWARDS: (Winners receive a bonus 20 Sweepstakes points)

PHOTOS OF THE YEAR: NEWS, SPORTS AND FEATURE — SEE CATEGORIES 51, 52 & 53. Only one winner per category: News Photo, Sports Photo & Feature Photo. Enter your best photos and compete against the best photographs entered by weeklies & dailies in all circulation classes. (This category is no longer an automatic entry of first place winners from each circulation class.)

EDITORIAL OF THE YEAR AWARD — SEE CATEGORY 54. Only one winner. Enter your best editorial and compete against the best entries by weeklies & dailies in all circulation classes. (This category is no longer an automatic entry of first place winners from each circulation class.)

ADVERTISEMENT OF THE YEAR AWARD — SEE CATEGORY 55. Only one winner. Enter your best ad and compete against the best entries by weeklies and dailies in all circulation classes.

Class Divisions

Division E

Dailies

Division A

Weeklies Up to 859 Circ.

Division B

Weeklies 860-1,499 Circ.

Division C

Weeklies 1,500-2,499 Circ.

Division D

Weeklies 2,500 & Up Circ.

(according to 2015

Statement of Ownership)

Deadlines

Entries must be entered online or mailed no later than Midnight on January 31, 2018.

Contest Period

Calendar Year 2017. All entries must have been originally published between January 1 and December 31, 2017.

Awards

Awards will be announced during the Nebraska Press Association Annual Convention, April 20-21, 2018 at the Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln.

NOTICE

**Entry Fee is \$4.00 per entry.
Entry fees must be paid by check.**

**Mail check to
Nebraska Press Association
845 "S" Street**



Daily & Weekly Contest Categories

1. Use of Computer Graphics - Produced In House

Original news graphics, created in house. Judges consider design, impact, clarity, relevance and quality of artwork. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

2. Building Circulation

Must be focused on retaining readers and building circulation. Cover letter can be included. Can be any original promotional material. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

3. Reader Interaction/Contest

Entry can consist of up to four examples – permanent links to digital content – exhibiting opportunities for reader interaction or promoting a contest designed specifically to engage readers. Initiated by news, marketing, advertising, circulation or cooperative efforts. Judges shall consider potential for reader participation, originality of theme, copywriting, attractiveness and creativity. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

Advertising

(The following applies to all Advertising Categories: **NO NPAS HOUSE, AGENCY OR CLIENT PRODUCED ADS ALLOWED – ALL ADS MUST BE CREATED BY SUBMITTING NEWSPAPER**)

4. Community Promotion Advertisement

A single ad or series of ads created by the newspaper promoting its community, a project in its community or a community event. List name responsible for content. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

5. Agricultural Advertisement

Best advertisement featuring an agricultural theme. Advertisement must be created by newspaper entered. Judges will consider cleverness of headlines and text and the ability to captivate, entertain and attract readers and motivate them to respond. Judges shall also consider basic idea, layout, copy, typography and originality. Must be produced in-house. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

6. Small Ad (Under 1/4 page or less than 3 x 10 1/2")

May submit up to three entries per newspaper. Judges will consider cleverness of headlines and text and the ability to captivate, entertain and attract readers and motivate them to respond. Judges shall also consider basic idea, layout, copy, typography and originality. Ad must be for a single advertiser. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

7. Signature Page

Best ad featuring any theme and containing multiple advertisers. Judges will consider originality of theme, design and layout, makeup, visual appeal and overall continuity. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

8. Classified Section

The purpose of this category is to recognize quality classified advertising pages. Judges will consider overall attractiveness, ease in reading, clarity of classified headlines, organization, promotion of classified advertising use, ease for readers to place and use classifieds. Maximum one entry per newspaper. **A COMMON SECTION WHICH APPEARS IN MORE THAN ONE NEWSPAPER SHOULD ONLY BE ENTERED IN THE LARGEST CLASS. NO TMC/SHOPPERS ALLOWED.**

9. Advertising Campaign

Two or more ads constitute "campaign." Campaign ads must be created by newspaper entered. List name of person responsible for content. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

10. Single Retail Advertising Idea - Color

No house ads. Ad must be created by newspaper entered. Judges will consider cleverness of headlines and text and the ability to captivate, entertain and attract readers and motivate them to respond. Judges shall also consider basic idea, layout, copy, typography and originality. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

11. Single Retail Advertising Idea - Black and White

No house ads. Ad must be created by newspaper entered. Judges will consider cleverness of headlines and text and the ability to captivate, entertain and attract readers and motivate them to respond. Judges shall also consider basic idea, layout, copy, typography and originality. Maximum three entries per newspaper.



12. Single Classified Advertising Idea - Color (DAILIES ONLY)

No house ads. Ad must be created by newspaper entered. Judges will consider cleverness of headlines and text and the ability to captivate, entertain and attract readers and motivate them to respond. Judges shall also consider basic idea, layout, copy, typography and originality. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

13. Single Classified Advertising Idea - Black and White

No house ads. Ad must be created by newspaper entered. Judges will consider cleverness of headlines and text and the ability to captivate, entertain and attract readers and motivate them to respond. Judges shall also consider basic idea, layout, copy, typography and originality. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

14. Creative Ad Writing

Each entry shall consist of three examples of creative ad writing in separate and unique advertisements. Judges will consider how the headlines and text complement artwork and other elements in the advertisements, and how the writing captures readers' attention, entertains, inspires, and prompts reader action. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

15. Best New Idea – Ads/Marketing

Submit up to four examples – permanent links and/or pdf – along with a letter explaining why your idea was a winner, how you implemented it, and why it could be successfully adapted for advertising and/or marketing campaigns by other newspapers. Judges shall consider creativity, originality, use of multiple platforms, reader engagement and applicability of idea. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

Sports

16. Sports Action Photo

Pictures must have been taken by a regular member of the newspaper staff, though not necessarily a full-time member. List name of photographer. Maximum seven entries per newspaper. **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet.** See Photo of the Year category under Special Awards.

17. Sports Feature Photo

Picture must have been taken by a regular member of the newspaper staff, though not necessarily a full-time member. List name of photographer. Maximum seven entries per newspaper. **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet.** See Photo of the Year category under Special Awards.

18. Sports Page

Select page or pages from one issue each of Fall, Winter, Spring and one of newspaper's choice. This is one entry. Judges consider content, writing, headline suitability, layout, design and appeal. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

19. Sports Column

Submit any two columns per columnist. Columns must be regular features, original, written by a regular member of the staff. Judges consider the purpose of the column, local interest, selection of material, literary merit. List name of columnist. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

20. Sports Writing

Submit entries with stories highlighted. Judges consider interest, impact, clarity of writing, local relevance. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

Photography

21. Photo Page

Pictures must have been taken by a regular member of the newspaper staff, though not necessarily a full-time member. Judges consider the theme, composition of individual photos, local interest, layout, reproduction, captions. A premium for originality. Maximum seven entries per newspaper. **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet.**

22. Feature Photography

Pictures must have been taken by a regular member of the newspaper staff, though not necessarily a full-time member. List name of photographer. Maximum seven entries per newspaper. **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet.** See Photo of the Year category under Special Awards.



23. News Photography

Pictures must have been taken by a regular member of the newspaper staff, though not necessarily a full-time member. List name of photographer. Maximum seven entries per newspaper. **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet.** See Photo of the Year category under Special Awards.

24. Breaking News Photography

Pictures must have been taken by a regular member of the newspaper staff, though not necessarily a full-time member. Breaking News is defined as a photo in which no advance planning is possible...tornadoes...accidents...fires...quick action items. Maximum seven entries per newspaper. **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet.** See Photo of the Year category under Special Awards.

News/Editorial

25W. Use of Color — News (WEEKLIES ONLY)

Judges consider originality, mechanical reproduction, compatibility with written matter, makeup. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

26. Personal Column

Submit any two columns per columnist. Each columnist limited to one entry. Columns must be regular features, original, written by a regular member of the staff. Judges consider the purpose of the column, local interest, selection of material, literary merit. List name of columnist. Entry shall consist of any two columns per columnist. Maximum seven entries per newspaper.

27. Breaking News

Breaking News is defined as an event or development in which no advance planning is possible...tornadoes...accidents...fires...quick-action items. Judges consider interest, thoroughness, clarity of writing and impact of visual elements and presentation. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

28. Feature Series

The Feature Series must have appeared in two or more issues. Judges consider subject, interest and impact, layout and design, writing. **(Don't confuse with contest No. 29).** Maximum three entries.

29. Single Feature Story

Judges consider subject, interest and impact, writing. **(Don't confuse with contest No. 28).** List name of writer. Maximum of four feature entries per newspaper.

30. In-depth Writing

An in-depth report on a serious subject, single or multiple elements or a series. Judges consider news peg, local relevance, use of research, computer-aided research, multiple sources, enterprise on the part of the newspaper in pulling resources together to get the story, impact on community, opportunity for the community to take action. Maximum two entries per newspaper.

31. Public Notice and Its Promotion

Submit any two examples of articles, editorials or ads which promote the concept of newspaper public notice as the best way to guarantee the public's right to know. This is one entry. Maximum of one entry. **THIS CATEGORY COUNTS DOUBLE POINTS FOR SWEEPSTAKES AWARD.**

32. Editorial Page

Limited to one entry per newspaper to be composed of one page each from the months of February, June & December. Judges consider power of original editorial matter, layout, design, information, reader participation and local relevance. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

33. Editorial

Entry shall consist of three staff-originated editorials. This is one entry. Judges consider local interest in issues raised, suggested solutions and call to action. Judges also consider clearness of style, sound reasoning, power to influence public opinion and literary merit. Maximum one entry per newspaper. See Editorial of the Year Award category under Special Awards.

34. News Writing

Judges consider the quality of writing... its impact, clarity of sourcing, thoroughness and relevance. Entry consists of story dealing with general news coverage. One entry per topic, any number of staff members may contribute to the story. Maximum of three entries per newspaper.



35. Best New Idea – News

Submit up to four examples – permanent links to digital content and/or pdf – along with a letter explaining why your idea was a hit, how you implemented it, and why it could be successfully adapted by editors and reporters at other newspapers. Judges shall consider creativity, originality, use of multiple platforms, reader engagement and applicability of idea. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

36. Headline Writing

Submit one front page from date of your choice. Enter entire front page as entry. Judges consider the effectiveness of front page headlines in capturing reader interest and in accurately reflecting the nature of stories. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

37. Front Page

Submit one front page from date of your choice. Enter entire front page as entry. Judges consider layout and design, writing, use of artwork, headlines, relevance, balance of local and non-local coverage. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

The following categories must be mailed to NPA.

38. General Excellence

This is one of the top awards in the NPA Better Newspaper Contest, an overall evaluation of the newspaper. Mail three issues. One issue each from the months of March, May & September. Judges consider news, content, quality of writing, headlines, page design, photos and captions, graphics and art elements, editorial page, front page, lifestyle pages, sports pages, reproduction, advertising design and content, treatment of public notices. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

39. Lifestyles (Dailies Only)

Mail actual complete print section. Select page or pages from any three issues. This is one entry. Judges consider layout, design, content, writing and local impact. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

40. Special Single Section

Mail actual complete print section. Each entry consists of one section on a single date of publication per newspaper, each must be accompanied by cover letter explaining the special nature of the section or edition. Judges consider best idea, editorial content, photo and art content, layout, impact on community. No NPAS sponsored sections, i.e. Beef Tab. Maximum three entries per newspaper. “By Staff” byline acceptable on this category. **A COMMON SECTION WHICH APPEARS IN MORE THAN ONE NEWSPAPER SHOULD ONLY BE ENTERED IN THE LARGEST CLASS. NO TMC/SHOPPERS ALLOWED.**

41. Special Section (Multiple Publication Days)

Mail actual complete print sections. Each entry consists of section on multiple dates of publication per newspaper, each must be accompanied by cover letter explaining the special nature of the section or edition. Judges consider best idea, editorial content, photo and art content, layout, impact on community. No NPAS sponsored sections, i.e. Beef Tab. Maximum three entries per newspaper. “By Staff” byline acceptable on this category. **A COMMON SECTION WHICH APPEARS IN MORE THAN ONE NEWSPAPER SHOULD ONLY BE ENTERED IN THE LARGEST CLASS. NO TMC/SHOPPERS ALLOWED.**

42. Youth Coverage

This is a mail in entry. Submit three examples of coverage of young people (full-page tearsheets of youth pages, opinions, in-depth series about issues facing young people, advertisements, special sections, etc.) with subject matter clearly outlined. Must include cover letter. This will be one entry. Judges will consider local interest, relevance, impact and ingenuity. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

43. Specialty/Lifestyles Sections

This is a mail in entry. Submit tearsheets from regular editions of up to three examples of specialty/lifestyle sections geared to a specific audience, or three examples geared to a variety of audiences: youth, business, agriculture, seniors, etc. Judges consider page design, impact, relevance of content. Maximum one entry per newspaper.



Leadership Awards

(Winners receive a bonus 20 Sweepstakes points)

44. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AWARD (All Classes Together)

Only one winner. Submit news articles, editorials, house ads and other materials demonstrating your newspaper's commitment to combating government secrecy and ensuring the public's right to know. Entry can include cover letter from entrant and supporting letters from the community.

45. BEST NIE PROGRAM

One entry per newspaper accompanied by cover letter explaining how your publication promotes Newspapers in Education. Samples can include full-page tearsheets of promotional advertisements, specialty pages or sections aimed at student readers, copies of fliers or letters sent to teachers, etc. Subject matter should be clearly outlined. Judges will consider ingenuity and impact of promotional materials and ads, and results of efforts. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

Digital

46. Web Sites

To enter include the address of Web Site and name(s) of staff responsible for site. Criteria includes usefulness to readers, effectiveness of advertising, quality and quantity of community content, ease of navigation, inclusion of special features such as links, interaction, etc., and cross-promotion of newspaper and Web Site. Maximum one entry per newspaper.

47. Online Video

Breaking news, sports, features, special interest, advertising and other styles of video are eligible. Judges shall consider quality of visual storytelling, graphics, sound, special effects and quality of script, camerawork, and editing. Premium for uniqueness and viewer impact. Newspaper must keep link active to entry on their respective website until judging is complete. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

48. Online Coverage of Breaking News

Entry consists of permanent link to digital content of the breaking news coverage along with cover letter explaining the depth and breadth of the coverage and containing statistical data on traffic growth, social media/video views, etc.

during the event. Judges will consider the newspaper's use of multi-media to break a spot news story and develop the coverage as the news event unfolds. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

49. Best Use of Social Media

This category recognizes newspapers that have utilized social media in an innovative way to expand coverage beyond traditional print. Entry shall consist of a cover letter of 300 words or less describing a single news event in which your newspaper creatively used social media to inform and interact with readers. Entry should include up to three examples (screen shots of Facebook posts, tweets, etc.). Judges will consider the entry's impact on the audience, clarity of the message and creativity. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

50. Best Digital Ad Idea

Any ad – animated or static – appearing on website or mobile site. Ad must have been created locally by newspaper entering it in the contest. Entry consists of permanent link to digital content. Maximum three entries per newspaper.

Special All-Class Awards

These are separate entries from any other category.

(Winners receive a bonus 20 Sweepstakes points)

51. News Photo of the Year

Only one winner per category. Enter your best news photo and compete against the best photographs entered by weeklies & dailies in all circulation classes. Submit entries online as per other photo category instructions. (This category is no longer an automatic entry of first place winners from each circulation class.) **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet. Entry cannot be entered in any other category.**



52. Sports Photo of the Year

Only one winner per category. Enter your best sports photo and compete against the best photographs entered by weeklies & dailies in all circulation classes. Submit entries online as per other photo category instructions. (This category is no longer an automatic entry of first place winners from each circulation class.) **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet. Entry cannot be entered in any other category.**

53. Feature Photo of the Year

Only one winner per category. Enter your best feature photo and compete against the best photographs entered by weeklies & dailies in all circulation classes. Submit entries online as per other photo category instructions. (This category is no longer an automatic entry of first place winners from each circulation class.) **Entry must be full page pdf or jpg tearsheet. Entry cannot be entered in any other category.**

54. Editorial of the Year

Only one winner. Enter your best editorial and compete against the best entries by weeklies & dailies in all circulation class. Submit entries online. (This category is no longer an automatic entry of first place winners from each circulation class.) **Entry cannot be entered in any other category.**

55. Advertisement of the Year

Only one winner. Enter your best ad and compete against the best entries by weeklies and dailies in all circulation classes. Submit entry online. **Entry cannot be entered in any other category.**

Sweepstakes Awards

Weekly Class Award

All **weekly** newspapers entered are automatically eligible. The award will be presented to the newspaper in each class of A, B, C and D that accumulates the most points in its class based on the formula given below.

Weekly Sweepstakes Award

All **weekly** newspapers entered are automatically eligible. This is the most prestigious award in the weekly competition. The award will be presented to the newspaper that accumulates the most points based on the formula given below.

Daily Sweepstakes Award

All **daily** newspapers entered are automatically eligible. This is the most prestigious award in the daily competition. The award will be presented to the newspaper that accumulates the most points based on the following formula:

Each first place award...10 points*
Each second place award...8 points*
Each third place award...6 points*
*Double points for General Excellence & Public Notice categories
Twenty Sweepstakes points will also be awarded for Freedom of Information, Best NIE Program & Special All-Class Awards: News Photo of the Year; Sports Photo of the Year; Feature Photo of the Year; Editorial of the Year; and, Advertisement of the Year.