Excellence in Journalism
Deadline writing

CLASS A

First Place
Steve Bandy
Marshall News Messenger
Officer shooting

Second Place
Angela Weatherford
Athens Daily Review
Jury takes a little more than 2 1/2 hours to return sentence

Honorable mention
Jessica Sanders
Seguin Gazette-Enterprise
Standoff ends as man surrenders to JP

Judges comments: This was not the longest story submitted in the Deadline Reporting category, but Bandy’s entry was by far the most complete. In the second-day story about a former police officer apparently gunning down a trooper at a traffic stop, Bandy takes information from officials, public records, other news reports an eyewitness and the slain trooper’s obituary. As the newspaper followed the story in the weeks after the shooting, the writer might have focused more on the narrative, but – on deadline – this reporting is great.

Judge: Allison Floyd, Athens Banner-Herald
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Deadline writing
CLASS AA

First Place
Laura Elder
Galveston County Daily News
Five rescued, one dead in boat sinking

Second Place
Nathaniel Lukefahr
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Dow Production, workers to be cut

Honorable mention
Paul A. Anthony
San Angelo Standard-Times
Lawmen enter temple

Judges comments: This was the most compelling read of all the stories I judged. It was clearly written and well reported with good sources. The lead was engaging and the story was one that grabbed me from beginning to end. Great details.

Judge: Bob Zaltzberg, Bloomington, Ind., Herald
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Deadline writing

CLASS AAA

First Place

Jessica Langdon
Wichita Falls
Times-Record News
A ton of water

Second Place

Gabe Semenza
Victoria Advocate
It Was Mass Chaos

Honorable mention

Jared Taylor
McAllen Monitor
21 Dead in Prison Riot

Judges comments: Strong story telling through the people who suffered through the high water. Excellent explanation of the "perfect storm" that created it and fine detail. I would guess readers could relate to what these people went through.

Judge: Dave Kotok, Omaha World-Herald
### Deadline writing

**CLASS AAAAA**

**First Place**

Scott Farwell, Scott Goldstein, Rachel Slade  
Dallas Morning News  
15 die in crash of bus

**Second Place**

Lindsay Wise, Dane Schiller, Rosanna Ruiz  
Houston Chronicle  
Crane collapse kills 4

**Honorable mention**

Staff  
Dallas Morning News  
A procession of painful goodbyes

**Honorable mention**

Staff  
San Antonio Express-News  
AT&T heads to Dallas

**Judges comments:** Beautifully told, largely through the eyes of survivors and families of those who died. Great description, excellent detail - a remarkable effort under deadline.

Judge: Penny Cockrell, The Oklahoman.
Features

First Place

**Tyesha Boudreaux**
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Where Hope Lives

Second Place

**Robin Y. Richardson**
Marshall News Messenger
Yearning for Zion

Honorable mention

**Daniel Walker**
Herald-Banner
F Bomb

**Judges comments:** It would have been easy to write this story and not make it seem this interesting. But with an active lead, it draws you in, and it explains the ins and outs — and the biggest, question of why — of a family involved in foster care. It also explains the need for foster parents through the eyes of the family.

Judge: Terry Rombeck, Lawrence Journal-World
Features
CLASS AA

First Place

Kevin Sieff
Brownsville Herald
Where Hope Lives

Second Place

Trish Choate
San Angelo Standard-Times
Yearning for Zion

Honorable mention

Laura Elder
Galveston County Daily News
F Bomb

Judges comments: A compelling read. This takes me deep inside a problem and shows how the impact of a political fight in Washington affects men and their families in Mexico, as well as businesses in the United States. The color and detail is what makes this a special read.

Judge: John Moore, Managing Editor, Ventura County Star
Class AAA

Features

First Place

Gabe Semenza
Victoria Advocate
Fatal Funnel

Second Place

Tommy Witherspoon
Waco Tribune-Herald
Open wide, Saddam

Honorable Mention

Denise Malan
Corpus Christi Caller-Times
This is a church with no steeple; look inside, see all the...

Judges comments: An ambitious series that captured real-life moments with great sensitivity.

Judge: Jill Williams, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
Features
CLASS AAAAA

First Place

Brad Buchholz
Austin American-Statesman
Glimmers of grace

Second Place

Christopher Wynn
Dallas Morning News
Past Perfect

Honorable mention

Jeannie Kever
Houston Chronicle
Tale of determination

Honorable mention

Denise Gamino
Austin American-Statesman
Claire James survived Whitman's bullet; the baby she carried didn't

Honorable mention

David Casstevens
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
After-school special

Judges comments: A moving essay that captures the qualities of one woman's life and its effects on, and meaning to, all those around her, through one person's eyes. It takes the reader inside the experience of victimhood and loss in a way seldom seen without bogging down in needless emotion. First-rate work.

Judge: Kevin McGrath, Wichita (Kan.) Eagle
Feature series

First Place
Michele Marcotte
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Elderly series-The Long Journey

Second Place
Jon Dustin Brooks
Marshall News Messenger
Uncommon Valor

Honorable mention
Terry Mathews
Sulpur Springs News-Telegram
Are we poor?

Judges comments: This was a great series that used vivid, in-the-moment writing and reporting to tackle some pretty heavy topics that pretty much every family must consider at some point. The stories all seemed to further the overall mission of the series. I was especially impressed by the sourcing — without finding excellent sources, the stories, and therefore the series, couldn’t have been this good. Finally, this wasn’t just about other people's stories — the paper did a good job of providing news-you-can-use tips and lists of resources so readers could truly gain something from the series.

Judge: Terry Rombeck, Lawrence Journal-World
First Place
John Lowman
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Myla’s Way: Live. Learn. Love

Second Place
Allen Essex, Fernando Del Valle, Steve Sinclair
Harlingen Valley Morning Star
Uncommon Valor

Honorable mention
Kevin Sieff, Laura B. Martinez, Gary Long, Aaron Nelsen, Emma Perez-Trevino, Jose Borjon, Laura Tillman
Brownsville Herald
Are we poor?

Judges comments: An excellent job of taking me into the lives of this family and how they are dealing with the potential tragedy that they faced. There are tremendous small details in reporting that bring each of the characters alive to me, the reader, and compel me to continue reading. You answer my questions about her condition and how it happened without slowing down the narrative. I might have shortened the package by a day or so, but it probably worked fine at its length for your readership. But it makes me care about these people and their situation. Well done.
Judge: John Moore, Managing Editor, Ventura County Star
Feature series
CLASS AAA

First Place
Gabe Semenza
Victoria Advocate
Fatal Funnel

Second Place
Brandon Leonard
Victoria Advocate
Receipe for Life

Honorable mention
Denise Malan
Corpus Christi Caller-Times
This is a church with no steeple; look inside, see all the...

Judges comments: Gripping retelling of this tragedy. The writer was able to get those involved to open up and provide such compelling details. Wonderful graphics. Very well thought out.

Judge: Sue Ontiveros, Chicago Sun-Times
First Place
Macarena Hernandez, Gary Jacobson, Holly Hacker, Katherine Leal Unmuth
Dallas Morning News
Hard Road to the Finish

Second Place
Eric Dexheimer
Austin American-Statesman
Billy's World

Honorable mention
Chuck Lindell
Austin American-Statesman
Court of family misery

Honorable mention
Jan Jarvis, Cary Darling, Chris Vaughn
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Living with HIV

Judges comments: This series is an excellent, comprehensive look at immigrant students, told as a result of the incredible access the writers were granted — and what they did with it. Brilliantly researched and written, the series unfolds all the layers of the issue. The story of the principal on Day 4 is uplifting and builds the series to a wonderful ending on Day 5. It's hard to imagine readers not seeing this series and, perhaps for the first time, understanding the depth of the issue and, also perhaps for the first time, considering it an issue of people, not immigration politics. Excellent, and bravo.

Judge: Mike Marino, Florida Times-Union
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Short features

CLASS A

First Place
Mary Rainwater
Palestine Herald-Press
Manners and a meal

Second Place
Jeff Walker
San Marcos Daily Record

Honorable mention
Angie Alvarado
Palestine Herald-Press

Judges comments: The writer tells a colorful story about a ballooning pioneer's career and accomplishments.

Judge: Stan Tiner, Editor, Biloxi (Miss.) Sun Herald
Short features
CLASS AA

First Place
John S. Merculief
San Angelo
Standard-Times
INTO THE TUMBLEWEEDS: Lost Maples a fall wonderland

Second Place
Gary Carter
Sherman/Denison Herald Democrat
Talk Texan? Fixin' to.

Honorable mention
Aaron Nelsen
Brownsville Herald
Cutting Edge

Honorable mention
Candace Carlise
Denton Record-Chronicle
Program lays foundation of books

Judges comments: None given.

Judge: Nora Shoptaw, Skirt! Greensboro magazine
First Place

Chris Ramirez
Amarillo Globe-News
Pigs fly before Ike hits

Second Place

Brian Pearson
Tyler Morning Telegraph
Old School: Downtown Barbershop Marks 50-Year Anniversary

Honorable mention

Celinda Emison
Abilene Reporter News
Brownwood Cries Out: Save our Starbucks

Judges comments: Super lede -- it made me read on. I loved the descriptions of the friends of swine and the quotes you chose.

Judge: Dana Coffield, The Denver Post
First Place

Vince Davis
San Antonio Express-News
Family helps nourish bodies and souls....

Second Place

David Flick
Dallas Morning News
A different shade of blues

Honorable mention

Deanna Boyd
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Loose horse gets kick out of patrol car

Judges comments: A wonderful story, with excellent description and good news value. This is a short feature that says something truly meaningful about a part of life in San Antonio that, as in every big city, many want to overlook.

Judge: David Caudill, Cincinnati Enquirer, Features copy desk chief.
Spot sports
CLASS A

First Place
Brandon Ogden
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Sue Gunter

Second Place
Benny Rogers
Athens Daily Review
Sizzlin' Start

Honorable mention
Jon Dustin Brooks
Marshall News Messenger


Judge: Bran Strickland, Aniston (Ala.) Star
Spot sports

First Place
Joshua Buckley
Galveston County Daily News
Out of bounds

Second Place
Bret Vito
Denton Record-Chronicle
15 UNT football players fail drug test

Honorable mention
Joel A. Erickson
Odessa American
Repeating themselves

Judges comments: Almost an unbelievable story about the taunts and interference a high school coach -- a winning high school coach -- had to endure from critical fans. A great read.

Judge: Barry Forbis, Rocky Mountain News.
Spot sports
CLASS AAA

First Place
Evan Ren
Abilene Reporter News
Playing this one for Paige

Second Place
Mike Forman
Victoria Advocate
Wallace gets first taste of NFL at combine

Honorable mention
Don Williams
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
Ex-Tech tennis player found dead

Judges comments: Evan Ren handled a sad, sensitive situation very professionally. He captured the emotion of the day in great detail and gave readers an intimate sense of what the school, friends and family had to endure.

Judge: Pat McLoone, Philadelphia Daily News
Spot sports

First Place

Suzanne Halliburton
Austin American-Statesman
A Horn once more

Second Place

Jonathan Feigen
Houston Chronicle
That's one big deal

Honorable mention

Brad Townsend
Dallas Morning News
Michael Phelps wins eighth gold

Judges comments: Great blend of behind-the-scenes detail and historical background on Texas' decision to offer the offensive coordinator job to former quarterback hero Major Applewhite and his decision to leave a great job at Alabama to take it.

Judge: Barry Forbis, Sports Editor, Rocky Mountain News
First Place
Jon Dustin Brooks
Marshall News Messenger
IOC vote leaves Team USA on farewell tour

Second Place
Dave Rogers
Baytown Sun
Future still in doubt for Outlaws

Honorable mention
Neal White
Waxahachie Daily Light
A rivalry with many sides

Judges comments: This feature is a perfect example of treating a local rivalry game like it's the biggest story in the world, which obviously it is to the readers of the Marshall News Messenger. The rich details make the story.

Judge: Randy Kennedy, Mobile (Ala.) Press-Register
First Place

Evan Mohl
Killeen Daily Herald
IOC vote leaves Team USA on farewell tour

Second Place

Jeff Andrews
Denton Record-Chronicle
Future still in doubt for Outlaws

Honorable mention

Joel A. Erickson
Odessa American
A rivalry with many sides

Judges comments: None given.

Judge: Colleen McDaniel, Sports Editor, Virginian Pilot
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Sports features

First Place
Lee Goddard
Corpus Christi Caller-Times
Robbed by dementia

Second Place
Evan Ren
Abilene Reporter News
Colt Crazy

Honorable mention
Joey Richards
Abilene Reporter News
The Best

Judges comments: Lee Goddard's story on the dementia of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi athletic director Dan Viola was a poignant piece that was well-written and educational. I learned a lot about frontotemporal dementia and it scared the heck out of me. A very readable story about how the disease has changed Viola's life, with a lot of details that allow the reader to relate to what Viola and his family are going through.

Judge: Chet Fussman, Florida Times-Union
Sports features

First Place
Barry Horn,
Albert Breer
Dallas Morning News
Frank Clarke

Second Place
Randy Riggs
Austin American-Statesman
Track keeper

Honorable mention
Dan McCarney
San Antonio Express-News
Jose Robles got game

Judges comments: Easily the winner in this category. Great story, great reporting, great writing.

Judge: Josh Pichler, Cincinnati Enquirer
Sports column writing

First Place
Pete Garcia
Alice Echo-News Journal
Portfolio

Second Place
Dave Rogers
Baytown Sun
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Kevin Gore
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Portfolio

Judges comments: This columnist is clearly in touch with the readers he serves. He does a great job of offering a strong opinion without making the column about himself.

Judge: Randy Kennedy, Mobile (Ala.) Press-Register
Sports column writing
CLASS AA

First Place
Bob West
Port Arthur News
NCAA no more fan friendly than NFL counterparts

Second Place
Eric Drennan
Temple Daily Telegram
What's behind lackluster performances at latest state track and field meet?

Honorable mention
Richard Croome
Bryan-College Station Eagle
Covering the Aggies

Judges comments: Bob West has the kind of powerful voice every columnist should have. He's not afraid to challenge the big guys with solid argument and strong technique. His piece on the NCAA and money resonates. I wish it could be picked up in every paper. Ditto with the Clemens column. This may have been a very tough position to take in Port Arthur.

Judge: Bill Felber, Sports Editor, Manhattan (Kan.) Mercury
Sports column writing
CLASS AAA

First Place
Brice Cherry
Waco Tribune-Herald
Portfolio

Second Place
George Watson
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
Westerners endure drunken-driving lesson

Honorable mention
Adam Zuvanich
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
For Heisman vote

Honorable mention
Joel A. Erickson
Odessa American
When a score means more than it might seem

Judges comments: Has all the elements you want to see out of your writers ... relevant to the community, inspiring, a talker, descriptive and touching.

Judge: Holly Lawton, Kansas City Star
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Sports column writing
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Kevin Sherrington
Dallas Morning News
Portfolio

Second Place
Tim Cowlishaw
Dallas Morning News
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Mike Leggett
Austin American-Statesman
Portfolio

Judges comments: A good combination of strong reporting and the human touch in one column, a sense of humor in another, and strong opinion in a third. A winning mix.

Judge: Reid Laymance, Sports Editor, St. Louis Post-Dispatch.
First Place

**Jayson Larson**

Athens Daily Review

Two tales of sportsmanship

Second Place

**Karla DeLuca**

Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel

You're the oldest, What Happened,
Don't feel obliged

Honorable mention

**Kevin Lewis**

Plainview Daily Herald

Under it all, a heart of gold

**Judges comments:** Larson doesn't try to dazzle readers with sophisticated literary devices and big words. He comes right at them with language and situations that feel familiar. His style might seem simple but he invariably leaves you nodding your head in agreement with him.

Judge: Rod Richardson, The Times (Shreveport, La.)
General column writing
CLASS AA

First Place
Fred Afflerbach
Temple Daily Telegram
Backroads, Waving a tradition on rural backroads

Second Place
Donna Fielder
Denton Record-Chronicle
Brazen Bob and Macho Mike cover Inhuman Ike

Judges comments: He did an exceptional job of using a theme - back roads -- that could be mundane to reflect on the human condition while giving his readers an enhanced understanding of the area in which they live.

Judge: -Bill McGoun, retired editorial writer, The Palm.

Honorable mention
Gene Powell
Odessa American

Honorable mention
Ken Brodnax
Odessa American

Honorable mention
Olga Pena
Killeen Daily Herald

Honorable mention
Heber Taylor
Galveston County Daily News

Honorable mention
Jim Fredricks
Conroe Courier
General column writing

CLASS AAA

First Place
Bruce Beck
Amarillo Globe-News
Portfolio

Second Place
M.B. (Marty) Richards
Wichita Falls Times-Record News
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Patrick Butler
Tyler Morning Telegraph
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Jon Mark Beilue
Amarillo Globe-News
Portfolio

Judges comments: Beck tells a great story and he gives readers the strong impression that he actually enjoys talking to them. The fact that he chooses to make the conversations so personal only enhances his work. In a category filled with strong, witty storytellers, Beck rises to the top.

Judge: Rod Richardson, The Times (Shreveport, La.)
General column writing
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Rod Dreher
Dallas Morning News
Portfolio

Second Place
Lisa Falkenberg
Houston Chronicle
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Pam LeBlanc
Austin American-Statesman
Portfolio

Honorable mention
John Kelso
Austin American-Statesman
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Jacquielynn Floyd
Dallas Morning News
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Ken Rodriguez
San Antonio Express-News
Portfolio

Judges comments: Nice description, good use of self-deprecating humor, well written (soapbox derby). Dreher courageously wrestles with God and faith in his "chief of sinners" column. Like Jacob, I don't think he wins, but I admire him for trying. Excellent, strong column.

Judge: Peter Bronson, Cincinnati Enquirer
Editorial writing
CLASS A

First Place
Daniel Walker
Greenville Herald Banner
A city killing its recovery process

Second Place
Karla DeLuca
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Prison gray, Water Power

Honorable mention
Karla DeLuca
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Gun Play, Perks Power, Power Plant

Judges comments: The author is a strong writer, pulling his readers in with interesting, easy-to-digest ledes that offer up the paper's opinion right away. Too often, editorials don't say much. That's not the case with Walker's work. The opinion is clear, strong and backed by fact. Not only does the author lament some of the problems facing his community, he proposes solutions. Using strong, declarative sentences, Walker persuades readers without being too preachy. Good work.

Judge: Dan Haley, Denver Post
First Place

**Dolph Tillotson**
Galveston County Daily News
*A city killing its recovery process*

Second Place

**Mike Trimble**
Denton Record-Chronicle
*Call 911, Jeeves: It's a Ford*

Honorable mention

**Heber Taylor**
Galveston County Daily News
*Walking quorum out of step with law*

Honorable mention

**Diana R. Fuentes**
Laredo Morning Times
*Portfolio*

**Judges comments:** Dolph Tillotson's clear, well-thought out vision for Galveston is a testament to the power and potential of the finest editorial writing. Tillotson's well-written editorial not only served as the groundwork for the city's future, but in the best tradition of editorial writing inspired and generated a community-wide discussion.

Judge: Joe Howry, Editor, Ventura County Star
First Place

Editorial Board
Victoria Advocate
What else has City Council done without the public's knowledge?

Second Place

John Young
Waco Tribune-Herald
Portfolio

Honorable mention

John Kanelis,
David Henry
Amarillo Globe-News
Red light cams right for city; Ballot box gets boxed up; The show that never ends

Judges comments: Some strong writing, some clever. This paper is community-oriented and that's so increasingly rare as to be priceless.

Judge: Charlie Mitchell, The Vicksburg (Miss.) Post
First Place
Claudia Kolker
Houston Chronicle
Get the lead out; Can do;
Railroaded

Second Place
Jack Z. Smith
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Portfolio

Honorable mention
David Langworthy
Houston Chronicle
U.S. Senate; Furtive decision;
Magnetic attraction

Judges comments: Strong positions, well reported. Few cliches were used, which is good, because they need to be avoided like the plague. I especially liked the railroaded editorial, which appropriately held officials and institutions accountable.

Judge: Craig Klugman, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette
First Place

Judy Morgan
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Soldier's war poems

Second Place

Jim Finley
Baytown Sun
Palin vs. Biden vs. the press

Honorable mention

Terry Mathews
Sulphur Springs News-Telegram
Nothing to write home about

Honorable mention

Neal White
Waxahachie Daily Light
535i

Judges comments: In this very tough field, "Katrina poet" stands.

Judge: Kathleen McElroy, New York Times
Comment and criticism

First Place

Carlina Villalpando
Kerrville Daily Times
The Book of Ruth

Second Place

Diana Fuentes
Laredo Morning Times
Arsenic and Old Lace

Honorable mention

Steve Alford
Lufkin Daily News
Latest installment on a vintage Indiana Jones tale

Judges comments: A compelling, personal look at the Bible's Book of Ruth and its meaning for women today -- all triggered by an upcoming theatrical production. This entry goes beyond the surface and makes the reader think.

Judge: Elizabeth Cook, Editor, Salisbury (N.C.) Post
Comment and criticism

CLASS AAA

First Place

Carl Hoover
Waco Tribune-Herald
Portfolio

Honorable mention

Stacy Horany Johnson
Wichita Falls
Times-Record News
Dull 'Wilderness ...
Comment and criticism

First Place
Gaile Robinson
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Portfolio

Second Place
Larry Ratliff
San Antonio Express-News
Movie reviews

Honorable mention
Andrew Dansby
Houston Chronicle
Greed and grit...A style like no other...
Rolling Stones

Judges comments: Opinion that is informative and entertaining and obviously well-researched. King Tut "the Mick Jagger of antiquities," gets well past the dry bones of the exhibit. This was clearly the best.

Judge: David Wells, Cincinnati Enquirer
Business reporting

First Place
Matthew Stoff
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Oil and gas exploration

Judges comments: A timely enterprise. The specific details on how the industry affects the county made this a good read.

Judge: Tim Rausch, Augusta Chronicle

Honorable mention
Andrew Goodridge
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Dollars and Sentences
First Place
Aaron Nelsen
Brownsville Herald
Bordering on Bad Times

Second Place
John Tompkins
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Troubled Waters

Honorable mention
Jayna Boyle
San Angelo Standard-Times
Dark Times

Honorable mention
Charlene Vandini
Harlingen Valley Morning Star
Phone cloning

Honorable mention
Matthew Watkins
Bryan-College Station Eagle
Layoffs brings Rockdale to its knees

Judges comments: 'I really liked this story because it was compact, as required in smaller papers, yet it was very well-sourced and covered several aspects of how the Mexican economy affects border towns. I admire the effort made to give it a macro-scope that went beyond the town borders. A very good effort.

Judge: Roger Hedges, assistant managing editor/business, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Judges comments: A strong story that shows in-depth reporting isn't dead or limited to the biggest newspapers. It was a timely idea on an important subject and was executed well.
First Place

Claudia Grisales
Austin American-Statesman
Co-op records: posh travel, no oversight

Second Place

L.A. Lorek
San Antonio Express-News
AT&T shift will hit a range of groups

Honorable mention

Jennifer Hiller
San Antonio Express-News
Henry Cisneros on the hot seat

Honorable mention

Andrea Jares, Maria Perotin
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
No Happy Home' for buyers

Judges comments: None given

Judge: Rodney Brooks, USA Today
Specialty reporting

First Place

Michele Marcotte
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Elderly-The Long Journey

Judges comments: The three pieces that I read from Michele Marcotte's six-part series on Alzheimer's, aging patients, and baby-boomer caregivers deserves this first place award for it's detailed anecdotal and scientific research. I found her pieces compelling, informative, and eloquently written. Her subjects were well chosen and their stories strongly convey the complexity of aging parents and the wide-reaching impact of Alzheimer's.

Judge: Laura Moran, Chicago Tribune

Honorable mention

Dave Rogers
Baytown Sun
Oak Island: stories from a wasteland
Specialty reporting
CLASS AA

First Place
Paul A. Anthony
San Angelo
Standard-Times
Judge's experience a match for massive FLDS case

Second Place
Kevin Sieff
Brownsville Herald
Behind the Red Line

Honorable mention
Fred Afflerbach
Temple Daily Telegram
Little River Erosion

Judges comments: Journalism committed here, in the best traditions of patience, perseverance, and public service. This was, no doubt, the biggest story in Texas in 2008, and Paul Anthony gave it the best coverage imaginable.

Judge: Frank Fellone, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Specialty reporting

First Place

Elliott Blackburn
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
Hope Deferred

Second Place

Denise Malan
Corpus Christi Caller-Times
Portfolio

Honorable mention

Kenneth Dean
Tyler Morning Telegraph
Police reporting

Judges comments: Excellent reporting. Writing is clear and riveting. These stories don't come along very often. Nice body of work.

Judge: Mark Hutchison, Daily Oklahoman
Specialty reporting
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Sig Christenson
San Antonio Express-News
Iraq War

Second Place
Wayne Slater
Dallas Morning News
Politics

Honorable mention
Jennifer Hiller
San Antonio Express-News
Business Writing

Judges comments: I applaud the Express-News for making a commitment to covering Iraq, and I applaud the quality of reporting. A clear, detailed, informative and interesting picture emerges of the war in Iraq. This is the best reporting I have read recently that helps me understanding how much progress has or hasn't been made in the war. The reporting also brings both Iraqi people and American soldiers to life.

Judge: Dennis Hetzel/Kentucky General Manager/The Cincinnati Enquirer
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Spot news photography

CLASS A

First Place

Christy Wooten
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel

Second Place

Christy Wooten
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel

Honorable mention

Christy Wooten
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel

Judges comments: Spot news sweep by the amazing Christy Wooten. Excellent job of hustling to the scene to get a vantage point, likely inside the line, to capture the action.

Judge: Chris Todd, Clarion (Miss.) Ledger
Spot news photography
CLASS AA

First Place
Kevin M. Cox
Galveston County Daily News
Women rescued from amusement ride

Second Place
Kevin M. Cox
Galveston County Daily News
Comeback Crawling

Honorable mention
Al Key
Denton Record-Chronicle
Source of strength

Judges comments: Galveston photographer Kevin Cox has demonstrated a strong understanding of the fundamentals of good photography. Both his first and second place images are compelling, capture emotion and are well framed. In what was a strong showing across Texas, his photography rises above and is worthy of the top prize.
Judge: Jim Lawitz, editor, Las Cruces (N.M.) Sun-News
Spot news photography

CLASS AAA

First Place
Nathan Lambrecht
McAllen Monitor
Defying Dolly

Second Place
Evan Lewis
Texarkana Gazette
Man removes storm debris

Honorable mention
Jaime R. Carrero
Tyler Morning Telegraph
Lindale Area Fire- Up in Flames

Judges comments: Good combination of the spot news and the human response to the spot news. The elegant framing with the floodwaters and the mom cradling her daughter and soggy son wading in front of the aqua house combines all the elements of good spot news photography.

Judge: Robin Daughtridge, Chicago Tribune
Spot news photography
CLASS AAAAA

First Place

Jay Janner
Austin American-Statesman
Seeking Solace

Second Place

Laura Skelding
Austin American-Statesman
Ike brings high water

Honorable mention

Jay Janner
Austin American-Statesman
Returning to Ruins

Tom Pennington
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Wall of Fire

Smiley N. Pool
Houston Chronicle
Left Standing

Judges comments: Jay Janner's wrenching photo of a 7-year-old child at the funeral of his twin brother being embraced and comforted by his dad is gripping. I think it's hard to win a news category with a funeral photo because they are general news events. It can be like taking pictures of a play. Whether you mean to or not, you can be intrusive in a way that dehumanizes mourners at their most vulnerable moments. Janner transcends those pitfalls. This photo helps the community mourn. It's respectful. It's full of content, complex emotional reactions, four different layers of very telling body language and splashes of sunlight that keep the eye moving and seeing more, more, more. I'm surprised it didn't run on A1.

Judge: John Sale/AME Visuals/The Commercial Appeal/Memphis
Feature photography
CLASS A

First Place
Christy Wooten
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
TakingADive, Kittenz

Second Place
Laura McKenzie
New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung
Sausage Maker

Honorable mention
Laura McKenzie
New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung
Blond Ponytail

Judges comments: Nature to Nurture is the winner due to the emotion evoking appeal of the main art.
Judge: Chris Todd, Clarion (Miss.) Ledger
Feature photography
CLASS AA

First Place
Dave McDermand
Bryan-College Station Eagle
Tunnel vision

Second Place
Ricardo Segovia
Laredo Morning Times
Bullfighting

Honorable mention
Jennifer Reynolds
Galveston County Daily News
Fantastic Fourth

Honorable mention
Dave McDermand
Bryan-College Station Eagle
What a view

Judges comments: A beautiful feature photo, it's graphic, uses light and timing well evokes mood.... nicely done.

Judge: Eric Strachan, Senior Managing Editor, Naples Daily News.
Feature photography
CLASS AAA

First Place
Michael Schumacher
Amarillo Globe-News
Portfolio

Second Place
Nellie Doneva
Abilene Reporter-News
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Alex Jones
McAllen Monitor
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Jerry Larson
Waco Tribune-Herald
Portfolio

Judges comments: This photo took patience and thought. The timing was perfect and had the added element of the ghostly person in the distance. Well done.

Judge: Dinah Rogers, New Orleans Times-Picayune
Feature photography
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Sonya Hebert
Dallas Morning News
Saying Goodbye to Mom

Second Place
John Davenport
San Antonio Express-News
Feature Photo 1

Honorable mention
James Nielsen
Houston Chronicle
Endeavour Launch

Judges comments: Powerful. Moving. Real. Very real. The photographer captures the reality of what is to come with a resignation on the part of the little girl even as she reaches out to stay as connected as possible. Terrific photo.

Judge: Neil Brown, St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times
Sports photography

**First Place**

**Gary Martin**  
Fort Bend Herald  
Gaining revenge

**Second Place**

**Gary Martin**  
Fort Bend Herald  
Paying the price

**Honorable mention**

**Ashley Landis**  
San Marcos Daily Record  
Secondary vertical photo of No. 11

**Judges comments:** Nice moment for a rundown play. Don’t usually see good photos under this situation. Great body language and reactions from both players.

Judge: Alfredo Araiza, Arizona Daily Star
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Sports photography
CLASS AA

First Place
Al Key
Denton Record-Chronicle
Gaining revenge

Second Place
Kevin Buehler
Odessa American
Paying the price

Honorable mention
Dan Dalstra
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Secondary vertical photo of No. 11

Honorable mention (2)
Kevin M. Cox
Galveston County Daily News
Getting Defensive and Dethroned

Judges comments: Sometimes great pictures are about emotion and body language. This picture has both, with a celebrating team and a dejected player on the wrong side the score.

Judge: Eric Strachan, Senior Managing Editor, Naples Daily News.
First Place

**Thomas Metthe**
Abilene Reporter News
West Texas Shootout

Second Place

**Thomas Metthe**
Abilene Reporter News
Badgers take over in 2nd half

Honorable mention

**Evan Lewis**
Texarkana Gazette
Soccer fight

**Judges comments**: Judges felt this photo read quickly.

Judge: Kent Johnson, Atlanta Journal Constitution
Sports photography
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Bahram Mark Sobhani
San Antonio Express-News
Sports Photo 4

Second Place
Smiley N. Pool
Houston Chronicle
Drop Off Huo Liang

Honorable mention
Ralph Barrera
Austin American-Statesman
8 and 0 brother

Judges comments: None given.
Judge: Neil Brown, St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times
Photojournalism
CLASS A

First Place
Christy Wooten
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Ivan, Aftermath

Second Place
Neal White
Waxahachie Daily Light
Honor Flight

Honorable mention
Anita Miller, Ashley Landis
San Marcos Daily Record
Ivan, Aftermath

Judges comments: Nice work on Ike's Aftermath. Consistently good composition with emphasis on the lead photo. Using the tree to frame the foreground with workers in the background took some thought.

Judge: Angela Pittenger and Alfredo Araiza, Arizona Daily Star
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Photojournalism
CLASS AA

First Place
Joshua Scheide
Odessa American
Growing up too soon

Second Place
Kevin M. Cox,
Jennifer Reynolds
Galveston County Daily News
Comeback Crawling

Honorable mention
Brian Connelly, Cynthia Esparza,
Patrick Dove
San Angelo Standard-Times
Compound raided - A special report

Honorable mention
Barron Ludlum
Denton Record-Chronicle
Pops Idol

Judges comments: Excellent job of carrying readers through revealing moments without treating subjects like afterthoughts. A sensitive but relevant topic that was thoughtfully covered well.
Judge: Rod Richardson, Managing Editor, The Times (Shreveport, La.)
First Place

Jacob Croft Botter,
Kevin Green
Longview News-Journal
Signs of faith

Second Place

Nathan Lambrecht
McAllen Monitor
Let It Ride

Judges comments: Great concept, well executed, showing elements of your community in a thematic photo essay.

Judge: Kent Johnson, Atlanta Journal Constitution

Honorable mention

Nathan Lambrecht
McAllen Monitor
The New Dogs
First Place
Sonya Hebert
Dallas Morning News
At the Edge of Life

Second Place
Laura Skelding, Jay Janner, Kelly West, Deborah Cannon, Rodolfo Gonzalez
Austin American-Statesman
Hurricane Ike Team Coverage

Honorable mention
Tom Fox
Dallas Morning News
Beijing Olympics

Honorable mention
Smiley N. Pool
Houston Chronicle
Hurricane Ike

Judges comments: Great access to a very emotional topic. Black and white images brought the emotion through even clearer. Great shot of casket going toward the light.

Judge: Tom Gilbert, Tulsa (Okla.) World
Headlines
CLASS A

First Place
Kendal Rogers
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Portfolio

Second Place
Sean McCrory
New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Bob Haenel
Fort Bend Herald
Portfolio

Judges comments: Headlines are creative and attention-getting. Heds accurately convey tone of stories. Quickly and effectively communicate gist of stories to readers. Coordinate well with art elements.

Judge: Brandye Alexander, (Former) news editor, The (Stockton, Calif.) Record
First Place

Stacy Faison
Lufkin Daily News
Portfolio

Second Place

Josh Owens
Denton Record-Chronicle
Portfolio

Honorable mention

Ralph Dice
Temple Daily Telegram
Portfolio

Judges comments: Obviously, you've got a great skill for writing clever headlines. ... Your snickers headline was the single best headline in the 2A group, and your ability to write great headlines from the police blotter (which often were little more than a headline themselves) was remarkable. There's little doubt in my mind that you deserve first place in this category.

Judge: George Tanner, Assistant News Editor, Rocky Mountain News
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Headlines
CLASS AAA

First Place
Pedro Oliva
McAllen Monitor
Portfolio

Second Place
Will Leschper
Corpus Christi Caller-Times
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Erin Keck
Waco Tribune-Herald
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Darren Nielsen
Abilene Reporter News
Portfolio

Judges comments: In each of Oliva’s work samples, all the display-type elements were complementary and appropriate to the subject.

Judge: Kent Johnson, Atlanta Journal Constitution
Headlines
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Dan Pritchett
Houston Chronicle
Portfolio

Second Place
Steve Schaeffer
Houston Chronicle
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Stephanie Milner
Houston Chronicle
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Mark Dooley
San Antonio Express-News
Portfolio

Judges comments: “GARBANZO JOURNALISM” sealed the deal. "... through the tiers" was a fine way to carry the idea through the deck head. Very nice work.

Judge: George Tanner, Assistant News Editor, Rocky Mountain News
News page design, individual

First Place
Kendal Rogers
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Portfolio

Second Place
Chris Lyons
Seguin Gazette-Enterprise
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Debi Ryan
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Portfolio

Judges comments: Very clean but creative designs. Art elements are attention-getting and given good play. Headlines work well with images. Pages are well-organized and effectively communicate the news of the day. All-text center packages are risky, but the “Change” CP is well-executed and a nice departure from traditional headline-photo-story layouts.

Judge: Brandye Alexander, (Former) news editor, The (Stockton, Calif.) Record
News page design, individual
CLASS AA

First Place
Michael Morris
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Portfolio

Second Place
Brian Grant
Galveston County Daily News
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Albert Saldana
Harlingen Valley Morning Star
Portfolio

Judges comments: These pages are well organized and well executed. The solid structure gives them a light feel not often seen in papers this size. The story count/amount of information is high, but the pages do not feel overwhelmed. This designer has a good feel for the content, showing a more traditional approach for harder news and a lighter touch for feature packages. The "Live, Love. Learn" package is a great example. The typography, photo play and white space sets it off nicely, yet still ties it into the rest of the page. These pages accomplish the goal of any good designer, communicate an appropriate visual message that matches the tone of the stories. Very solid command of the design and how that helps enhance the paper's message.

Judge: Brian Clark, Assistant Design Director, Rocky Mountain News
Judge: Jason Morris, Chicago Tribune

Judges comments: These three pages show that the designer has a sense of the news and how to use type and art. Randy Ferguson seems to have absorbed the centerpiece stories, reflected their meanings and balanced their displays with the news of the day. His clean, engaging designs also seemed to help reinforce the paper's redesign and reorganization of the front page. His readers and bosses should thank him.
News page design, individual
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Scott Ladd
Austin American-Statesman
Portfolio

Second Place
Jesus Maldonado
Houston Chronicle
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Chris Hanna
Austin American-Statesman
Portfolio

Judges comments: 'Lots of information made it onto these pages, but the designer found a way to package it so it didn’t overwhelm the page. The oil drilling centerpiece merges the art and text elements with overlapping boxes, and stands out because of the information offered. The coverage of Ike gives much the same detail, but plays to coverage strengths, namely the photo of the destruction. The Texas-Oklahoma package has an energy to it thanks to the photos and headline placement, but the page still manages to work in other issues using the shaded boxes to set them off -- while providing a pillar-like support for the main photo package.

Judge: Jeff Harkness, Assistant News Editor, The Cincinnati Enquirer
Feature page design, individual
CLASS A

First Place
Debi Ryan
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Portfolio

Second Place
Debi Ryan
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Debi Ryan
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Portfolio

Judges comments: 'The "Starting early" page stands out because of its reliance on solid design. There are few design "tricks" that draw attention to themselves but instead techniques that help the meaning of the story come through. The typography in the headline and text is uncomplicated and integrated well with the visuals; each is allowed the room that's needed to provide a clean, classic presentation. "The road ahead" is also one of the best pages in the competition.
Judge: Joe Hudson, Denver Post
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

**Feature page design, individual**

**CLASS AA**

**First Place**

**Nikina Roberts**  
San Angelo Standard-Times  
Portfolio

**Second Place**

**Billie Dorman**  
Galveston County Daily News  
Portfolio

**Honorable mention**

**Maria Ponce-Martinez**  
Al Dia  
Portfolio

**Judges comments:** This is a very fun set of pages that truly stand apart from the field. This designer does a lot with a little, and ends up with a very sophisticated look. The designs convey a sense of whimsy and appear to be breaking a lot of the rules, but underneath you realize there is a strict adherence to the fundamental rules of good design. The designer creates a wonderful blend of color and graphic elements and avoids the urge to overdo it. In short, great color, clean and crisp typography and strong graphic imagery.

Judge: Brian Clark, Assistant Design Director, Rocky Mountain News
Feature page design, individual

CLASS AAA

First Place
Bruno Garcia
McAllen Monitor
Portfolio

Second Place
Joaquin Herrera
210SA
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Brandon Garcia
McAllen Monitor
Portfolio

Honorable mention
Joe Landin
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
Portfolio

Judges comments: Wow. Striking design and nice balance of words and photos. All of this entrant's designs were great, but this one really stood out.

Judge: Michelle Smith, Kansas City Star
Feature page design, individual

First Place

Jamie Huckaby
Dallas Morning News
Portfolio

Second Place

Sharon Kilday
Dallas Morning News
Portfolio

Honorable mention

Mike Sutter
Austin American-Statesman
Portfolio

Honorable mention

Lisa Veigel
Dallas Morning News
Portfolio

Judges comments: 'This page stops you -- it's a movie review that doesn't rely on studio handout art for big impact, instead using an illustration stripped down to its simplest form, working together with headline to get a message across. Great way to approach a design that could easily have been done by formula, but instead takes it beyond and is true to the theme.

Judge: Kathy Bogan, Design Director, Rocky Mountain News
Team page design

CLASS A

No award given
Team page design

First Place
Miguel Collis, Jamie Chase
Brownsville Herald
Voters Guide, Spring Break Guide

Second Place
Christian Schmidt, Chris Hawkes
Bryan-College Station Eagle
Heavy local news day

Honorable mention
Connie Harshman, Gary Carter, Edward Southerland, Chris Jennings
Sherman/Denison Herald Democrat
Henry Claret’s letter

Honorable mention
Stefanie Charles, Tanya Ramirez, Julie Daffern, Joe Rutland, Diana Fuentes
Laredo Morning Times
It’s not a dream

Honorable mention
Ana Martinez and Chris Hawkes
Bryan-College Station Eagle
Breaking news

Judges comments: Incredibly well-packed with information without being overpowering. Something for everyone. Good use of color and breakout boxes.
Judge: Kelly Adams, Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal
Team page design
CLASS AAA

First Place
Robert Zavala,
Gabe Semenza,
Kimiko Fieg, Chris Cobler,
Frank Tilley
Victoria Advocate
Fatal Funnel (Double Truck)

Second Place
Oscar Gonzalez Jr.,
Bruno Garcia,
Juan Luevano,
Andy Comer
McAllen Monitor
Yes, He Did!

Honorable mention
Jen Meehan, Todd Yates,
Jorge Vidrio, Stephanie Jordan,
Allison Ehrlich
Corpus Christi Caller-Times

Judges comments: Of all the entries for team pages, this showed the most teamwork. It’s clear that artists, designers, editors and reporters had to work together to pull all the elements together—and to pull off the vision for the artistic look.

Judge: Jason Morris, Chicago Tribune
Team page design
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Michael Hogue, Evan Grant, Jason Dugger
Dallas Morning News
Welcome to Texas

Second Place
Cynthia Wahl, Ross Hailey, Cathy Frisinger, Sarah Brubaker, Jeremy Cannon
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Indulge

Honorable mention
Kari Crane, Michael Currie, Steve Wilson
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Election 2008

Honorable mention
Nadya Shakoor, Mara Davenport, Buster Dean
Houston Chronicle
Year of the Rat, Feb. 2, 2008

Judges comments: This big old-fashioned map sprinkled with icons, text and drawings is the clear winner. The concept is creative - apply the state of the Rangers baseball team at mid-season to the State of Texas map and cleverly look through a Ranger lens at landmarks across the state. Teamwork is evident from the idea stage, through, drawing and completion. On the day this was published, I bet many readers spent more time devouring this page than all of the newspaper's section fronts combined.

Judge: John Sale/AME Visuals/The Commercial Appeal/Memphis
Infographics

First Place

Daniel Walker
Greenville Herald Banner
Portfolio

Judges comments: None given.

Judge: Joe Hudson, Denver Post
First Place

Miguel Collis
Brownsville Herald
Natural Habitat

Second Place

Ryan Henry
Brownsville Herald
Voters Wanted

Honorable mention

Rayanne Schmid
Kerrville Daily Times
Coming to theaters

Honorable mention

Ryan Henry
Brownsville Herald
A lot hangs on every word

Judges comments: This one stands out for two things: clarity and clean design that plays off the story theme well without being overwhelming. The color palate is just right -- doesn't shout green but does get the point across. The fact box on the left rail is clear in its typography and writing. And there's nothing better than a dominant image to focus your eyes long enough to take in all of the surrounding "habitat." Thanks for not overdoing it.

Judge: Donna Reed, Media General, Inc.
First Place

Robert Zavala
Victoria Advocate
Feds Probe Crash

Second Place

None given

Honorable mention

Scott Fagner
Waco Tribune-Herald
Mapping the death toll

Judges comments: The Victoria entries stood out for their clear design and intuitive narrative. The use of colors was appropriate without being distracting.

Judge: Doris Truong, Washington Post
First Place

Alberto Cuadra
Houston Chronicle
50 years of exploration

Second Place

Michael Hogue,
Jim Landers
Dallas Morning News
Foot Notes

Honorable mention

Alberto Cuadra, Jay Carr
Houston Chronicle
A look inside the new Co-Cathedral

Honorable mention

Robert Calzada, Mary Coppinger,
Linda Scott, Don Tate II, Roberto
Villalpando
Austin American-Statesman
Staff entry

Judges comments: Love the arrangement of information "orbiting" around the NASA logo. Lots of layers and connections to be made between administrations, technological advances and specific missions. The photos of each event add depth and the fun of looking at a scrapbook.

Judge: Kathy Bogan, Design Director, Rocky Mountain News
Best blog
CLASS A

No award given
Best blog
CLASS AA

First Place

Jeff Andrews, Adam Boedeker
Denton Record-Chronicle
“High Schools Blog”

Second Place

Denise Hoepfner
Lufkin Daily News
“Charm blog”

Honorable Mention

The Facts staff
“Hurricane Ike blog”

Judges comments: None given.

Judge: Barry Arthur, Arkansas Press Democrat
Best blog

CLASS AAA

First Place

J.B. Smith
Waco Herald-Tribune
Our Man Downtown

Second Place
210SA staff
210 SA
Alamode Blog

Honorable Mention
William Kerns
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal

J.B. Smith
Waco Herald-Tribune
Our Man Downtown

210SA staff
210 SA
Alamode Blog

Wendy Gragg
Waco Herald-Tribune

Gabe Semanza
Victoria Advocate

Jennifer Lloyd, Jennifer McInnis, Emily Messer
210 SA

Judges comments: Nice design; good bio pic. Waco seems to be home to several great, personable writers and editors who let them express themselves in their blogs. JB paints a great pictures, and comes up with phrases his readers will remember (comeuppance from poultry? That's going to stick with me). I really got a sense of the city as well. Great, great use of photos.

Judge: Jennifer Ward, The Fresno Bee
Best blog

CLASS AAAAA

First Place

Dwight Silverman
Houston Chronicle
“Tech blog”

Second Place

Tara Trower
Austin American-Statesman
“Mama Drama”

Honorable Mention

None awarded

Judges comments: None given.

Judge: Jeff Lindsey, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Best online package
CLASS A

First Place
Michele Marcotte
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel

Second Place
Beth Foley
Palestine Herald-Press
Renovation collection

Honorable Mention
Dave Rogers
Baytown Sun
Oak Island: Stories from a wasteland

Judges comments: None given
Judge: Will Sullivan, St. Louis Post-Dispatch
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Best online package

CLASS AA

First Place

Staff

Killeen Daily Herald

Eyes on Crime

Second Place

PJ Brown, Dan Dalstra, John Lowman

Brazosport (Clute) Facts

Myla's Way July 6

Honorable mention

Brad Doherty, Laura Tillman

Brownsville Herald

Rubio House - Inside the home where three babies were killed

Honorable mention

Staff

Killeen Daily Herald

Hood Holiday Howdys

Judges comments: This was not only the best-designed, it also was the most complete. Smartly packaged public service project. Navigation and interactivity both excellent. Kudos.

Judge: John Boogert, Online Editor, Rocky Mountain News
Best online package

CLASS AAA

First Place
Staff
Corpus Christi
Caller-Times
Hurricane Ike

Second Place
T.C. Baker, Gabe Semenza,
Bill Clough, Julie Zavala,
Robert Zavala
Victoria Advocate
Fatal Funnel

Honorable mention
Staff
Amarillo Globe-News
Pigskin Review

Judges comments: Fantastic coverage of a disastrous event in their backyard. Deep multimedia and quick reporting throughout the event raise this above all other packages to the first prize.

Judge: Will Sullivan, St. Louis Post-Dispatch
Best online package
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Staff
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Killer package

Second Place
Lee Hancock,
Sonya N. Hebert
Dallas Morning News
Edge of Life

Honorable Mention
Laura Weisman
Houston Chronicle
Houston Grows.com

Honorable Mention
Staff
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Tony Hawk package

Judges comments: Excellent work, wonderful use of wide array of online tools. Compelling subject, easy to navigate. Great job!

Judge: John Boogert, Online Editor, Rocky Mountain News
Best photo gallery

CLASS A

No award given
Best photo gallery

First Place
Sarah Moore Kuschell
Killeen Daily Herald
Family mourns their fallen hero

Second Place
Dan Dalstra
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Way family during therapy

Honorable mention
G. Daniel Lopez
Brownsville Herald
The trade of a taxidermist

Honorable mention
Patrick Dove
San Angelo Standard-Times
From the sidelines

Judges comments: A military funeral is not such a rare event these days, but this moving gallery of photos is set apart by the focus on the faces. The range of emotions from sadness to pride is shown on the faces of family, mourners and honor guard. A very strong group of individual images that make a cohesive whole.

Judge: Gary Kiefer, Managing Editor online, Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch
Best photo gallery
CLASS AAA

First Place
Ronald W. Erdrich
Abilene Reporter News
Kin and Cancer

Second Place
Adam Wratten
McAllen Monitor
Weslaco Bullriders

Honorable mention
Adam Wratten
McAllen Monitor
Costumes at the Omnicon Anime and Video Game Convention

Judges comments: Kin and Cancer demonstrates effective storytelling using consistently well-composed and compelling still photographs. The photographer captures the life elements and emotion of his father and family as they endure the experience together.

Judge: Ellyn Angelotti, Poynter Institute
Best photo gallery
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Staff
Houston Chronicle
Best of Ike Photos

Second Place
Laura Skelding, Jay Janner, Deborah Cannon, Rodolfo Gonzalez
Austin American-Statesman
Hurricane Ike

Honorable mention
Smiley Pool
Houston Chronicle
Photos from Beijing

Judges comments: This is an outstanding collection of images from before, during and after the hurricane. The sweeping storm scenes are dramatic, but the close-up focus on the people who were affected made this gallery the winner.

Judge: Gary Kiefer, Managing Editor online, Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch
Spanish-language awards
News

First Place

**Jorge Luis Sierra**
La Voz de Houston
Hispanos, n desventaja para recuperarse de desastre de Ike

Second Place

**Constanza Morales**
La Estrella (Dallas-Fort Worth)
'Defienden beneficios de educación bilingüe

Honorable mention

**Juan Carlos Sánchez**
El Nuevo Heraldo (Brownsville)
Busca Patria
First Place

Jorge Luis Sierra
La Voz
Radigrafía del votante hispano de Houston

Second Place

Carolina Amengual
La Voz
Gracias con el Corazón

Honorable mention

Patricia López y Aurora Orozco
La Frontera
Instrumentos de Tortura
First Place
Edgar Chrnko Salas
La Frontera
¿Qué? Tecos es superlíder

Second Place
Juan Carlos Sánchez
El Nuevo Heraldo
La historia perfecta

Honorable mention
Edgar Chrnko Salas
La Frontera
Tigres enjaulados
First Place
Alfredo Carbajal-Madrid
Al Día
Votantes tienen una cita con la historia

Second Place
Héctor Pina
La Voz
Las Madres Adolescentes: Un reto que debemos atender

Honorable mention
Germán Fernández-Moores
La Voz
Una señal de alerta para los Juegos Olímpicos
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Headlines

First Place

Zulema Báez
El Nuevo Heraldo
'Mudo Testigo'

Second Place

Adan Guerrero
La Frontera
Ruta de Muerte

Honorable mention

Zulema Báez
El Nuevo Heraldo
Cae la 'lana'
Excellence in Journalism
Star reporter of the year
CLASS A

First Place
Chris Cobb
New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung

Judges comments: The way Cobb grabs the reader in the lede shows how he's thought through the story before he begins to write. With his diverse topics, thorough reporting and easy writing style, he serves the reader ... a goal for any journalist. Good job.

Judge: Allison Floyd, Athens (Ga.) Banner-Herald
Star reporter of the year

CLASS AA

First Place
Donna Fielder
Denton
Record-Chronicle

Judges comments: Very good investigative work that obviously had an impact. Donna Fielder's stories were detailed and thorough, showing a high level of research and a willingness to use other-than-official sources. She adroitly placed descriptive narrative, adding texture to the story without slowing it down and without overwriting it. I had a clear idea of who the police officer was, not whether he killed his wife, but a textured portrait and questions that needed to be raised about his wife's death. The greatest achievement for a reporter is to see direct action based on reporting in the Lozano case. Further Fielder's other articles prove that she is a talented writer and reporter who incorporates the most desirable journalistic skills. It's good that you're not naming a second place finisher. Our judges liked several of the other entries after Ms. Fielder. The entries by Paul Anthony, Rhiannon Meyers, Gary Long and John Tompkins all scored well.

Judge: Carl Redman, executive editor, and staff of the Baton Rouge (La.) Advocate
Judge: Todd Stone, St. Louis Post-Dispatch
Star reporter of the year
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Emily Ramshaw
Dallas Morning News

Judges comments: Emily Ramshaw is a classic "star reporter." Her stories are diverse, but always hard-hitting and impactful. Whether exposing the bureaucratic morass after a hurricane, using public records to reveal mistreatment in psychiatric hospitals or group homes for the disabled, or blowing the whistle on wasteful spending, her nose for news is unerring. She zeroes in, digs and, almost inevitably, hits paydirt. A storyteller and a watchdog with a passion for society's forgotten people, Ramshaw is the sort of reporter every editor loves, every newspaper relies on, and every community needs.

Judge: Jack McElroy, editor, Knoxville News-Sentinel
Star photojournalist of the year
CLASS A

First Place
Christy Wooten
Nacogdoches
Daily Sentinel

Judges comments: 'I cannot remember the last time I saw 10 photographs that nailed the technical, the narrative and the intangible in each shot. Even photos that should be a cliche, like the boys jumping in the lake, showed technical skill with a human touch. But the fencers, the cops by the burning car, the baby's hand ... all I can say is wow. These aren't just flashy for art's sake; they are visual journalism at its best.

Judge: Kathleen McElroy, New York Times
Star photojournalist of the year

CLASS AA

First Place
Stuart Villanueva
Bryan-College Station Eagle

Judges comments: Excellent lighting, unusual vantage points and approaches make this the winning Star Photojournalist entry. Shots like the prostitute, the car wreck and the church moving set up the story, but facial expressions force the reader to go to the story for more.

Judge: Dan Herrera, Managing Editor, Albuquerque Journal
Star photojournalist of the year

CLASS AAA

First Place

Michael Zamora
Corpus Christi
Caller-Times

Judges comments: Zamora’s eye for design and composition helped contribute to several diverse and unique photographs. I particularly liked the thought and framing on the two couples on the seawall. A nice juxtaposition. His attention to light is also noticeable in this selection of images. Zamora had two solid sports action shots as well as a nice sports feature moment at the conclusion of a football game. I think that what edged Zamora over the other entrants was the way he choose subtle moments to press the shutter. The investigator leaning over the cones and exhaling. The cadet in a line of cadets with a quick glance with her eyes to her right. The motorcycle club member with head down and hand on face. These very subtle elements show Zamora is paying close attention and getting more out of a situation. These are often typical, everyday assignments and Zamora shows a skill for turning the typical scene into something a little more with his choice of moments.

Judge: Mike Yoder, chief photographer, Lawrence (Kan.) Journal-World
Star photojournalist of the year
CLASS AAAAA

Judges comments: 'This portfolio had the most consistently powerful single images and the best variety of assignments, demonstrating a wide range of skills from making news aerials to covering Olympic sports to portraiture. There are clean images and some images that reveal layers of emotion. There is really only one image that left me wondering why it was included, so the portfolio stands as the strongest for 11 images.

Judge: Geri Migielicz/Director of Photography/San Jose Mercury News
Star designer of the year
CLASS A

First Place
Debi Ryan
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel

Judges comments: 'Ms. Ryan shows here an ability to handle news and feature pages with equal amounts of skill and creativity. The "Aftermath" cover has the potential to be a very busy one, with four stories and four photos, yet I thought it was handled well. I also liked the use of the barbed wire on the prison story. The features layouts seemed to flow smoothly without becoming too busy.

Judge: Kevin Hecteman, The Record (Stockton, Calif.)
First Place

M. Clare Haefner
Killeen Daily Herald

Judges comments: Very newsy. I loved the use of color, typography and photographs. I especially liked the pages from the Fort Hood Herald -- seeing the different front pages around the edges was a treat.

Judge: Kelly Adams, The Topeka Capital-Journal
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Star designer of the year
CLASS AAA

First Place
Joaquin Herrera
210 SA


Judge: Rachel Conger, Albuquerque Journal
Star designer of the year
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Scott Ladd
Austin American-Statesman

Judges comments: This portfolio stood out from a very strong field in terms of packaging, attention to detail and visual appeal. Designs were sophisticated and never forced. The pages were well packaged without being formulaic. Centerpiece efforts were enticing and provided balance and a strong sense of community. Delivered to readers was wonderfully vibrant personality. Well done!

Judge: Ken Amos, Design Director, Cincinnati Enquirer
Star investigative report of the year
CLASS A

First Place
Matthew Stoff
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel

Judges comments: Stories do a good job of educating readers about a complicated subject.

Judge: Stan Tiner, Editor, The Biloxi (Miss.) Sun Herald
Star investigative report of the year

CLASS AA

First Place
Jessica Savage
Lufkin Daily News
Davita Series

Second Place
Staff
Killeen Daily Herald
Eyes on Crime

Honorable mention
John Tompkins,
John Lowman
Brazoport (Clute) Facts
Judge indicted, investigated, resigns

Judges comments: This excellent series shows the value of what can be done through dogged pursuit of a story and not giving up on public records requests. The newspaper served the community well in this controversy by staying on top of the ongoing coverage while pushing hard for information from public agencies that would shed light on what they knew about the problems with this facility. It was that coverage that fully enlightened the community about the dialysis center. Well done.

Judge: John Moore, Managing Editor, Ventura (Calif.) County Star.
Star investigative report of the year
CLASS AAA

First Place
J.B. Smith
Waco Herald-Tribune
Broken Promise Land

Second Place
Staff
Victoria Advocate
Fatal Funnel

Honorable mention
Brenda Bernet
Amarillo Globe-News
Paid to Leave

Judges comments: Good investigative journalism is about stories that otherwise would not be told. That's a big reason why first place goes to the series titled Broken Promise Land in the Waco Tribune-Herald. If not reporter J.B. Smith, you would have stop the stories of Eloy Francisco and the other immigrants who died in the Arizona desert in their attempts to find a better life in this country? Smith showed a dogged determination and much skill in telling those stories. I was enriched by reading them.

Judge: Thomas Cole, Albuquerque Journal
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Star investigative report of the year

First Place
Darren Barbee,
Anthony Spangler,
Yamil Berard
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
John Peter Smith Hospital

Second Place
Steve McGonigle,
Jennifer Emily
Dallas Morning News
A Blind Faith in Eyewitnesses

Honorable mention
Susan Carroll
'Houston Chronicle
Elusive Justice

Honorable mention
Todd Bensman
San Antonio Express-News
Playground Safety

Judges comments: This series kept on giving. Each day delivered a new revelation about problems at JPS Health System, leading to an overhaul of how the hospital is run and care is delivered. The stories define public watchdog journalism at its best. Well done.
Judge: Eric Brown, city editor, Rocky Mountain News
Star breaking news report of the year

First Place
'Michele Marcotte, Christy Wooten, Matthew Stoff
Tyesha Boudreaux
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Ike's Aftermath

Honorable mention
Tyesha Boudreaux, Christy Wooten
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Body discovered in trunk

Judges comments: Comprehensive coverage of Hurricane Ike showed this newspaper's ability to serve its community in a crisis while also telling the human side. Compelling design. Good to see multi-media components included.

Judge: Ken Tingley, The Post-Star
Star breaking news report of the year

CLASS AA

First Place

Staff
Galveston County Daily News
Hurricane Ike

Second Place

Staff
San Angelo Standard Times
Compound raided

Honorable mention

Staff
Sherman/Denison
Herald Democrat
Bus tragedy

Judges comments: The paper’s compelling coverage of Hurricane Ike, both in words and pictures, was incredible. Staffers were able to both inform readers of the area’s condition, but also tell the stories of people coping with the devastation. The staff’s Herculean effort to publish at a time when their readers needed them most also should be lauded.

Judge: Kevin Richardson, Business Editor, Jackson (Miss.) Clarion Ledger
Star breaking news report of the year

CLASS AAA

First Place

Staff
Victoria Advocate
It Was Mass Chaos

Second Place

Staff
McAllen Monitor
Defying Dolly

Honorable mention

Staff
Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
Not in 100 Years

Judges comments: The writing is exceptional and the sidebar items and photography make for an incredible package. Considering the complete unexpected nature of the event, the staff showed great resilience.

Judge: Ed Johnson, Albuquerque Journal
Star breaking news report of the year

First Place
Staff
Houston Chronicle
Hurricane Ike, Sept. 14, 2008 edition

Second Place
Staff
San Antonio Express-News
AT&T heads to Dallas

Honorable mention
Staff
Houston Chronicle
Sherman Bus Crash

Judges comments: Excellent writing, sets the scene vividly and pointedly delivers the news about the violations by the bus company.

Judge: Bob Stover, Florida Today
College Newspapers of the year
Newspaper of the year

First Place
The Shorthorn
University of Texas, Arlington

Second Place
Daily Skiff
Texas Christian University

Honorable mention
The Lariat
Baylor University

Honorable mention
The Daily Toreador
Texas Tech University

Judges comments: The Shorthorn fires on all cylinders. It balances hard and soft news, profiles and features, entertainment and opinion, with spacious presentations that showcase strong photojournalism, portraiture and illustrations. Its editors pay attention to the details in design, typography and white space. Thus its strong content comes shining through..

Judge: Ron Johnson, past president, College Media advisers; director, Indiana University Student Media
Newspaper of the year NON-DAILY

First Place
The Talon
University of Texas at Tyler

Second Place
The Flare
Kilgore College

Honorable mention
University Press
Lamar University

Judges comments: The Talon reflected the best news judgment with strong front pages. ... Page 1 package on student who escaped from Sierra Leone was excellent. Pulse page definitely a plus. The spider bite package also was very informative. Strong editorial pages were also a plus. Photography was generally strong.

Judge: Robert Adams, journalism director, Western Kentucky University
Excellence in Journalism
AP staffers of the year
First Place
Jay Root
Austin

Judges comments: Root's entry stands out for displaying a clear commitment to watchdog journalism, the type that can lead to demands for greater transparency and accountability in government. It demonstrates both a knack for finding information that certain public officials would prefer to keep hidden - such as lawmakers' financial stake in a company doing business with the state, and details of a powerful state leader's personal fortune - and a willingness to confront those politicians directly with the findings.

Work such as Root's allows readers to make smarter choices and sometimes even persuades government officials to take a closer look at how they are policing themselves. At the very least, it reminds them that they are being watched.

Judge: Chuck Melvin, Assistant managing editor/business, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
2009 Texas APME/Headliners Foundation Awards

Photography

First Place
Matt Slocum

Second Place
Eric Gay

Honorable mention
LM Otero

Judges comments: None given.

Judge: Nick Lisi, director of photography, Syracuse (N.Y.) Post-Standard,
Community service
CLASS A

First Place
Staff
Seguin Gazette Enterprise
Hurricane Ike coverage

Second Place
Staff
Marshall News Messenger
Eyes on Crime

Honorable mention
Staff
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Davita series

Judges comments: The Gazette Enterprise brought to light the potential dangers of the move and called attention to the issue, culminating in an end to the story that ultimately benefited the public.
Judge: Katherine Lee, Tuscaloosa News
Community service
CLASS AA

First Place
Staff
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Hurricane Ike coverage

Second Place
Natalie T. Hull, Don Bolding, Mason Canales, Justin Cox, Victor O'Brien, Kevin M. Smith, Joshua Winata, Tyrell Johnson, M. Clare Haefner, Steve Gietz, Sarah Moore Kuschell, David Morris
Killeen Daily Herald
Eyes on Crime

Honorable mention
Rick Smith
San Angelo Standard-Times
Hope for the holidays

Honorable mention
Jessica Savage,
Andy Adams
Lufkin Daily News
Davita series

Judges comments: Many news organizations were sent reeling by Hurricane Ike. The Facts, which serves Brazoria County, fought its way through the storm and its aftermath with the intelligence, grit and grace of much larger organizations, and provided a great service to its.

Judge: Rex Smith, Times-Union
Community service

First Place
Rubi Reyes,
Editorial Board
Victoria Advocate
Voter's University of Houston
Victoria Expansion

Second Place
J. B. Smith, Cindy V. Culp,
Rowland Nethaway, Tommy
Witherspoon, Bill Whitaker
Waco Tribune-Herald
Texas Ranger Museum bones

Honorable mention
Staff
Abilene Reporter News
Voter's Guide Election 08

Judges comments: As the Victoria Advocate itself noted, this was a decision that could "change the face of Victoria." At issue was the expansion of the University of Houston-Victoria from a two- to four-year institution. The newspaper, in simple and passionate language, championed this cause in its editorials. In the best tradition of community service, it provided that drumbeat of coverage that kept the issue out front for the public -- and decision-makers -- to see.

Judge: Carole Tarrant, The Roanoke (Va.) Times
Community service
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Darren Barbee,
Anthony Spangler,
Yamil Berard
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
John Peter Smith Health System Fort Worth

Second Place
Steve McGonigle,
Jennifer Emily
Dallas Morning News
A Blind Faith in Eyewitnesses

Second Place
Claudia Grisales
Austin American-Statesman
Pedernales Electric Co-op

Honorable mention
Karisa King, John Tedesco,
Jaime Castillo
San Antonio Express-News
Cozy Contracts

Judges comments: Among very strong competition, this series and the actions it prompted fought to the top of the stack. Taxpayer-funded hospitals, like public utilities, began in more idealistic times as services to improve lives and communities. Too often, as in the case of Tarrant County's hospital, they become insider fiefdoms that serve only a few. It took a newspaper's dedication to truth to learn why a cash-rich public hospital performed so poorly. This series performed a major public service. It showed why information about public health services should be public record. It brought to light a system that was failing in its tax-funded mission while chasing more affluent patients. And it produced positive change benefiting all taxpayers.

Judge: Sonny Albarado, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Team effort

CLASS A

First Place
Matthew Stoff, Christy Wooten, Michele Marcotte, Tyesha Boudreaux, Andrew Goodridge, Debi Ryan, Kendal Rogers, Keith Lansdale
Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel
Hurricane Ike

Second Place
Nicole D. Perez, Ofelia Garcia Hunter, Mauricio Julian Cuellar Jr., Christopher Maher
Alice Echo-News Journal
March Primary alleged misconduct

Honorable Mention
Staff
Orange Leader
Hurricane Ike

Honorable Mention
Staff
Herald-Banner, Greenville
Meth Series

Judges comments: ’I was very impressed with the level of Hurricane Ike coverage from the Daily Sentinel. One of my favorite touches was the Evacuee Guide from the Sept. 12 edition -- I have to think that this information came in very handy for people who may have been new to town and were there under less-than-ideal circumstances. I also took note of the fact that the online folks had video to supplement the print and online stories, as well as large photo galleries from a staff photographer who traveled to the coastal areas. Excellent work all around.
Judge: Kevin Hecteman, The Record (Stockton, Calif.)
First Place
Natalie T. Hull, Don Bolding, Mason Canales, Justin Cox, Victor O'Brien, Kevin M. Smith, Joshua Winata, Tyrell Johnson, M. Clare Haefner, Steve Gietz, Sarah Moore Kuschell, David Morris
Killeen Daily Herald
Eyes on Crime

Second Place
Staff
Bryan-College Station Eagle
Ike's aftermath far from home

Honorable mention
Staff
San Angelo Standard-Times
 Officials on FLDS

Honorable mention
Staff
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Hurricane Ike coverage

Judges comments: Great graphics; love the faces of people. Wonderful to do in-depth work on a news topic. Strong, solid writing and headlines. Thoughtful story selection/development.

Judge: Julie Shirley, Executive Editor, Bellingham (Wash.) Herald
Team effort
CLASS AAA

First Place
Gabe Semenza, Bill Clough, Julie Zavala, Robert Zavala, Frank Tiley, T.C. Baker, Kimiko Fieg, Chelsea Delaney, Sarah Lim, Christina Burke, Chris Cobler, Tom Martinez
Victoria Advocate
Fatal Funnel

Second Place
Staff
McAllen Monitor
Defying Dolly

Honorable mention
Staff
Amarillo Globe-News
Pigskin Preview

Judges comments: Excellent package. The writing, photos and graphics all work well together to tell a compelling story. Nice touch to include editorial and guest opinions in the project. It is clear the Advocate staff spent a significant amount of time planning and collaborating to put together such outstanding journalism.
Judge: Hipolito Corella, Arizona Daily Star
Team effort

First Place
Steve McGonigle, Jennifer Emily
Dallas Morning News
A Blind Faith in Eyewitnesses

Second Place
Editorial Team
Dallas Morning News
Bridging Dallas' North-South Gap

Honorable mention
Staff
Houston Chronicle
Hurricane Ike, Sept. 14

Honorable mention
Staff
Austin American-Statesman
Governor's Mansion Fire

Honorable mention
Staff
San Antonio Express-News
A Greener City

Honorable mention
Tim Madigan
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
To Catch a Killer series

Judges comments: An exemplary investigative effort initiated by staff members that blended creative techniques, data and analysis. Effort delivered strong human element, on top of findings that changed police/prosecutor procedures.

Judge: Randy Brubaker, Managing Editor, Des Moines Register
First Place
JoAnn Livingston
Waxahachie Daily Light
Election issue

Second Place
JoAnn Livingston
Waxahachie Daily Light
Crime and punishment

Honorable mention
JoAnn Livingston
Waxahachie Daily Light
Who is J.W. Dant?

Judges comments: The Waxahachie Daily Light staff is the pit bull that won't let go. They don't just use the Freedom of Information laws to reveal information. They also follow up the information with analysis and hard questioning in pursuit of the truth. This is the kind of dogged journalism that will save this industry.

Judge: Ken Tingley, The Post-Star
Freedom of information

First Place

Donna Fielder
Denton Record-Chronicle
Court records shed light on death

Second Place

Peggy Heinkel-Wolfe,
Amy Dodd Thompson,
Lowell Brown
Denton Record-Chronicle
Audit reveals cities snagged by Web

Honorable mention

Erin McKeon, Yvonne Mintz
Brazosport (Clute) Facts
Brazoria officers Nov. 7, 14, 18

Judges comments: The reporter's curiosity, determination and careful research resulted in justice for a community. Research and reporting forced public officials to do their jobs.

Judge: Mike Knaak, Managing Editor, St. Cloud (Minn.) Times
Freedom of information

First Place
Dan Kelley,
Denise Malan
Corpus Christi Caller-Times

When it comes to giving information, who gives the green light?

Second Place
Gabe Semenza
Victoria Advocate
Law and Disorder

Honorable mention
Dan Kelley,
Denise Malan
Corpus Christi Caller-Times

Is county agenda detailed enough?

Judges comments: Well researched with a variety of sources, showing once again that public officials tend to ignore or try and intimidate John Q. Public when it comes to open records. Keep holding them accountable, by all means.

Judge: Mark Hutchison, The Oklahoman
Freedom of information

First Place

Steve McGonigle, Jennifer Emily
Dallas Morning News
A Blind Faith in Eyewitnesses

Second Place

Jaime Castillo, Karisa King & John Tedesco
San Antonio Express-News
Cozy Contracts

Honorable mention

Darren Barbee, Anthony Spangler, Yamil Berard
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
JPS Health System

Judges comments: This is outstanding use of records to be the public's eyes and ears -- exactly the kind of work that only newspapers can provide their readers. The press for the records and the analysis of them reveal an astounding and troubling history in Dallas County, especially the use of one-person "showup" lineups and an overall blind allegiance to eyewitness accounts. The stories, too, are told well, not forgetting that their are human victims of the longstanding practices by police and prosecutors there.

Judge: Peter Bhatia, Executive Editor, The Oregonian
First Place
Ryan Robinson,
Doug McDonough
Plainview Daily Herald
www.myplainview.com

Second Place
Staff
Sulphur Springs
News Telegram

Judges comments: Good use of video. ... Integrate multimedia and community resources to make them vital destinations for your audience. Your sports section is a good model.

Judge: Jonathan Kealing, Lawrence Journal-World
Online newspaper

First Place
Staff
San Angelo
Standard-Times
gosanangelo.com

Second Place
Staff
Odessa American
www.oaoa.com

Honorable mention
Staff
Galveston County Daily News
Galvnews.com

 Judges comments: This site uses clean design and intuitive navigation to lead users through the news and happenings of San Angelo. The scrolling centerpieces allow the staff to highlight multiple stories and rank importance of pieces of news, which is always difficult to accomplish online. The staff clearly has a dedication to breaking and updating news, as the homepage is also crammed with time-stamped updates. Very nice. The easy navigation and entry into stories via topic, popularity, multimedia or e-mail is also a nice touch.

Judge: Meg Martin, Online Editor, Roanoke (Va.) Times
First Place
Denise Nelson, Clayton Hein
Wichita Falls Times-Record News
timesrecordnews.com

Second Place
Staff
Corpus Christi Caller-Times
Caller.com

Honorable mention
Chris Cobler, Terry Owen
Victoria Advocate
VictoriaAdvocate.com

Honorable mention
Dewuan Davis
Abilene Reporter News
Reporternews.com

Judges comments: None given.
Judge: Jonathan Kealing, Lawrence Journal-World
Class AAAAA

First Place
Kristi Kingston and staff
Austin American-Statesman
Statesman.com

Second Place
Staff
Dallas Morning News
dallasnews.com

Honorable mention
Staff
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Star-Telegram.com

Judges comments: Austin just does it right. Between statesman.com and austin360.com, they provide their community with a variety of types of storytelling -- they always seem to be on top of the breaking news, and display it well -- as well as a variety of ways to enter stories. From Virtual Capitol to their homepage's featured video and most-commented articles, they allow folks to enter stories in some of the many ways people do enter stories online, which is not always from a text link on the homepage. And austin360 shows that they're the experts on the entertainment scene in their town. Both sites have clean design, easy, intuitive navigation, and a great vibe. They also show, in many ways, that the team involved with putting them together aren't afraid of trying technology as it comes along -- that they're willing to take the risk of failing to see what sticks. That's huge, and it provides their community with an incredible service. Nice work.

Judge: Meg Martin, Online Editor, Roanoke (Va.) Times
Newspaper of the year

SPANISH-LANGUAGE

First Place
EL NUEVO HERALDO (Valle del Río Grande)

Judges comments: None available
Newspaper of the year
CLASS A

First Place
Nacogdoches
Daily Sentinel

Judges comments: The Daily Sentinel stood out in its class by nearly every measure. Daily and Sunday front pages are anchored by strong enterprise and beat reporting. News coverage ran the range of public safety trends, criminal justice investigation, economic development and public institutions. Harder edged news is mixed with neighborhood and people stories that give the paper a sense of time and place in its community. The newspaper is consistently well-designed, making excellent use of photographs from section to section. Designers create points of entry well and use pullouts to aid readers not just visually, but also contextually in understanding stories. Opinion pages, particularly on Sunday, were resonant with voices locally and regionally. From front to back, this is a newspaper that evokes its community.

Judge: Metro Editor Cynthia Montgomery and assistant metro editors Doug Miller, Michael Gordon and Liz Chandler, Wichita (Kan.) Eagle
Newspaper of the year
CLASS AA

First Place
San Angelo
Standard-Times

Judges comments: Each newspaper that was reviewed in the AA class could each win for individual categories of reporting, design, photography and so on. But the newspaper that was the most consistent and stood above the rest in those same categories was the Standard-Times. Their coverage of the compound raid was something to be proud of for any newspaper. The special section on Sunday, April 13, 2008 was full of in-depth reporting, great photography and quality writing. As impressive as the special section was, their consistency in all three days is also impressive. The clean, simple design allows daily readers to get through the paper easily, but leaves the reader with a better understanding of what happened in their community.

Judges: Joe Hight, Matt Clayton, Daily Oklahoman
Newspaper of the year
CLASS AAA

First Place
Corpus Christi Caller-Times

Judges comments: The Corpus Christi Caller-Times hits high notes on execution, style and newsiness/enterprise in the three papers we judged. We liked the amount of staff written stories throughout the paper, as well as the paper's appearance. Photography is often very good to excellent, especially in the well-designed sports section. We liked the enterprise shown in the ‘Doctor to Defendant’ Sunday CP, but the staff also moved fast to cover a youth court judge who died on Saturday. The headlines are consistently well-done, even clever. Readers are treated to loads of local and community news, but not at the expense of important national and international stories. Bravo for maintaining separate sections for Local and Business news. Overall, this is a paper that feels plugged into its community and is smartly reported and edited.

Judge: Metro Editor Cynthia Montgomery and assistant metro editors Doug Miller, Michael Gordon and Liz Chandler, Wichita (Kan.) Eagle
Newspaper of the year
CLASS AAAAA

First Place
Dallas Morning News

Judges comments: Very competitive field. Of all the entries in this category, The Dallas Morning News was most consistent throughout each section in providing hard-hitting news, lively writing and smart design - all three days. The A1 cover for Sunday, Feb. 3, 2008 is a great example of the perfect mix: a hard-hitting investigative piece on ricin at UT Southwestern Medical Center; a touching narrative about a young woman whose fiancé died while serving in Iraq; a solid local piece on television campaign ads in Texas before Super Tuesday; and a Super Bowl preview story that was much more interesting and informative than the usual run-of-the-mill previews. Other highlights: smart delegate map on the inside of the A section, especially for a graphic that had to be produced in black and white; great sports section design; smart centerpiece on the business section cover. Even in this time of intense financial pressures and dwindling staffs, readers of the Morning News are getting their money's worth. Very impressive effort across all three days submitted for judging..

Judge: Louis Graham, Memphis Commercial Appeal
Headliners awards
Star reporter of the year

First Place
Jeremy Roebuck
McAllen Monitor
Portfolio

Judges comments: Jeremy is a capable, excellent general-assignment reporter, skilled; he is someone who is able to take a complicated story and make it intelligible. His important reporting on smugglers, drug traffickers from Mexico, and his political story about "Dirt in the Delta" show his ability to get good quotes and write the kinds of stories citizens need to read.

Judge: Barbara S. Reed
Dept. of Journalism & Media Studies School of Communication Information and Library Studies Rutgers University
Star photojournalist of the year

First Place
Stuart Villanueva
Bryan-College Station
Eagle

Judges comments: Stuart consistently produces interesting, dramatic and original photography that grabs the reader’s attention and draws them in to the stories he is covering . . . Stuart uses light, composition, perspective and lens choice to make dramatic photos of every day life that jump off the page for the readers of his paper and engage them in the news.

Judge: Jim Bourg, Reuters News Photography
Star designer of the year

First Place
Joaquin Herrera
210 SA

Judges comments: The Barack The Vote page is just a beautiful spread. The typography on the tab's cover and on the spread's first page provide readers with a fresh perspective on a topic that had been in the news cycle for quite a few days. The use of grids and color, along with the consistency throughout the spread show a true designer's touch is present. This designer understands the concepts and principles of graphic design.

Judge: John Wile, The Washington Post
Star investigative report of the year

First Place
J.B. Smith
Waco Herald-Tribune
Broken Promise Land

Judges comments: The competition was formidable, but Smith's four-part series "Broken Promise Land" presented a passionate, dramatic and emotional picture of the state of illegal immigration along the southern U.S. border. Smith's descriptive writing and ability to put faces on people who die anonymously was tremendous journalism.

Judge: Jim Schaefer, Detroit Free Press
Star breaking news report of the year

First Place

Staff

Houston Chronicle

Hurricane Ike, Sept. 14, 2008 edition

Judges comments: The very large staff produced extraordinary coverage of the community. It had great pictures, really superb in fact; much human interest material showing misery as well as how neighbors come through in a world of devastation. But more: there was information on how to clean up afterwards, with straight advice to readers on what to do (e.g., fallen trees and power lines)--and not to do.

Judge: Barbara S. Reed
Dept. of Journalism & Media Studies School of Communication Information and Library Studies Rutgers University