

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

Better Newspaper Contest



20 CATEGORIES to recognize your newspaper AND staff members.

2019 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST ENTRY RULES

ELIGIBILITY: The 2019 Better Newspaper Contest is open to current OPA Business members in good standing, and all college newspapers. TMCs and free distribution products are not eligible as entries from Business Membership Newspapers. All entries must be published within a legal newspaper as defined by Title 25 O.S. 106.

CONTEST PERIOD: The 2019 OPA Better Newspaper Contest period is from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2019.

ELIGIBILITY PERIOD: To be eligible, newspapers must have been OPA members for a minimum of six full months immediately preceding the final day of the contest period, which is Dec. 31, 2019. (Newspapers may submit entries published during the entire

contest period – Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2019 – even if they have not been members for the entire contest period.)

ENTRY DEADLINE: All entries must be submitted online by **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2020**. Entry materials that must be mailed to the OPA office for categories 1, 2 and 3 must also be postmarked by the February 3 deadline.

ENTRY FEE: \$10 per entry in each category.

PAYMENT: Entry fees must be paid at the conclusion of entry submission.

Payment options:

- (a) Pay online with a credit card or debit card via Paypal (you do not need a PayPal account to pay). You will be given this option at the conclusion of submitting your entries online.

- (b) Call OPA at 405-499-0026 to provide credit card over the phone, or
- (c) Mail a check to OPA, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

CONTEST WEBSITE: To submit contest entries, visit <https://betternewspapercontest.com/OPA>. The newspaper's password is the same as last year. If your paper did not enter the contest last year, the password is "bnc". Contact Lisa Sutliff at LSutliff@okpress.com or (405) 499-0026 if you need your newspaper's password.

ENTRIES: Entries will be judged only in the category in which they are submitted online. Judges are not permitted to move entries to other categories. All entries become the property of OPA and may be reproduced in print or electronic

ENTER ONLINE – <https://betternewspapercontest.com/OPA>

format as educational material and/or exhibits.

ENTRY FORM: Every entry requires completion of an online entry form. If you submit multiple entries in one category, a separate entry form must be completed for each. Entry materials for categories 1, 2 and 3, which are mailed to OPA, also require completion of an online entry form. Print the completed form to mail with your entries.

ENTRY PREPARATION:

Most entries will be uploaded electronically as FULL-PAGE DIGITAL TEARSHEETS in PDF format. Detailed instructions are provided. Maximum file size allowed is 5 MB. Larger files (for categories such as Sales Promotion) may be uploaded to a third-party site, such as scribd.com or issuu.com. If you cannot upload PDFs, please contact OPA at 405-499-0020 or 1-888-815-2672.

If multiple pages are required for a single entry, combine all pages into a single PDF file. This makes it easier for the judge to review your entry.

Three categories (News Content, Layout and Design, and Advertising) require that three full different issues of the printed newspaper be mailed to the OPA office for judging. Print and attach the online entry form then mail to OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

Categories #10-20 allow multiple entries per newspaper, but there is a limit on the number of entries allowed per newspaper or per person. These limits are indicated in each category description.

HEADLINES/TITLES: When completing your online entry forms, please use the following method for the "Headline or Title" field. The title of a story entry should be the headline. The title of a photo entry should be the subject, headline or first few words of the cutline. The title of advertising entries should identify the business, organization or ad headline to be judged. Titles will assist the judges in determining which story, photo or ad on a page is to be judged.

MULTIPLE PUBLICATIONS:

Newspapers having multiple publications or editions under one ownership with the majority of pages in common (news and/or advertising) may only enter issues of the publication or edition having the largest circulation.

IDENTICAL MATERIAL: Identical material may be submitted by only one publication – the newspaper that produced the majority of the content, or, if it was a shared responsibility, the newspaper with the largest circulation.

STAFF PRODUCED: All contest entries must have been produced by the newspaper's staff or regular paid contributors. Outsourced work may be entered, but the work must

have been done exclusively for the newspaper entering the material. Syndicated material cannot be entered.

ADVERTISING ENTRIES: All ads must be original work by your staff. They must be conceived and sold by your newspaper staff. Clip art is acceptable, but no camera-ready ads should be submitted, such as those from advertising agencies or advertiser produced. All ads must be from your regularly printed newspaper. Do not submit ads from other publications (magazines, real estate guides or niche publications).

ALTERING CONTENT: All submitted digital content must be as it appeared in print, with the exception of color correction of photographs for print purposes. If an entry alteration is alleged, it must be reported to OPA, in writing and signed by the person or newspaper submitting the allegation, by December 31, 2020. If the OPA Board of Directors finds the entry has been altered, the newspaper will be disqualified from the year of entry when the action occurred and suspended from participation in the OPA Better Newspaper Contest for two contest years immediately after the Board decision.

LETTERS TO JUDGES: Comment letters to judges are required in Event 7, Sales Promotion, and Event 8, Community Leadership. Letters to judges may be included in other events but are not required.



DIVISIONS AND AWARDS

DIVISIONS: There are nine (9) divisions: eight for OPA Business Membership Newspapers and one for college newspapers.

Divisions 1-8 are determined by newspaper circulation and frequency shown on the October 2019 U.S. Postal Service statement of total paid circulation (PS Form 3526, line 15C) plus the number of paid electronic subscriptions.

DIVISION 1

Daily newspapers, circulation more than 6,200.

DIVISION 2

Daily newspapers, circulation between 3,000 and 6,200.

DIVISION 3

Daily newspapers, circulation of less than 3,000.

DIVISION 4

Weekly newspapers, circulation more than 1,600.

DIVISION 5

Weekly newspapers, circulation between 1,050 and 1,600.

DIVISION 6

Weekly newspapers, circulation between 725 and 1,049.

DIVISION 7

Weekly newspapers, circulation less than 725.

DIVISION 8

Semi- and Tri-Weekly Newspapers

Division 9

College Newspapers

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

(a) For divisions 2-7, a newspaper may elect to compete in a higher circulation division of the same publication frequency at the time of entry, but may not compete in a lower division. Notify OPA to update your division in the online system before you begin submitting entries. If a newspaper chooses to compete in a higher circulation division, the newspaper must submit all entries in the higher division.

(b) If a newspaper changes its publication frequency during the contest period, it must have published at that frequency for a minimum of six full months immediately preceding the final day of the contest period, which is Dec. 31, 2019, to compete in the corresponding division. (Such newspapers may still submit entries published during the contest period – Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2019.)

(c) If a category that recognizes individuals receives three or fewer entries in a circulation division, the entries may be judged as is or be moved into the next larger circulation group.

Further, if three or fewer entries are submitted in a category in division 4 (large weeklies), the entries will be combined for judging with the entries in the same category of division 8 (semi- and tri-weeklies). If three or fewer entries are submitted in a category in division 8 (semi- and tri-weeklies), the entries will be combined for judging with the entries in the same category of division 3 (small dailies).

AWARDS: Every category will have first through third place winners. Each division's Sweepstakes winner, which is determined by the amount of points accumulated in the first eight categories, receives the Sequoyah Award – the highest honor in the contest. Sequoyah Award and First Place winners receive plaques; second and third place winners receive certificates. Each winning newspaper receives the privilege of publishing the 'Prize Winning Logo' in its newspaper for the entire year. Awards will be presented during the OPA Annual Convention.

POINTS: Points in the first eight categories are awarded on the following scale:

EVENTS 1-3

1st Place	110 Points
2nd Place	80 Points
3rd Place	60 Points

EVENTS 4-8

1st Place	100 Points
2nd Place	70 Points
3rd Place	50 Points

No points will be awarded in categories 9 through 20.

TIES: There will be no ties within categories.

CONTACT INFORMATION: For clarification of rules contact Jennifer Gilliland or Lisa Sutliff at (405) 499-0020 or 1-888-815-2672 (toll-free in Oklahoma). Contest rules are available on the OPA website at www.okpress.com/awards.

A list of participating newspapers sorted by division will be posted on the OPA website within one week after the contest deadline.

2019 BETTER NEWSPAPER CONTEST

CATEGORIES

CATEGORIES 1-9 (Recognizes Newspapers)

Categories 1 through 9 are limited to one entry per newspaper and awards are presented to the newspaper. Categories 1 through 8 award points for the Sequoyah Award.

1. NEWS CONTENT

Mail three full issues (each from a different date) from anytime within the contest period to OPA, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105 with a printed entry form. Limit one entry per newspaper.

Judges will consider the extent and quality of the overall news product that is representative of the community. Criteria include: local coverage, balance, government coverage, headlines, organization, photos, graphics and writing.

2. LAYOUT & DESIGN

Mail three full issues (each from a different date) from anytime within the contest period to OPA, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105 with a printed entry form. Limit one entry per newspaper.

Judges will consider selection and effective use of typefaces, photos and graphic elements; headlines; general makeup; organization and advertising display.

3. ADVERTISING

Mail three full issues (each from a different date) from anytime within the contest period to OPA, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105 with a printed entry form. Remove any pre-printed inserts, unless composed at the newspaper. Limit one entry per newspaper.

For display advertising, judges will consider the advertising enterprise of the paper (wide variety of merchants), headlines, copy and layout, imaginative use of illustrations, apparent effectiveness and creativity.

For classified advertising, judges will consider the ease of finding classifications, display (use of type and attractiveness), enterprise and neatness.

4. EDITORIAL WRITING

Submit THREE different editorials as one entry. Upload full-page digital tearsheets and list the headline(s) in the Title field for identification purposes when submitting your entry. Limit one entry per newspaper.

DEFINITION OF AN EDITORIAL:

An article that persuades, informs and/or expresses an opinion of those in control of the publication on a matter of current interest. Personal columns may be entered if each is limited to one subject and fulfill the other qualifications of an editorial.

Judges will consider quality of writing, originality, logical construction, strong lead and conclusion.

5. PHOTOGRAPHY

Submit SIX photos comprised of: two news photos, two sports photos and two feature photos. Upload full-page digital tearsheets and identify the photos to be judged in the headline field when submitting the entry.

Photos may be black and white or color. A picture page or related photos of the same subject matter published in the same issue may be considered as one photo selection. Limit one entry per newspaper. The six photos will be judged as a package and not individual photographs.

Judges will consider subject composition, originality, technical skill demonstrated, and use of photographs.

6. SPORTS COVERAGE

Submit THREE separate full sports pages or sections from the following dates: one from January through June 2019, one from July through December 2019, and one from anytime within the contest period.

Upload full-page digital tearsheets. Limit one entry per newspaper.

Judges will consider newsworthiness, overall coverage, writing skill, creativity, headlines, photography and organization of the sports page(s) or section.

7. SALES PROMOTION

Submit one revenue-producing promotion published and delivered in your newspaper anytime within the contest period. Upload a digital file of the entire section. A letter (in PDF, TXT or other format) must accompany this entry explaining the promotion and amount of revenue produced. Include all sales support materials such as pre-publicity ads, and news stories, direct mail, flyers and point of purchase materials used relating to the event. Limit one entry per newspaper.

Judges will consider originality, organization, design and writing.

8. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Submit one project, over and above the normal duties of a newspaper, that is aimed at service to the community rather than revenue. A letter (in PDF, TXT or other format) must accompany this entry explaining the project.

Upload digital tearsheets of any articles and ads related to the project. List article and ad headlines in the Title field for identification purposes when submitting your entry. Limit one entry per newspaper.

Newspaper staffs recognize and act upon specific issues or needs within their communities. This event seeks to recognize these efforts and promote newspapers' commitment to civic responsibility. Projects should be developed through the newspaper's own efforts, and should be completed or have significant progress made during the contest period. Include all relevant information (i.e., news stories, editorials, advertising, reports of events).

Judges will consider relative importance of the topic, quality of effort, depth of research, degree of involvement and results.

9. DIGITAL MEDIA

Submit the following: (A) your website address and any passwords required to access protected content and (B) your social media addresses to be considered. A letter (in PDF, TXT or other format) explaining your media's unique and valuable aspects is allowed. Place any passwords in the Comment field. Limit one entry per newspaper.

No points will be awarded in this category.

All daily newspaper participants will compete together in one division.

All weekly and semi-weekly newspapers will compete together in one division.

All college newspaper participants will compete together in one division.

Judges will consider news content, navigation, advertising, community, design and visuals

CATEGORIES 10-20 (Recognizes Individuals and Newspapers)

Categories 10 through 20 allow for more than one entry per newspaper and awards are presented to the individual unless otherwise indicated on the online entry form. Each category description includes the number of entries allowed per person and/or per newspaper.

10. NEWS STORY

Upload digital tearsheet(s) of one story and jump, if applicable. Indicate the story to be judged by entering the headline in the Title field when submitting your entry. Entries may include a related sidebar in the same issue. One story per entry. Limit four entries per newspaper. Judges will consider importance to the community, organization, writing skill, and impact of lead and headline.

11. FEATURE STORY

Upload digital tearsheet(s) of one story and jump, if applicable. Indicate the story to be judged by entering the headline in the Title field when submitting your entry. One story per entry. Limit four entries per newspaper.

DEFINITION OF A FEATURE

STORY: A story of human interest. It may or may not be of a timely nature and it may or may not be news related. It is not a regular feature, i.e., personal column, and may or may not carry a byline and it may or may not have supportive pictures.

Judges will consider writing skill, clarity, a creative lead, human interest and organization of story.

12. SPORTS STORY

An entry may include a game story, general news, feature or profile. Upload digital tearsheet(s) of one story and jump, if applicable. Indicate the story to be judged by entering the headline in the Title field when submitting your entry. One story per entry. Limit four entries per newspaper.

Judges will consider originality, style, organization and reader interest.

CATEGORIES 10-20 (CONTINUED)

13. IN-DEPTH REPORTING

May include a single story or series of stories on the same topic beyond routine news coverage. An entry may include a written summary to explain the topic and coverage. A series of stories (maximum of 10) comprises one entry. Upload full-page digital tearsheet(s). List the topic in the Title field with publication dates and headlines in the Comments field for identification purposes. Limit two entries per newspaper.

DEFINITION OF IN-DEPTH

REPORTING: A story or series of stories that explores a significant topic in-depth with multiple sources.

Judges will consider completeness, thoroughness of research, excellence of writing, community-wide interest, execution and commitment of the newspaper to the project.

14. COLUMN WRITING

Submit three different columns by the same writer as one entry. Upload full-page digital tearsheets and list the headlines and titles in the Title field for identification purposes when submitting your entry. Limit one entry (of 3 columns) per person as this category will recognize the best column writer, not the best column. Limit four entries per newspaper.

Judges will consider originality, writing, effective humor when appropriate, reader interest, organization, strong lead and conclusion.

15. SMALL SPACE AD

Any one advertisement at a size SMALLER THAN one-quarter (1/4) page. May be color or black and white. Entry must be a paid ad created by the newspaper staff for a single advertiser, not a house ad. Upload full-page tearsheet. Indicate the ad to be judged by entering the business name or ad headline in the Title field when submitting your entry. Limit four entries per newspaper.

Judges will consider layout, typography, copy and originality.

16. LARGE SPACE AD

Any one advertisement at a size EQUAL TO OR LARGER THAN one-quarter (1/4) page. May be color or black and white. Entry must be a paid ad created by the newspaper staff for a single advertiser, not a house ad. Upload full-page tearsheet. Indicate the ad to be judged by entering the business name or ad headline in the Title field when submitting your entry. Limit four entries per newspaper.

Judges will consider layout, typography, copy and originality.

17. NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

May be black and white or color. A photograph entered in the News category cannot be entered in the Feature or Sports Photograph categories. Upload full-page tearsheet. Indicate the photo to be judged by entering the subject, headline or first few words of the photo caption. One photo per entry. Limit four entries per person. No limit per newspaper.

Judges will consider newsworthiness, reader interest, originality and quality of photo.

18. FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

May be black and white or color. A photograph entered in the Feature category cannot be entered in the News or Sports Photograph categories. Upload full-page tearsheet. Indicate the photo to be judged by entering the subject, headline or first few words of the photo caption. One photo per entry. Limit four entries per person. No limit per newspaper. Judges will consider quality of photo, originality and reader interest.

19. SPORTS PHOTOGRAPH

May be black and white or color. A photograph entered in the Sports category cannot be entered in the Feature or News Photograph categories. Upload full-page tearsheet. Indicate the photo to be judged by entering the subject, headline or first few words of the photo caption. One photo per entry. Limit four entries per person. No limit per newspaper.

Judges will consider newsworthiness, reader interest, originality and quality of photo.

20. FRONT PAGE DESIGN

Upload digital tearsheet of one front page per entry. Limit three entries per newspaper.

Judges will consider use of photographs and graphics, headlines and body types, organization and overall appearance.

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3601 N. LINCOLN BLVD.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105

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