

Gulf Coast Press Association



Better Newspaper Contest

DEADLINE TO ENTER THE CONTEST IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2024

ENTRY RULES

•Open to all TGCPA member newspapers whose dues are paid in 2024. (If dues are not current, please send them to: TGCPA, c/o Nonnie Barton, 1027 Cleistes Ln, Richmond, TX 77469-2010 or enclose with the contest entries payment.)

•Dues are \$85 per year.

•Each entrant newspaper must hold a valid periodical class permit with the U.S. Postal Service.

•Entries must have been published during 2023.

ONLINE SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES

•Entries will now be submitted to an online platform. For registration and uploading instructions, please visit:

www.newspapercontest.com/gulfcoast

•If you have questions or need assistance, please email gulfcoast@newspapercontest.com or call TGCPA contest chair Regina Keilers at 979-249-6591 (cell) or Texas Press Association Regional Better Newspaper Contest Coordinator Sue Brown at 830-570-7543 (cell) or 512-477-6755 (office).

•The deadline is Friday, Feb. 2, 2024 at midnight.

•Entries should be submitted online and marked in red when rules specify. Entries must be the work of paid staff members.

ENTRY FEES

•After submitting the contest entries online at www.newspapercontest.com/gulfcoast please click on "Entry Billing" to see a summary of contest entries uploaded and the total entry fees to pay.

•Please mail a check payable to the Texas Gulf Coast Press Association, for the contest entry fees to:

TGCPA Contest
c/o The Fayette County Record
P.O. Box 400
La Grange, TX 78945

DIVISIONS

Division 1 – Small weeklies (2,500 or below circulation)

Division 2 – Large weeklies (2,501 and above circulation)

Division 3 – Semi-weeklies and dailies which publish six days a week or less

A semi-weekly is defined as the same paper published twice a week.

Twin-weeklies published on different days of the week under different names, but for the same community, **MUST** each be entered separately in the semi-weekly division. Failure to adhere to the rules will result in disqualification.

A division is valid as long as at least one completed entry is received in the category. Division status (circulation frequency) is based on the 2023 published Postal Form 3526 filed with TPA.

AWARDS PRESENTATION

The awards presentation will be held on Saturday, April 20, 2024. Plaques will be presented for first places and certificates will be awarded for second place, third place and honorable mention.

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2024 86th Annual TGCPA Convention

April 18-20, 2024
Moody Gardens in Galveston

*Details on registration for the
combined STPA and TGCPA
Convention are included
with this packet.*

Texas Gulf Coast Press Association 2024 Better Newspaper Contest Categories

All entries must have been published during 2023

SPECIAL SECTION: Submit ONE PDF sample of your best special section. Mark out advertising and editorial copy not produced by paid newspaper staff. Entries created by a central office must be submitted in the highest circulation category. Judging will be based on creativity, layout, quality of photos and copy, benefiting target audience.

GENERAL EXCELLENCE: Submit TWO CONSECUTIVE issues published anytime during the contest year. Include combined PDFs of the entire issues (without inserts). Each individual newspaper must be a separate entry, even if several newspapers are published by the same company. Overall appearance, quality of local copy and pictures will be judged. Special editions are NOT eligible. Email a PDF of the front page of one of the issues entered in General Excellence to regina@fayetecountyrecord.com before the deadline.

EDITORIAL WRITING: Submit TWO staff-written editorials clearly marked on a PDF of a full newspaper page either by outlining in red or with headline. Include the name of the writer. Include any jumps in the entry, on a separate page in the same PDF file, also marked. Writer(s) must be paid employee(s) of the newspaper.

SERIOUS COLUMNS: Submit TWO columns clearly marked on a PDF of a full newspaper page either by outlining in red or with headline (include jump on separate page in same PDF file). The columns must be by the same columnist on "serious" subject matters. Columnist must be a staff member and columns must be published on a regular basis. Syndicated columnists will NOT be allowed to enter.

HUMOROUS COLUMNS: Submit TWO columns clearly marked on a PDF of a full newspaper page either by outlining in red or with headline (include jump on separate page in same PDF file). The columns must be by the same columnist on "humorous" subject matters. Columnist must be a staff member and columns must be published on a regular basis. Syndicated columnists will NOT be allowed to enter.

NEWS PHOTOS: Submit TWO news photographs clearly marked in red on a PDF of a full newspaper page. The news photographs must be taken by paid staff member(s) of the newspaper. Do not include feature or sports photographs. Photos will be judged on impact, display and quality of reproduction.

FEATURE PHOTOS: Submit TWO feature photographs clearly marked in red on a PDF of a full newspaper page. The feature photographs must be taken by paid staff member(s) of the newspaper. Do not include sports photographs. Photos will be judged on impact, display and quality of reproduction.

SPORTS PHOTOS: Submit TWO sports photographs clearly marked on a PDF of a full newspaper page by outlining in red. The sports photographs must be taken by paid staff member(s) of the newspaper. Do not include feature photographs. Photos will be judged on impact, display and quality of reproduction.

SPORTS COVERAGE: Submit sports pages/sections from TWO separate issues. Present material from each issue in a combined PDF format of full newspaper pages (one PDF per issue). Include additional pages if stories jump to other pages. Staff written stories, graphics and photography will be the focal point of judging. Mark out (in red) all non-staff written stories and photos.

HEADLINE WRITING: Submit TWO headlines (sports, features, articles, columns, cutlines, etc.) clearly marked in red, so they may be easily identified, on a PDF of a full newspaper page.

FEATURE WRITING: Submit TWO feature stories clearly marked in red on a PDF of a full newspaper page. The feature stories must be written by paid staff member(s). Include feature story jumps. Entries may include sports features.

NEWS WRITING: Submit TWO news stories clearly marked in red on a PDF of a full newspaper page. The news articles must be written by paid staff member(s). Include article jumps. Impact, interest and clarity of writing style are considered in judging.

DISPLAY ADVERTISING: Submit THREE ads clearly marked by outlining in red on a PDF of a full newspaper page. The ads must be created in-house (by paid staff members or group production department) for the newspaper. If any ad runs in more than one newspaper, only one newspaper may submit that ad. Entries created by a central office must be submitted in the highest circulation category. Judging will be on copy, illustrations, use of color (if used) and overall design and impact.

BEST NEWSPAPER WEBSITE:

- Small Weekly Division (2,500 or below circulation) min. 3 entries*
- Large Weekly Division (2,501 and above circulation) min. 3 entries*
- Semi-Weekly Division minimum of 3 entries**

Include website address and any passwords required to access all pages within the site. Include a brief description of the site's unique aspects, how frequently it is updated and what makes the site vital to your readers. Judging will be based on content, ease of use and navigation, page design, advertising, timeliness and consistency. Entries will be judged online at an unannounced date set by the judges.

*Minimum of 3 entries: If fewer than 3 entries are received in either category (small weekly division or large weekly division), the entries in those two divisions will be combined for one weekly division.

**If fewer than 3 entries are received, entries will not be judged.

FARRIS BLOCK MEMORIAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD:

Any community service effort of the newspaper relating to one specific subject may be entered. Present material in a combined PDF format clearly marked in red. Include news articles, editorials, photos, columns, letters to the editor and other subject matter pertinent to the newspaper's support of ONE PROJECT. May include interpretation of local government reform, promotion of worthwhile community project, etc. A cover letter should be included stating the purpose of the series or special effort and whether the goal or purpose was accomplished. NOTE: News coverage of an event AFTER it occurs, such as floods, storms, etc. should be entered in the News Writing category, not Community Service. Reporting on efforts to prevent or alleviate the seriousness of such events in the future may be submitted as Community Service. This category will not count towards sweepstakes points.

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SCORING SYSTEM: Best all-around in each division is based on the following scoring system: First Place, 100 points; Second Place, 50 points; Third Place, 25 points; Honorable Mention, 10 points. Only one honorable mention per category will be given. Community Service will not count toward the final tally for best all-around.

If you have any questions or need more information, call Second Vice President/Contest Chair Regina Keilers 979-249-6591 (cell) or email regina@fayetecountyrecord.com before deciding to do something not specifically mentioned in these rules.

Remember – Submit all contest entries online at www.newspapercontest.com/gulfc coast before the deadline on Friday, Feb. 2, 2024!