



Delaware Press Association
High School Communications Contest

Entries must have been published between
Feb. 1, 2019, and Jan. 31, 2020

CONTEST CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA CONSIDERED BY JUDGES

NEWS: print and/or online (Categories 1 – 13) These categories consist of written or visual information that appears in print or online publications. Entries are either PDFs of pages that contain the entry material OR the URLs that point to the work sample online.

WRITING entries: Categories 1 – 7. Do not include work by or names of photographers or graphic artists.

- 1. Editorial** – An editorial appears on the editorial page of the paper and is the voice of the paper. It is **not** a bylined personal column, but may be signed on behalf of an editorial board. **Judges will consider** clarity of point, relevance of subject matter to its audience, and soundness and persuasiveness of argument.
- 2. Opinion** – An opinion article is *always* bylined. It is the voice of a single writer, not to be confused with an editorial. It can focus on items of a personal nature, social issues, or the happenings of the world. It can be insightful and/or critical, but not libelous. **Judges will evaluate** clarity of style, sound reasoning, and the effort to influence a reader's opinion in what the writer believes is the right direction.
- 3. News Story** – The writer should show initiative in obtaining a story that presents new information or that provides a different angle on published information or past events. **Judges will consider** general organization, clarity of lead, writing style, readability, and impact.
- 4. Feature Story** – The material may be a personality profile or a human interest piece. The story should focus on an in-depth topic of interest to readers. **Judges will consider** interest and unusual aspects of the feature material itself and/or the handling of it, writing style, richness of detail, use of quotes, readability, and thoroughness of coverage.
- 5. Sports Story** – The story should demonstrate imagination and good application of sports-writing style in advance, follow-up, summary or feature coverage of sports events or sports participants. Avoid play-by-play rehash. **Judges will consider** same criteria as for news or feature stories, as well as author's ability to write knowledgeably on the subject.
- 6. Columns or Blogs** – Each entry must consist of **two (2)** columns or blogs. (They do **not** have to have been published consecutively.) The content should entertain and/or educate, and the writer may use in-depth knowledge, research, study or expertise. They can be analytical scrutiny, satire, or personal comment on general or special subjects. **Note:** This category includes sports columns. **Judges will consider** interest, organization, and ideas, as well as clarity, readability, style, and author's ability to write knowledgeably on the subject.
- 7. Review** – The entry – on any subject – should be of interest to the publication's readers. In addition to the writer's opinion, the article should include some critical analysis and show the writer's knowledge of the subject. **Judges will consider** interest of subject matter, creativity, and richness of style.

VISUAL entries: Categories 8 – 13.

- 8. News or Feature Photo** – The photo must spark an emotional response in the viewer, and have a storytelling quality. No posed shots. The entry will consist of **a) the original photo** submitted as a JPG **AND** **b) a PDF of the published page** that contains the photo. Images must not be digitally enhanced or retouched; correction for lens distortion, cropping, toning, contrast, and red-eye removal are the only electronic adjustments that are allowed. **Judges will consider** creativity, uniqueness, clarity of relationship to the article or publication, and how the photo enhances the subject matter.
NOTE: Failure to submit **both** the original photo in JPEG or similar format (no PNGs) **AND** a PDF of the published page that contains the photo will result in disqualification.
- 9. Sports Photo** – The photo should be easy to "read" and cropped for impact. It should show the peak of the action, or capture an exciting moment or a storytelling facial expression. No posed shots. The entry will consist of **a) the original photo** submitted as a JPG **AND** **b) a PDF of the published page** that contains the photo. Images must not be digitally enhanced or retouched; correction for lens distortion, cropping, toning, contrast, and red-eye removal are the only electronic adjustments that are allowed. **Judges will consider** creativity, uniqueness, clarity of relationship to the article or publication, and how the photo enhances the subject matter.
NOTE: Failure to submit **both** the original photo in JPEG or similar format (no PNGs) **AND** a PDF of the published page that contains the photo will result in disqualification.

10. Cartooning – Copy may be freehand or generated by computer. The entry will consist of **one (1)** comic strip OR **one (1)** cartoon. Subject matter is unrestricted; any political, economic, human relations, or social issue, as well as other topics, may be covered. **Judges will consider** the text or caption and the use of concept and artistic style.

11. Graphics/Photo Illustration – The entry may be created freehand or electronically. **Judges will consider** creativity, uniqueness, clarity of relationship to an article or publication, and how the graphic contributes to the visual enhancement of the subject matter.

12. Single-Page Layout – The entry may be from a desktop publishing project or from traditional printing production methods. **(A double-truck is not a single page.)** **Judges will consider** creative and effective use of graphic elements, typography, photos, illustrations, and color in drawing reader interest and supporting the content of the article(s).

13. Double-Truck Layout – The entry is a two-page layout (centerfold) made up as a single unit, with the usual margin between the two facing pages eliminated. **Judges will consider** creative and effective use of graphic elements, typography, photos, illustrations, and color in drawing reader interest and supporting the content of the article(s).

ENVIRONMENT: This category accepts entries focused on the environment in any communications discipline.

14. Environment – Entries in this category may be in a print or online publication, part of a radio or television broadcast, or an article or display in a yearbook. **Judges will consider** how the package (the article, layout, graphic, and/or photography elements, or radio or television elements) educates the public about environmental issues or concerns.

BROADCAST or VIDEO (Categories 15 – 20) These categories are for work produced for airing on radio, television, or via the Web.

15. Radio Prepared Report: soft feature / audio postcard – Entry may be limited to a single report / feature / segment or may include excerpts from a series. Entrant must be the reporter, reviewer, commentator, or critic. Story must have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Submit an audio file of entry (MP3, WAV, etc.). **Judges will consider** creativity, initiative, quality of sound production (proper miking techniques, etc.) ability to obtain a story with impact, clarity of writing / production, thoroughness of research, documentation of any allegations, technical excellence, and concise assembly.

16. Radio/Television Interview or Talk Show – Entry may be a radio or television broadcast. Entrant may be host or interviewer. Delete all commercial breaks, but no other editing may be done. Submit an audio or video file (MP3, MP4, WAV, etc.) or URL pointing to the place where entry resides. **Judges will consider** quality of questions, thoroughness of research, reporting skills (does the interviewer put the subject at ease, do members of the listening / viewing audience come away more informed / engaged / surprised than when they came in?), impact of story, creativity of presentation, and technical excellence.

17. Best Newscast: Radio or Television – Newscast must be under the overall supervision of the entrant(s). Delete any commercial breaks, but no other editing may be done. Narratives or voice-overs are allowed only if they were part of the original piece that aired. **Judges will consider** excellence of news content and production values.

18. Video News Story – The entry, produced for airing on television or via the Web, can be submitted either in DVD format or as an electronic link to a file. If the DVD format is chosen, the DVD must be playable on a consumer DVD player or PC, and the entry should indicate the file format and the Mac or PC program in which the file was created. **Judges will consider** how well the student has used video and narration/reporting to obtain a news story that presents new information or a new angle, the quality of picture and sound, and overall editing.

19. Video Feature Story – The entry, produced for airing on television or via the Web, can be submitted either in DVD format or as an electronic link to a file. If the DVD format is chosen, the DVD must be playable on a consumer DVD player or PC, and the entry should indicate the file format and the Mac or PC program in which the file was created. **Judges will consider** how well the student has used video and narration/reporting to give an in-depth or unusual look at a topic or person of interest, the quality of picture and sound, and overall editing.

20. Video Sports Story – The entry, produced for airing on television or via the Web, can be submitted either in DVD format or as an electronic link to a file. If the DVD format is chosen, the DVD must be playable on a consumer DVD player or PC, and the entry should indicate the file format and the Mac or PC program in which the file was created. **Judges will consider** how well the student has used video and narration/reporting to cover a sports event or participant, the quality of picture and sound, and overall editing.

YEARBOOK (Categories 21 – 23) These categories are for work published in 2017 yearbooks.

21. Yearbook Layout – The entry may be a single-page or double-truck layout from the 2017 yearbook. **Judges will consider** creative and effective use of graphic elements, typography, photos, illustrations, and color, with a focus on how they attract reader interest or illustrate article content. In the case of a double-truck layout (two-page layout, i.e., a centerfold, made up as a single unit, with the usual margin between the two facing pages eliminated), judging also will consider how the elements of two facing pages work together.

22. Yearbook Photo – The entry may be a single photo or a multiple-photo spread from any section of the 2017 yearbook. The entry will consist of **a) the original photo** submitted as a JPG **AND b) a PDF of the published page or spread** that contains the photo. No posed shots. Images must not be digitally enhanced or retouched; cropping, toning, contrast, and red-eye removal are the only electronic adjustments that are allowed. **Judges will consider** the quality of the photo(s), with emphasis on the activity portrayed, the news value, and the composition and cropping.

NOTE: Failure to submit **both** the original photo in JPEG **AND** a PDF of the published page that contains the photo will result in disqualification.

23. Yearbook Copywriting – The entry will consist of text from a section of the 2017 yearbook. Photo captions are not permitted as entries. **Judges will consider** creativity, effectiveness, impact, and clarity.