

THE KANSAS PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATORS AND KANSAS SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCE THE 2009 ALL-KANSAS WRITE-OFF



The All-Kansas Write-Off allows student journalists to compete in 21 categories. The newspaper categories are news writing, feature writing, editorial writing, opinion writing, personal column writing, sports writing, photography (feature and sports), environmental coverage, cartoons and double page layout. Yearbook categories are double-page spread, copy writing and photography. The three new desktop categories, combined in a newspaper and yearbook division, are informational graphic or chart, feature headline and logo.

This contest brings together student journalists from across Kansas through individual competition. The best of the best in qualifying categories are then sent to the National Federation of Press Women High School Communications Competition.

Experienced judges who know the educational benefits of constructive criticism evaluate the entries. Our goal? Helpful, easy-to-understand comments on each entry. First, second and third place winners are selected, as well as honorable mention. All winners will be honored at the KPC spring awards banquet.

•• OFFICIAL CONTEST RULES••

• **CATEGORIES** Student journalists may enter any or all categories, but are allowed to enter only **once per category**. For example, a photographer may enter once in newspaper photography, once in yearbook photography and once in desktop logo. A photographer who entered two pictures in the yearbook photography category would be automatically disqualified in that category. There are 20 contest categories.

A student may not enter a co-written article in addition to a singly authored article in the same category. For purposes of this section, co-authorship counts as a single entry for each co-author. There are no limitations on the number of entries per school. For example, three different students from one school could enter yearbook copy writing.

• **FEES** Contest fees are \$5 for each entry for KSPA member schools and \$7 for non-member schools. **UNPAID ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO COMPETE.** Co-authored entries pay one fee. Make checks payable to KANSAS PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATORS.

• **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY** Each entry must have been created by one or more Kansas high school students. It must have been published in a Kansas high school newspaper, professional publication, or yearbook on or between Jan. 12, 2008, and Jan. 31, 2009.

According to National Federation of Press Women rules, entries must be the work of students enrolled in grades 9-12 during the current school year or the last semester of the senior year for students' work published after the current deadline. Only work produced March 1, 2008, or later is eligible for the national competition.

• **POSTMARK DEADLINE** All entries must be postmarked on or before Friday, Feb. 6, 2009, and mailed to All-Kansas-Write Off, c/o Linda Drake, P.O. Box 356, Cottonwood Falls, KS 66845, (620) 273-6700 (home), (620) 273-6354 (school). If interested, include a self-addressed postcard which will be returned to verify that the entries met the deadline.

• **ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS** All entries, except yearbook, must be submitted as clippings or tearsheets (full pages from your publication). Submit yearbook entries as a photocopy attached to the entry form.

Submit **two tear sheets** (the entire page in which the article appears) for each entry or one tear sheet and one clear copy if there is a shortage of newspapers. All entries must have been published.

In the column category, send **two copies each of three different columns**, two consecutive ones (not necessarily chronologically) and any third one.

Submit an actual black-and-white photograph for the yearbook photography competition but also provide the required published copy of the photograph. Judging is based on composition, not the reproduction of the photograph in the newspaper.

Cartoon and desktop publishing entries that illustrate stories, features, photo packages or theme concepts must include additional support materials. For an informational chart, or feature headline, also send a photocopy of the related story and/or photograph. In addition to a logo send a photocopy of its yearbook cover or division page. This will help ensure relevant, equitable evaluation. Stand-alone informational charts need no supplemental materials.

Each entry must be paper clipped to a fully completed entry form. Photocopy the blank entry form for use on all entries (or photocopy it for all students after typing in information about school, adviser and hometown paper). Keep accurate records of your entries. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.

• **JUDGES** The contest relies on Kansas Professional Communicators (formerly Kansas Press Women) members and other communication professionals to serve as judges. Dozens of entries are judged and processed in a two-month time frame. The judges work on a volunteer basis, solely out of dedication to Kansas journalism education.

• NEWSPAPER JUDGING CRITERIA

EDITORIALS – local interest for readers, clearness of style, sound reasoning and effort to influence readers' opinions in what the writer believes is the right direction. (An editorial is not a bylined personal column, but may be a signed editorial written on behalf of an editorial board.)

OPINION – the voice of the writer, not to be confused with an editorial. It can focus on items of personal nature, social issues, or happenings of the world. It can be insightful and/or critical, but not libelous. Judging will evaluate clearness of style, sound reasoning and effort to influence reader's opinion in what the writer believes is the right direction. An opinion article, the voice of the individual, is always bylined.

NEWS – evidence of initiative in obtaining a story that presents new information or a different angle on published information or past events, planning a general organization, writing style, readability and impact.

FEATURE – interest to reader and unusual aspects of the material or its handling, writing style and richness of

CALL FOR ENTRIES

detail and use of quotes, readability and thoroughness. (Includes personality profiles, human interest, general features and opinion pieces.)

SPORTS – imagination and good application of sports writing style in advance, follow-up, summary or feature coverage of events or sports participants; avoiding play-by-play rehash.

COLUMN – (Submit three columns — two consecutive and any third one.) Analytical scrutiny, satire or personal comment/opinion on general or special subject that entertains and/or educates. (May take in-depth knowledge, research, study or expertise.)

FEATURE PHOTO – human interest of people in their environment, action and/or “story-telling” quality (not posed shots) and quality of the reproduction in the publication. No print required, but two copies of the publication tear sheet.

CARTOONING – may be generated by computer graphics or free-hand and may be a comic strip or cartoon. The judge will consider the text or caption and the use of concept and artistic style. The subject matter is unrestricted. For example, any political, economic or social issue may be covered or any human relations issue or any other topic. Include a description of the event that prompted the cartoon.

GRAPHICS – entry may be created freehand or electronically. Judging will be on creativity, uniqueness, clarity of relationship to article or publications and entry’s visual enhancement of the subject matter. Unsigned work requires adviser’s verification.

SINGLE PAGE LAYOUT – may be from a desktop publishing project or from the traditional printing production methods. (A double-truck is not a single page.) Judges will consider any number of graphic elements, typography, photos, illustrations and color. Judging will be on creative and effective use of elements in drawing reader interest and supporting article(s) content. Unsigned work requires adviser’s verification.

REVIEW – entry should be of interest to the publication’s readers. Subject may be art or dramatic event or music. Article should include some critical analysis and show writer’s knowledge and background in the art form. Review should be interesting, creatively written and have rich style.

• YEARBOOK JUDGING CRITERIA

COPYWRITING is judged on structure, interest to readers, direct quotations, historical value, organization, grammar and style.

PHOTOGRAPHY is judged on quality of the original glossy print, with emphasis on the activity, the news value, the composition and the cropping. Entries must be candid not posed photographs. They may be from any part of the published yearbook.

DOUBLE-PAGE SPREAD is judged on how the elements of the two facing pages are positioned to create a pleasing display of copy, photographs, artwork, headlines and captions.

SINGLE-PAGE LAYOUTS are judged on creative,

effective use of graphic elements, typography, photos, illustrations and color, particularly in regard to how they draw reader interest and support article content.

• DESKTOP PUBLISHING JUDGING CRITERIA

INFORMATIONAL CHART OR GRAPHIC is judged on its simplicity, relevance, newsworthiness and visual appeal to the readership. The resource for the information must be provided on the published graphic/chart. Additional free-hand artwork supporting the chart is optional; this artwork may or may not be scanned or computer-generated.

FEATURE HEADLINE is judged on content, typography and design, all of which must relate to the story or photo package it supports.

LOGO is also judged on content, typography and design, all of which must quickly and simply communicate the intended message to the readership. Free-hand artwork in this category must be computer-generated.

• **NFPW COMPETITION** The top entry in the following categories—news stories, feature stories, editorials, opinions, sports stories, personal columns, photos, cartoons, graphics, reviews and single-page layout—will be submitted for nationwide competition sponsored by the National Federation of Press Women. Currently, NFPW does not offer competition in the other Kansas categories of yearbook and desktop publishing. Please note: Entries to the national contest must be submitted as tearsheets. Winning national entries will be published in “Press Women” magazine and the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund newsletter. Guidelines for the national contest, which were approved by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, are available at www.nfpw.org/competitions.html.

• **AWARDS** State winners in all categories will receive non-monetary awards. Winners will be notified by mail in March 2008. Entries and judges’ comments will be returned to publication advisers soon thereafter. Judges will be asked to strive for balanced comments on all entries, depending on the judging time available.

• **KSPA MEMBERSHIP STATUS** Direct all questions regarding KSPA membership status to John Hudnall, Executive Director, Stauffer-Flint Hall, University of Kansas, 1435 Jayhawk Blvd., Lawrence, KS 66045-7575, (785) 864-0605, or e-mail kspa@ku.edu.

• **KPC/NFPW MEMBERSHIP STATUS** Direct all questions on KPC membership to Gwendolynne Larson, The Emporia Gazette, P.O. Drawer C, Emporia KS 66801; (620) 342-4841 Ext. 219, FAX (620) 342-8108 or e-mail l Larson@emporiagazette.com.

• **DISQUALIFICATION** The contest coordinator reserves the right to disqualify entries for rule violations, including multiple entries in a single contest category, entries with tampered dates, etc. Improperly submitted entries will be disqualified and entry fees will NOT be refunded. Entries that are not legible will also be disqualified, so please type or print clearly.

