



**For release:** May 22, 2026  
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## **APA Media Awards Select Advertising Contest Winners Announced**

**Birmingham, AL (May 22, 2026)** – Winners of select 2026 Alabama Press Association Media Award categories have been announced by Dee Ann Campbell, chairman of the AMA Contest Committee. This year, 23 publications submitted 484 entries in the annual advertising contest. The Pennsylvania News Media Association membership judged the entries.

First-place awards in many categories and divisions will be recognized at the 2026 APA Summer Convention banquet awards program on June 27 at the Perdido Beach Resort.

***Congratulations to all of the winners!***

## **Cat. 02 Best Classified Page or Section**

### **Division B**

- 1st Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) by staff  
2nd Place: The Fort Payne Times-Journal by staff  
3rd Place: The Cullman Tribune by Dustin Isom, Noah Galilee, Janet Chandler

### **Division C**

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) by staff  
2nd Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) by Dee Ann Campbell  
3rd Place: The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) by Rebecca Tabor

### **Division D**

- 1st Place: The Baldwin Times by April Marie-Wallace  
2nd Place: The Observer (Opelika) by staff  
3rd Place: The Wetumpka Herald by staff

## **Cat. 03 Best Single Ad 1/2 page and under, B/W**

### **Division B**

- 1st Place: The Clanton Advertiser for "MorLyns fine Jewelry and Gifts" by Zack Bates  
2nd Place: Jackson County Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "Ryan Hicks Law Office" by Jordon Hypes, Dolores Hambrick  
3rd Place: Jackson County Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "Jackson County Park" by Jordon Hypes, Dolores Hambrick

### **Division C**

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Oak View Veterinary" by Rhett McCreight  
2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Helena Veterinary" by Rhett McCreight  
3rd Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "Gilbertown Graduate" by Dee Ann Campbell

### **Division D**

- 1st Place: The Clay Times-Journal (Lineville) for "Remembering Our Past-Final Clay Bowl" by Tammy Andrews, Ray Stansell  
2nd Place: The Clay Times-Journal (Lineville) for "Remembering Our past-The Legend of Benjamin Dawkins" by Tammy Andrews  
3rd Place: The Clay Times-Journal (Lineville) for "Remembering Our Past-Lester Proctor" by Tammy Andrews

## **Cat. 04 Best Single Ad 1/2 page and under, Color**

### **Division B**

- 1st Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Momentum Marine" by Sam Himes  
2nd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Phillip Pouncey Builder, Inc." by Audra Spears  
3rd Place: The Clanton Advertiser for "Peach Park" by Zack Bates

### **Division C**

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Senior Picnic" by Rhett McCreight  
2nd Place: The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for "The Exchange Club of Phenix City" by Rebecca Tabor  
3rd Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "Chamber Graduation" by Dee Ann Campbell

### **Division D**

- 1st Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "Brush Poppers Cowboy Church" by Sam Himes

- 2nd Place: The Observer (Opelika) for "Donuts with Deputies" by Jessica Henderson  
3rd Place: The Baldwin Times for "White Sands RV" by McKinzie Impastato

Division E

- 1st Place: The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for "M.A. Jackson Co." by Donna Counts, Rhonda Stennett  
2nd Place: Village Living (Mountain Brook) for "Parrot Structural Services" by Melanie Viering, Ted Perry  
3rd Place: The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for "North Country New Year's Sale-a-bration" by Donna Counts, Rhonda Stennett

**Cat. 05 Best Single Ad over 1/2 page, B/W**

Division C

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Small Business Awards" by Rhett McCreight  
2nd Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "Nanafalia Baptist Church" by Dee Ann Campbell

**Cat. 06 Best Single Ad over 1/2 page, Color**

Division B

- 1st Place: The Clanton Advertiser for "First Assembly of God" by Zack Bates  
2nd Place: Jackson County Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "Northeast Alabama Community College" by Jordon Hypes, Elizabeth Law  
3rd Place: The Cullman Times for "Hanceville Nursing and Rehab Center Happy Holidays" by Glenda Smith, Heather Casillas

Division C

- 1st Place: The Sand Mountain Reporter (Albertville) for "Southern Metal Fabricators" by John Morris  
2nd Place: The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for "Eufaula Heritage Association" by Rebecca Tabor  
3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Senior Picnic" by Rhett McCreight

Division D

- 1st Place: The Dadeville Record for "Legacy New Homes" by Audra Spears  
2nd Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "City of Wetumpka" by staff  
3rd Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "Fur Baby University" by staff

Division E

- 1st Place: 280 Living (Birmingham) for "TherapySouth" by Melanie Viering, Ted Perry  
2nd Place: The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for "Full Moon BBQ" by Donna Counts, Rhonda Stennett

**Cat. 07 Best Regularly Scheduled Special Section-Newsprint or Glossy**

Division B

- 1st Place: The Cullman Tribune for "November Community Matters" by Dustin Isom, Noah Galilee, Janet Chandler  
2nd Place: The Daily Home (Talladega) for "My Hometown 2025" by staff  
3rd Place: Jackson County Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "InSight" by staff

Division C

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Profile" by staff  
2nd Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "Turning the Tassel" by Dee Ann Campbell  
3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Metro Football" by staff

#### Division D

- 1st Place: The Baldwin Times for "Best of Baldwin" by McKinzie Impastato, staff  
2nd Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "Gridiron Guide" by Lizi Arbogast, Ana Sofia Meyer, Cliff Williams  
3rd Place: The Clay Times-Journal (Lineville) for "Honoring Breast Cancer Survivors" by staff

### **Cat. 08 Best One Time Special Section-Newsprint or Glossy**

#### Division B

- 1st Place: The Clanton Advertiser for "Chilton County Snapshots" by staff  
2nd Place: The Cullman Tribune for "Football Fanatics" by Janet Chandler, Dustin Isom, Noah Galilee  
3rd Place: The Fort Payne Times-Journal for "Best of DeKalb" by staff

#### Division C

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Election Guide" by staff  
2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Vincent championship" by staff  
3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Thompson championship" by staff

#### Division D

- 1st Place: The Baldwin Times for "Voters Guide" by Brooke Duck, staff  
2nd Place: The Clay Times-Journal (Lineville) for "Spring Home and Garden" by staff  
3rd Place: The Observer (Opelika) for "Decision 2025: Opelika Votes" by Michelle Key, David Bell

#### Division E

- 1st Place: The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for "Redstone Arsenal Post Guide" by Donna Counts, Rhonda Stennett  
2nd Place: The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for "Veterans Day 2025" by Donna Counts, Rhonda Stennett  
3rd Place: The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for "Engineers Week 2025" by Donna Counts, Rhonda Stennett

### **Cat. 09 Best In-Paper Promotion of Newspaper**

#### Division B

- 1st Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "One Gives You..." by Audra Spears  
2nd Place: Jackson County Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "Gift the News" by Elizabeth Law  
3rd Place: The Clanton Advertiser for "Football Pickem Contest" by Zack Bates

#### Division C

- 1st Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "22 for 22" by Dee Ann Campbell  
2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "QR Code for Football Coverage" by Alec Etheredge  
3rd Place: The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for "GameTime Magazine" by Rebecca Tabor

#### Division D

- 1st Place: The Baldwin Times for "Report for America end-of-year campaign" by Brooke Duck, Kayla Green, Gabriella Chavez  
2nd Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "Read Local Shop Local" by Audra Spears  
3rd Place: The Tallassee Tribune for "What We Do" by Audra Spears

### **Cat. 10 Best Advertising Campaign**

#### Division B

- 1st Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "We Just Make Sense" by Audra Spears  
2nd Place: The News-Courier (Athens) for "Courtesy First" by Angie Christopher, Glenda Smith

3rd Place: The Cullman Times for "Mitch Smith Chevrolet Athlete of the Week" by Matthew Swan

#### Division C

1st Place: The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for "America's Thrift Halloween" by Rebecca Tabor

2nd Place: The Sand Mountain Reporter (Albertville) for "Sante Fe Restaurant" by John Morris

3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Athlete of the Week" by Noah Brakefield, Andrew Simonson

#### Division D

1st Place: The Observer (Opelika) for "It Can Wait" by Jessica Henderson

2nd Place: The Observer (Opelika) for "Angel's Antiques" by Michelle Key

#### Division E

1st Place: Vestavia Voice for "Aqua Systems of Birmingham" by Ted Perry, Melanie Viering

### **Cat. 11 Best Original/Creative Idea**

#### Division B

1st Place: The Daily Home (Talladega) for "Businesses from Decades Past to Decades to Come" by staff

2nd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Bad News" by Audra Spears

3rd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Veterans Salute" by Audra Spears

#### Division C

1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Vulcan Wanted Dead Not Alive" by Rhett McCreight

2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Lawn Mower For Sale" by Alec Etheredge

3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Alabaster For Tomorrow" by Rachel Henderson

#### Division D

1st Place: The Baldwin Times for "Report for America" by Brooke Duck, RFA Team

2nd Place: The Observer (Opelika) for "Claus Knows Local" by Michelle Key

3rd Place: The Clay Times-Journal (Lineville) for "Happy Snow Day" by staff

### **Cat. 12 Best Classified Display Ad**

#### Division B

1st Place: The Cullman Tribune for "Dental Office Help Wanted" by Janet Chandler, Dustin Isom

2nd Place: The Cullman Tribune for "Manager Help Wanted" by Janet Chandler, Dustin Isom

3rd Place: The Cullman Tribune for "Logistics Help Wanted" by Janet Chandler, Dustin Isom

#### Division C

1st Place: The Sand Mountain Reporter (Albertville) for "Swafford Auction Group, LLC" by John Morris

2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "P&F Coin" by Evann Campbell

3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Blanket Fort Hope" by Evann Campbell

### **Cat. 13 Best Signature Page**

#### Division B

1st Place: Jackson County Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "Flag Salute" by Jordon Hypes, Dolores Hambrick, Elizabeth Law

2nd Place: Jackson County Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "Happy Thanksgiving" by Jordon Hypes, Dolores Hambrick, Elizabeth Law

### Division C

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Thompson Championship" by Rachel Henderson  
2nd Place: The Sand Mountain Reporter (Albertville) for "Memorial Day" by John Morris  
3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Small Businesses" by Rhett McCreight

### Division D

- 1st Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "Don't Shop, Adopt!" by Sam Himes, Audra Spears  
2nd Place: The Dadeville Record for "Reeltown High School Football" by Audra Spears  
3rd Place: The Clay Times-Journal (Lineville) for "Clay County Yellow Meated Watermelon Festival" by Tammy Andrews

### Division E

- 1st Place: The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for "Restaurants" by Donna Counts, Rhonda Stennett

## **Cat. 14 Best Niche Publication**

### Division B

- 1st Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Go Local" by Audra Spears, Lizi Arbogast, Shaylee Moore  
2nd Place: The Cullman Tribune for "Football Fanatics" by Dustin Isom, Noah Galilee, Janet Chandler  
3rd Place: The Clanton Advertiser for "Winter 2025 Gift Guide" by staff

### Division C

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Metro Football" by staff  
2nd Place: The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for "GameTime Magazine Fall 2025" by Rebecca Tabor  
3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Explore Shelby County" by staff

### Division D

- 1st Place: The Baldwin Times for "Big Beautiful Baldwin" by McKinzie Impastato, staff  
2nd Place: The Dadeville Record for "Dadeville Magazine" by Audra Spears, Lizi Arbogast  
3rd Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "FYI" by Audra Spears, Lizi Arbogast, Cliff Williams

### Division E

- 1st Place: Hoover Sun for "Under the Lights" by Ted Perry, Melanie Viering

## **Cat. 15 Best Use of Humor**

### Division B

- 1st Place: The News-Courier (Athens) for "Courtesy First Fiddling" by Angie Christopher, Glenda Smith  
2nd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Horse's Mouth" by Audra Spears  
3rd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Friday the 13th" by Audra Spears, Baily Terry

### Division C

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Lawn Mower For Sale" by Alec Etheredge  
2nd Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "Animal Shelter Graduation" by Dee Ann Campbell  
3rd Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "Gibson Body Shop" by Dee Ann Campbell

### Division D

- 1st Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "Horse's Mouth" by Audra Spears  
2nd Place: The Dadeville Record for "All Ears" by Audra Spears

3rd Place: The Tallassee Tribune for "Antisocial" by Audra Spears

## **Cat. 16 Best Presentation of Online Advertising**

### **Division B**

1st Place: The Cullman Tribune for "www.cullmantribune.com " by Janet Chandler, Dustin Isom, Noah Galilee

2nd Place: Jackson County Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "www.jcsentinel.com" by staff

3rd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "www.alexcityoutlook.com" by staff

### **Division C**

1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "www.shelbycountyreporter.com" by staff

### **Division D**

1st Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "www.thewetumpkaherald.com" by staff

2nd Place: The Tallassee Tribune for "www.tallasseetribune.com" by staff

3rd Place: The Dadeville Record for "ww.thedadevillerecord.com" by staff

## **Cat. 17 Best Innovative Online Advertising - Single Ad**

### **Division B**

1st Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Explore Lake Martin" by staff

2nd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Wayside Animal Hospital" by Renee Trice

3rd Place: The Fort Payne Times-Journal for "NACC Begin Your future here" by staff

### **Division C**

1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Rodeo" by Rachel Henderson

2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Biscuit Belly" by Rachel Henderson

3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Taste of Pelham" by Rhett McCreight

### **Division D**

1st Place: The Baldwin Times for "Cozumel Bar & Grill" by McKinzie Impastato

2nd Place: The Tallassee Tribune for "Parker Tire" by Audra Spears

3rd Place: The Baldwin Times for "Look Dental" by McKinzie Impastato

## **Cat. 18 Online Revenue Builder**

### **Division B**

1st Place: The Fort Payne Times-Journal for "DeKalb Living Subscribe Today" by Emily Wooten

2nd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Election Center" by staff

3rd Place: The Cullman Tribune for "CullmanTribune.com - Subscribe to The Cullman Tribune" by Janet Chandler, Dustin Isom

### **Division C**

1st Place: The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "This week on SunTV football" by Dee Ann Campbell

2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "QR Code for Football Coverage" by Alec Etheredge

3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Online classifieds" by Evann Campbell

## **Cat. 19 Best Use of Social Media Advertising**

### **Division C**

1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Thompson championship show" by Alec Etheredge, Andrew Simonson, Rachel Henderson

- 2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Taste of Shelby County" by Alec Etheredge  
3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "The Red Zone" by Tyler Raley

## **Cat. 20 Best Use of Social Media Advertising**

### **Division B**

- 1st Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Onin Staffing" by Renee Trice  
2nd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Lake Martin Paw Pals" by Erin Vickers  
3rd Place: The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Edge Home Finance" by Renee Trice

### **Division C**

- 1st Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Live Shelby County Pregame Football Show" by staff  
2nd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "The Red Zone Sponsored by AmFirst" by Tyler Raley, Tori Smith  
3rd Place: Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for "Wayne's Pest Control" by Rachel Henderson, Alec Etheredge

### **Division D**

- 1st Place: The Dadeville Record for "Lake Martin Living Art & Photo Reception" by Audra Spears  
2nd Place: The Tallassee Tribune for "Article Plaque" by Tippy Hunter, Audra Spears  
3rd Place: The Wetumpka Herald for "Domino's Pizza" by Sam Himes