

NAMPA 2025 Annual Awards Competition Results

I utilized my 18 years of experience in publication work (including writing, editing, proofing, photography, layout, and design) to analyze each category against industry best practices to determine awards. I included commentary on what I thought stood out for all award winners. In particular, for written winners, I looked for excellent writing, compelling narratives, and great interviews. For design categories I looked at best use of space, typography, color, and photographs. Readability was important in all categories.

Thank you for the opportunity to judge this year's awards!

Jessica Rinaudo, Judge of the NAMPA 2025 Awards Competition

1. Best of Show

DIVISION A

- *The Best of Times (Louisiana)*

DIVISION B

- *The Vegas Voice (Nevada)*

DIVISION C

- *Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.)*

2. General Excellence

DIVISION A

- *First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana)*
 - *Judge's Comments:* A wide range of interesting columns, features, briefs, history, and recipes tucked inside every issue. Paired with beautiful images and great writing, this publication is first class.
- *Second Place: Senior Voice (Alaska)*
 - *Judge's Comments:* Wonderful range of well-written articles and topics. This engaging publication does a great job of appealing to a wide-range of interests, and serving the Alaskan population specifically. Attractive, smart, and heart-warming.

- **Third Place: Westchester Senior Voice (New York)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *From business and travel to local events and people, this publication shares it all in a clean format with excellent use of photos.*

DIVISION B

- **Honorable Mention: The Vegas Voice**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *This publication is jam-packed with tons of columns and information. It includes serious—and divisive—political topics, as well as surprising articles on sexual health. Though the stories are interesting, this publication could be elevated by higher quality images and clearer article organization.*

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.)**
 - **Judges Comments:** *This publication is a standout with well-written articles, useful advice, and engaging storytelling. Special sections are a nice draw, and the use of large photos makes one want to pick it up and start reading.*

4. Column Review

DIVISION A

- **First Place: PrimeLife Times (Illinois) - Book Reviews**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *Both reviews in this column do a wonderful job of giving a summary of the story and highlighting what makes the book a good fit for readers.*

DIVISION B

- No winner

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.)**
 - **Judges Comments:** *Enjoyable reads about two plays that highlight the strengths of each production,*

5. Senior Issues

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Senior Voice (Alaska) - Perspectives**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This column details personal struggles with aging parents and anxiety and gives tactical ways to make them better in an approachable, well-written voice.
- **Second Place: Westchester Voice (New York) - Scam Alerts**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Informative columns details how scams happen and ways to avoid them. Excellent job defining the problem and the solution for seniors.
- **Third Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - From the Bench**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Great range of relevant topics from Real ID to AI and how they can affect seniors. Easy to comprehend and well-written.

DIVISION B

- **First Place: The Vegas Voice - Scams**
 - **Judges Comments:** This column does a great job of laying out exactly what to look for with actionable items for seniors. Clear, interesting, and helpful.

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.)**
 - **Judges Comments:** Wide range of interesting topics from eyesight to off the cuff decision making. Enjoyable and entertaining writing.

6. Editorial/Opinion

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Senior Voice (Alaska) - Anchorage sales tax: there are better ideas**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Well written opinion piece does an excellent job of providing evidence, sources, and details about why the author holds his opinion on taxing, and provides alternative solution suggestions.

DIVISION B

- No winner

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - “Add it to the water?”**
 - **Judges Comments:** Extremely topical, interesting, and well-researched piece on GLP-I’s.
- **Second Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - “Is it me? Or everyone else?”**
 - **Judges Comments:** Great anecdotes and writing to illustrate differing personal views.

7. Briefs/Shorts

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Westchester Senior Voice (New York) - Out and About**
 - **Judge’s Comments:** Great mix of local art, movies, and events with succinct and informative paragraphs and photos about each.
- **Second Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Stat! Medical News & Info**
 - **Judge’s Comments:** Interesting and informative mix of health information. Short paragraphs are consumable and strong headlines make it easy to pick and choose what to read.
- **Third Place: The Best Times (Tennessee) - Upcoming Events & Happenings**
 - **Judge’s Comments:** Short, well-written blurbs keep locals informed about events.

8. Personal Essay

DIVISION A

- **First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - A Spark of Hope**
 - **Judge’s Comments:** This essay, divided into McDonald’s years into his life, has a lyrical quality and expertly weaves themes of family and faith to tell a touching life story in a small space. Beautifully written and touching.
- **Second Place: PrimeLife Times (Illinois) - Discovering my great grandfather’s legacy**
 - **Judge’s Comments:** This interesting essay reads like a novel, detailing the amazing and devastating life and legacy of a World War II soldier.
- **Third Place: Senior Voice (Alaska) - Dave’s Musical Memories Worked Magic**

- **Judge's Comments:** Beautiful writing pulls the reader into the story and makes us feel like we are there with her listening to Dave's music.

DIVISION B

- **First place: The Vegas Voice - "Christmas Memories"**
 - **Judges Comments:** The author did a great job of painting a picture of the past and sharing a unique perspective of her life, while making it accessible to all.

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "It Only Takes a Moment"**
 - **Judges Comments:** Vulnerable writing makes readers feel, perhaps, not so alone about fears and trying new things at an older age.
- **Second Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "It's not so easy to play cupid anymore"**
 - **Judges Comments:** Informative, entertaining, and personal. It hit all the right notes.
- **Third Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "Is it dementia? Or wasn't I like this at 40?"**
 - **Judges Comments:** Personalizing a frightening topic made this essay interesting and informative.

9. Profile Entries

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Howard County Beacon (Maryland) - Poet teaches art of healing**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This phenomenal profile piece shares the moving life of Vanita Leatherwood, with each section of her life more incredible than the next. Excellent writing and narrative.
- **Second Place: Westchester Senior Voice (New York) - How One Woman Turned Adversity into a Lifelong Passion**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This inspiring and heartwarming story perfectly sets the stage from the first paragraph, and does an excellent job of building the story with quotes from the featured person.

- **Third Place: Howard County Beacon (Maryland) - Writer uses fiction to express what's true**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Great opening sentence and hook. This piece does an excellent job of highlighting the featured person while weaving an interesting narrative.

DIVISION B

- **First place: Baltimore Beacon Newspaper (Maryland) - "Local twins are soup meisters"**
 - **Judges comments:** This well written piece was both engaging and fun. Great hook with "just like Willy Wonka"
- **Second place: The Vegas Voice - "The unexpected therapy in pizza dough"**
 - **Judges comments:** John Arena's story is both captivating and heartwarming.
- **Third place: Baltimore Beacon Newspaper (Maryland) - "In style, thrifty and over 50"**
 - **Judges comments:** This article was well written, engaging and did a wonderful job of introducing us to the profiles while also tying everything into the local community.

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "A Life of Music and Adventure"**
 - **Judges Comments:** This profile weaves Scott's life story with her music and hits all the right notes.
- **Second Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "Our Own Golden Bachelorette"**
 - **Judges Comments:** An interesting interview with a reality TV star. Great job digging into some of the difficulties of being on a dating show.

10. Annual Senior Resource Guide or Directory

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Boom Athens - Senior Resource Directory**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This resource directory does an excellent job of using large category headlines, color, and a readable font to delineate sections. Upgraded listings utilize a nice color palate and logo.

- ***Second Place: The Best Times (Tennessee) - Mid-South 50+ Resource Guide***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** Color tabbing and clear section headers that are easy to read help make this guide easy to navigate. The cover is very nice too.
- ***Third Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) Silver Pages***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** Great use of photos throughout to help showcase the information listed.

11. How-To Feature or Do It Yourself Feature.

DIVISION A

- ***First Place: The Best Times (Tennessee) Disposing of household goods***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** Article provides many options for seniors who want to downsize, but don't know how. Informative and helpful.
- ***Second Place: Senior Voice (Alaska) Supplement your social security income***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** Author offers creative suggestions from stocks to pet sitting on how a senior might earn a little extra cash. Great and fun ways to think outside the box.
- ***Third Place: Prime Life Times (Illinois) Beat the Heat - Don't get stranded on vacation***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** Offers great advice on things to check on one's car before taking a trip and provides helpful alternatives if a traveler's vehicle isn't up to snuff.

DIVISION C

- ***First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "Who you gonna call" How 'solo agers' do it"***
 - ***Judges Comments:*** Excellent information and instructions on things to prepare for when living alone as a senior. Use of numbers and bullet points really drove home tips and information.

12. Travel Column

DIVISION A

- ***First Place: PrimeLife Times (Illinois)***

- **Judge's Comments:** Both travel columns submitted were full of personality and charm, and highlighted uncommon adventures. A delight to read.
- **Second Place: Senior Voice (Alaska)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This unique take on a travel column shared wedding destinations at discounts for seniors, which was both informative and fun.

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.)**
 - **Judges Comments:** Column is well-written, with language that perfectly paints the scene for the destination. Of note is the column, "A road trip throughout dramatic Iceland"

13. Feature Writing

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Howard County Beacon (Maryland) - Both Dog and Trainer are Fast**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This delightful story about a mixed-breed dog being the first to win the Westminster Dog Show agility competition has all the markers of an excellent feature story: an interesting topic, great interviews, and a deeper dive into the topic. Thoroughly enjoyable and adorable.
- **Second Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Bizarre Medical Treatments from the Past**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Fantastic subject matter told in an un-put-downable narrative.
- **Third Place: Senior Voice (Alaska) - A necessity of the past becomes a fur rendezvous tradition**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This highly entertaining topic of outhouse races was told with great humor and well researched insight into Alaskan history. Fantastic writing and topic.

DIVISION B

- **First Place: Baltimore Beacon Newspaper (Maryland) - "Oriole Advocates Change Lives" by Cathy Habas**
 - **Judge's comments:** The writing in this feature is engaging, paints the scene, helps us get to know the volunteers, and ties everything back to a Baltimore staple: The Orioles. Great read from start to finish.

- **Second Place: Baltimore Beacon Newspaper (Maryland) - “Free Advice for Entrepreneurs” by Margaret Foster**
 - **Judge’s comments:** *The writing in this feature is well done and presents a clear story about SCORE, while pairing it with an illustrative story. It’s divided into helpful sub-categories, so the reader can find exactly what they need.*

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - “Family-run camp for 32 years”**
 - **Judges Comments:** *This article featured a fun topic with great interviews, storytelling, and sense of history. Well written and enjoyable.*
- **Second Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - “Collectors are Crazy About Cars”**
 - **Judges Comments:** *Lots of great details and information for car enthusiasts and the curious alike. Great interviews.*
- **Third Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - “Summer Camps for Grownups”**
 - **Judges Comments:** *A topic that makes readers smile told in a way that they can imagine themselves joining in on the fun too.*

14. Special Section in the publication

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Westchester Senior Voice (New York) - Memory Care**
 - **Judge’s Comments:** *This comprehensive special section draws the reader in with interesting photography, graphics, and facts, and keeps them there with helpful stories on everything from research on Alzheimer’s to common questions about memory loss.*
- **Second Place: The Best Times (Tennessee) - Retirement Housing Guide**
 - **Judge’s Comments:** *This section opens strong with an article about the pandemic changing how people live, and has a helpful, detailed guide on living options.*

DIVISION B

- **First place: The Vegas Voice - “Honoring All Veterans”**

- **Judge's Comments:** *This section was a great mix of veteran-related stories, from sharing how to investigate the origins of a 100-year-old honorable discharge document, to opinions from veterans themselves. Great reading,*

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "Housing & Homecare Options"**
 - **Judges Comments:** *Great opening image, clear direction on what to expect, and excellent articles within the special section.*
- **Second Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "A Caregiver's Guide"**
 - **Judges Comments:** *Topical and helpful articles in an organized and easy-to-read layout.*

15. Topical Issue

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Boom Athens - "Living Apart Together" by Arlene Williams**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *This story explores an interesting topic, with great quotes and explanations by people living as a supportive couple with no plans to marry. It provides a look into a topic not often considered and was well-written and heartwarming.*
- **Second Place: Senior Voice (Alaska) - "Wildfire Prevention and Older Adults" by Paola Banchero**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *This informative article does a great job of giving current context about wildfires and why it's important for seniors especially to take action and be aware of fire safety measures.*
- **Third Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - "After Death: Alternatives to Traditional Burial" by Sara Hamer**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *This informative article does a great job of both looking to past burial traditions and considering new ones while managing to not be morbid or frightening.*

DIVISION B

- **First place: The Vegas Voice - "Not MY Children" by Rana Goodman**

- **Judge's Comments:** *This article was a great explanation of guardianship laws and why seniors should take the time to complete a guardianship nomination form. This is a great topic that may not be front of mind for many. The real life example was a great support for the piece.*

DIVISION C

- **First Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "Hosts Love Exchange Students"**
 - **Judges Comments:** *This article had a unique and engaging topic that was related well to seniors. Great interviews and narrative.*
- **Second Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "Teamwork Times Two: The Story of AA"**
 - **Judges Comments:** *Great article about the famous AA program and the couple behind it. Touching and well-written.*
- **Third Place: Washington Beacon Newspapers (Washington D.C.) - "Searching for New Love Mid-Life"**
 - **Judges Comments:** *Excellent interview, storytelling and interesting topic.*

16. Front Cover (Photo)

DIVISION A

- **First Place: Senior Voice (Alaska)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *Photo of Northern Pintails outside is beautiful and professional, and the birds draw the reader in.*
- **Second Place: The Best Times (Tennessee) - It's Fall Y'all**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *The fall photo is charming and inviting. The headline is fun and perfectly suited to the image.*
- **Third Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Women in War**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *The photos of Arlington National Cemetery are beautiful and the headline is well suited to the images and topic.*

DIVISION B

- **First place: The Vegas Voice - Summer with the grandkids**
 - **Judge's Comments:** *This front cover is both eye-catching and hilarious! The typography is in perfect contrast to the background and easy to read.*

17. Front Cover (Illustration)

DIVISION A

- ***First Place: The Best Times (Tennessee)***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** *A child's sculpture is beautiful and perfectly draws the reader into the story.*
- ***Second Place: PrimeLife Times***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** *A cute piggy bank with a perfectly suited typeface for the headline draws the reader into the story.*

18. Table of Contents

DIVISION A

- ***First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana)***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** *Images, color, and dividers make this table of contents both attractive and easy to use.*

19. Briefs/Shorts

DIVISION A

- ***First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Stat! Medical News and Info***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** *Great use of images and color to convey information in consumable paragraphs.*
- ***Second Place: The Best Times (Tennessee) - Upcoming Events & Happenings***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** *Large photos help showcase a list of events in the local area.*

20. Annual Senior Resource Guide or Directory

DIVISION A

- ***First Place: The Best Times (Tennessee) - Mid-South 50+ Resource Guide***
 - ***Judge's Comments:*** *This resource guide uses bold colors along the edge of the pages and titles to clearly define sections and makes it easy to navigate and read. Great use of space and clear readability.*

- **Second Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Colored tabbing along the sides for each category help make this guide reader-friendly, even with the vast amount of content.

21. Feature Layout

DIVISION A

- **First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Women in War**
 - **Judge's Comments:** The first page of the spread makes excellent use of the space with a large, attractive image and high contrast type for the title. The companion women warriors infographic is both beautiful to look at and interesting to read.
- **Second Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Common Medical Mistakes & How to Avoid Them**
 - **Judge's Comments:** The cutouts of doctors with important take-aways for readers are both attractive and informative. Subheadings make it easy to move through the article and find information.

22. Best Overall Use of Photography

DIVISION A

- **First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Photos used consistently across the publication to illustrate columns and stories. Cut-out images in the briefs are particularly attractive.
- **Second Place: The Best Times (Tennessee)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This publication's photos really shine on the cover. The Around Town section uses nice, big photos as well.

23. Best Use of Color

DIVISION A

- **First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** This publication leans into contrasting colors, particularly red, which is eye-catching and makes it fun to flip through.

24. Overall Design

DIVISION A

- **First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Beautiful layouts, great use of images, and clear headlines. This magazine is beautiful from cover to column.
- **Second Place: Westchester Senior Voice (New York)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Clean lines and great use of images and color make this magazine easy to read and navigate.
- **Third Place: Senior Voice (Alaska)**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Beautiful covers, clear, color-coded columns, strong legible headlines and excellent use of strong images make this publication's design attractive and fun to read.

25. Self Promotion (in house)

DIVISION A

- **First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Silver Pages**
 - **Judge's Comments:** The ad's use of a circle to frame the information and high contrast draws the reader's eye to the information.
- **Second Place: The Best Times (Tennessee) - A Spring Morning in the Garden**
 - **Judge's Comments:** Great use of white space to showcase information.

26. Self Promotion (outside source)

DIVISION A

- **First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - The Stage is Set for...**
 - **Judge's Comments:** The ad is a great play on words. Love the use of the curtain to reveal the magazines that are waiting to perform for the viewer.

27. Self Promotion/Awards

DIVISION A

- **First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - We're on Cloud 9**

- ***Judge's Comments:** This ad is playful and fun with great use of color. The play on words is perfect for showcasing the awards won.*

30. Best Single Ad (Color)

DIVISION A

- ***First Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Weems, Schimpf, Haines & Moore ad***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** Clean layout, easy to read copy, and great use of space and color.*
- ***Second Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana) - Southern Roofing***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** Copy is easy to read, the logo is clear and the images across the middle clearly define the purpose of the company.*

31. Best Banner

DIVISION A

- ***First Place: The Best Times (Tennessee)***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** Banner's font is easy to read with a thick, serifed font on a clear background. The tag line is also clearly legible.*
- ***Second Place: The Best of Times (Louisiana)***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** Banner is bold and eye-catching. The larger first letters of each word draw the eye across the top of the page.*

DIVISION B

- ***First Place: The Vegas Voice***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** The title is clear and legible, and the Vegas skyline added to it is the perfect touch!*

33. Website Self Promotion

- ***First place: The Best of Times (Louisiana)***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** Clean, concise ad is easy to read and directs the user to the website with clarity.*
- ***Second place: The Vegas Voice***

- ***Judge's Comments:** There is a lot happening in this ad with color and images and background. Even though it's very busy, it does draw the eye and convey the information on the website.*

34. Website General Excellence

- ***First place: TheBestTimes.com (Tennessee)***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** Clean layout is attractive and easy to read and navigate. It's more modern, news website style and clean color palate makes this website a clear winner.*
- ***Second place: TheVegasVoice.net (Nevada)***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** The slideshow keeps regular visitors aware of the newest articles, but the website really shines in its organization under "Latest Articles"*
- ***Third place: TheBestofTimesNews.com (Louisiana)***
 - ***Judge's Comments:** Clear organization and beautiful banner.*