

# General Excellence

## Guidelines for newspaper and newsmagazine entries

Newspaper and newsmagazines are judged twice in the General Excellence competition each year. During the contest, one set of judges evaluates the entire publication, provides comments for the staff and assigns a score. Another set of judges rates portions of the publication such as the front page, editorials or sports, and awards “best of” recognition.

Staffs that follow a newsmagazine format should note that on their entry form. Newsmagazines, as defined by the National Scholastic Press Association, are publications that consistently use cover art devoted to one story and/or a dominant piece of artwork. Newsmagazines also tend to use longer, more feature-style writing. The same criteria is used for judging both newspapers and newsmagazines.

There must be at least two entries from two different schools in the newsmagazine category to be judged. If enough entries are not received, the publication will be placed with newspapers by default.

Individual students do not submit their work in the General Excellence category. Instead, they compete in a separate competition (see information on pages 6-8).

### Newspaper General Excellence

Judges for this category review three entire issues of an entered newspaper from the 2004-2005 school year and provide a written critique of the newspaper. Schools placing first or second, or winning an achievement award will be recognized at the annual convention. Categories, based on school size and type of publication, are:

• *Senior High School Printed Newspapers:* Schools are divided based on school size and awards will be given within each division. Newsmagazines are included in this category.

• *School Sections in Local Newspapers:* Sections produced in-school and regularly printed in the local newspaper.

• *Miniature-sized Papers:* Typically papers using a two or three-column format and duplicated on in-school office equipment.

• *Junior High or Middle School Newspapers:* Open to any GSPA member junior high or middle school newspaper.

### Newspaper Special Categories

Judges also award first, second or achievement prizes in the following special categories as part of General Excellence judging:

• *Best News Writing:* Articles report, but do not interpret, events that have news value and timeliness to the readers.

• *Best Features Writing or Best Use of Features:* The story or series of stories includes human interest, entertainment or information.

• *Best Editorial Page:* Editorial pages will be judged on reader interest, originality, appropriateness, clarity of purpose and effectiveness. Editorials should represent the opinion of the staff and editors on a timely news matter of concern to the school, community, state, country or world.

• *Best Use of Photographs:* Use of photographs throughout an issue will be evaluated.

• *Best Sports Coverage:* Effective and equal coverage of men’s and women’s sports as well as freshman, junior varsity and senior varsity sports will be evaluated. In addition, topics will be evaluated for obvious impact on the student audience.

• *Best Use of Advertising:* Creativity, content, design and overall use of space will be evaluated.

• *Best Front Page Layout:* Front pages will be evaluated for content, design and overall use of space.

### HOW TO SUBMIT AN ENTRY:

*NOTE: GSPA Contests are provided as both a learning tool and a way to recognize the excellent work produced by Georgia students and their advisers throughout the school year. Guidelines are set to ensure efficiency in processing of entries.*

All entry materials must be postmarked by March 1, 2005. No late entries will be accepted.

Staffs competing in this contest must be 2004-2005 members of GSPA.

Complete a contest entry form (page 3).

Complete a media information form (Page 5).

Submit the \$35 critique fee.

Send two copies of your best **three** issues printed during the 2004-2005 school year.

There’s no need to select entries for the special categories contests, such as “Best Editorial Page;” your paper will be judged automatically in the special categories.

Questions? Concerns? Contact GSPA at 706-542-5022 or send an e-mail to: [gspa@uga.edu](mailto:gspa@uga.edu).