

The 31<sup>st</sup> annual Lisagor Awards  
for work done in 2007  
presented April 25, 2008

Judges' comments included, when available.

#### OVERALL DEADLINE REPORTING

Introduced this year, this category was open to all media for a cross-competition of superior deadline reporting. Entries reflected coverage of breaking news by a reporting team as published, posted on a Web site or aired within 24 hours of the event. Judges were instructed to look for enterprise, accuracy, style and impact as well as speed of execution.

**Winner:** *Daily Herald*, "Luna Guilty," Stacy St. Clair, Joseph Ryan and Staff

Judges' comments: While the entire package was complete and readable, the main story was exceptionally well written and managed to incorporate the most interesting aspects of the trial that lasted 14 days. One strength of the package was the number of sources quoted and paraphrased. It lent a personal tone to the stories but didn't exploit the principal characters involved. The package also effectively used reader-friendly devices like the jury deliberation chart, reactions to the verdict and photos of the victims. The package also included a good story looking forward to how the verdict would affect the other defendant's case.

**Finalist:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, "Guv's Big New Biz Tax Blitz," Greg Hinz and Paul Merrion

Judges' comments: The proposed bill would have an immense impact on businesses first but also on virtually everyone in the state. The story is a good example of enterprise reporting with a strong sidebar that included comments from small business people who would be affected by the law as well as placing the matter into context with other states with similar policies. One shortcoming was that the reporters found no proponent for the proposed system. It would also have been interesting to juxtapose the pros and cons of the tax proposal to those of the universal health insurance plan that it was designed to help fund.

#### BEST NEWS WEB SITE

This new category honors the best source of news and utility in the community.

**Winner:** *Northwest Herald*, [nwherald.com](http://nwherald.com), Staff

Judges' comments: A very clean designed, very functional and colorful site with tons of entry points. Great use of type size, colors and shapes.

**Finalists:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, [ChicagoBusiness.com](http://ChicagoBusiness.com), Michael McHugh, Todd Behme and Staff

Judges' comments: Very clean, easily navigable with clear hierarchy, many entry points, not obtrusively advertised.

*Chicago Tribune*, [chicagotribune.com](http://chicagotribune.com), Bill Adey, Ben Estes and Staff

Judges' comments: Clean design, good hierarchy, non-obnoxious advertisements.

#### BEST INTERACTIVE FEATURE

Judges of this new category looked for the most compelling online project. Submissions could have been a multimedia package, database, user-generated feature or any interactive project.

**Winner:** *Northwest Herald*, "Coincidence or cluster? The McCullom Lake brain cancer lawsuits," Staff

Judges' comments: Wonderful blend of public records, maps, videos, photos and traditional print elements narrating the plight of those possibly affected by tainted well water and their lawsuit against the chemical companies that may have been responsible. Deftly explaining a tedious lawsuit and incorporating harrowing testimony of struggle and suffering, this was obviously an ongoing team effort that marries the talents of several

newspaper departments for an exceptional example of modern journalism.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Public Radio WBEZ*, "DNA files," Staff

Judges' comments: An ongoing radio series about genetics and related research in the Chicago area, DNA Files makes effective use of audio, video and photos to tell the story of ancestry, science, disease and what the building blocks that we each share — genes — tells us about our lives, environment and future.

*Realtor® Magazine*, "Stage this room," Melissa Dittmann Tracey

Judges' comments: As a multimedia piece accompanying Realtor Magazine's print story, "Staged to Sell," this was one of the few entries that was truly interactive. Incorporating videos, tips and Q&A — writers, designers and editors repackaged magazine content in a unique way that helps showcase visual elements that aren't served by words alone.

#### EDITORIAL CARTOONS

Up to six examples of the work of a single editorial cartoonist. Judges looked for creativity, technical mastery and impact.

**Winner:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, Roger L. Schillerstrom

Judges' comments: Well-drawn and clever cartoons the reader can instantly identify with, especially the homeowners on the torture rack of subprime lenders, getting a little adjustment. Well done.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, Thomas Frisbie

Judges' comments: Clever way of illustrating the morass we're in.

*Daily Herald*, Eric Semelroth

Judges' comments: Simple and graphic. Don't all Cubs fans feel like they're pushing a boulder uphill?

## DESIGN

### **Daily Newspaper News Design**

**Winner:** *Daily Herald*, "Windy vs. Indy," Tim Broderick and Sean Stangland

Judges' comments: Impact design with a punchy headline. Pride and enthusiasm for the Bears clearly shows in this layout for their quest for the Super Bowl.

**Finalists:** *Daily Southtown*, "\$738 million Question," Chad Merda

Judges' comments: Clever use of toy cars to illustrate story on congestion.

*Daily Herald*, "Luna Guilty," Tim Broderick

Judges' comments: Front-page design complemented an excellent effort by reporters. Well planned.

### **Daily Newspaper Feature or Sports Design**

**Winner:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, "Green House," Greg Good

Judges' comment: The clear winner in an incredibly tough field. Beautifully planned and rich detail in this illustration. A great service to readers on a subject that is getting a great deal of attention these days.

**Finalists:** *Daily Southtown*, "Train Rex," Chad Merda

No comments

*Chicago Sun-Times*, "Super Hero," Eric White, Arnel Reynon and Dan Mann

Judges' comments: Clean and elegant design. Watercolors juxtaposed with photos were a superb touch.

### **Magazine**

**Winner:** *Beep*, A *Daily Herald* publication, "Fall Out Boy/Plain White T's," Jason McGregor

Judges' comments: Jason's use of typography and graphics in lieu of running a boring handout photo brought lots of impact to what could have been a dull cover. Taking the basics and standing them on their head from cover to centerspread was what impressed our judges.

**Finalists:** *Time Out Chicago*, "The Beer Issue," Bryan Erickson and Mike Novak

No comments

*Hospitals & Health Networks*, "States Evidence," Chuck Lazar

No comments

### **Non-daily Newspaper**

**Winner:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, "The Teachings of India," Melissa Phee

Judges' comments: Absolutely beautiful. The judges were very impressed with use of India-theme graphics and photos that pulled the package together from front to back. Visually stunning.

**Finalist:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, "Focus: Brazil," Melissa Phee  
No comments

#### COMMENTARY

A series on a single topic, or up to three examples by the same author illustrating general excellence. Judges looked for analytical skill, style and impact.

#### Daily Newspaper Editorial

**Winner:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, "CTA Bailout," Editorial Board

Judges' comments: These pieces show excellent watchdog baying on behalf of beleaguered citizens, by bringing the hard light of publicity onto the situation, explaining it, providing background and history, proposing solutions and preventive measures, and sticking with it until the government did something about it. One judge said: "It made me mad – and I haven't ridden the el since the summer of 1990. The thought that so many Chicagoans were being threatened with the loss of their only way to work and school was unthinkable. Fix it, now, indeed!"

**Finalist:** *The Courier News*, "Watching a Gentle Light Go Out," Mike Bailey

Judges' comments: Mike Bailey's writing was superb in all three of his entries; however, they really belong in the DC1 (news column or commentary) category. However, since all three would have been very fine editorials had they been rewritten and published that way, I thought it a good idea to make him a finalist. Further, the piece on the passing of a colleague is a good example of the kind of "take-a-moment-to-see-the-big-picture" viewpoint we need to see more often in print, to balance our daily nitpicking and fault-finding. The public often complains that they only read bad news in our pages; pieces like these – especially if moved into the lead editorial spot – would go a long way toward restoring some credibility and respect for our efforts. Very well conceived and written.  
*Chicago Sun-Times*, "BP Pollutes Lake Michigan," Editorial Board

Judges' comments: More exemplary watchdog commentary, though the call for a boycott might have been a bit much. It would have been better to get someone in the community to do that for you. However, the judges commend the board's decision to draw a line in the lake, so to speak, and firmly insist that any further addition of pollutants, no matter how diluted or within acceptable regulatory limits, is unacceptable in principle and should be unthinkable in practice. Chicago has a long history of short-sighted decisions that led to long-term threats to its water supply. Good for you for standing on principle.

#### Non-daily Editorial

**Winner:** *American Medical News*, "TB on a Plane," Stephanie Stapleton

Judges' comments: After the buzz about the Atlanta lawyer with TB on a plane died down, the story of what do about the national problem of infectious diseases appeared to disappear also. This editorial brings the problem in a much larger context back to the

table for discussion and notes what needs to change if we don't want to see this sort of thing on a regular basis.

**Finalists:** *Pensions & Investments*, "Sovereign funds' test," Barry B. Burr

Judges' comments: Editorials often cover problems that are happening, as opposed to those that may happen. But this one is different. It flags up concern over a type of investment that is growing very quickly, gives the concern context and offers a solution – all in an easy to read format.

*Modern Healthcare*, "What are You Prepared to Do?," Neil McLaughlin

Judges' comments: Editorials that entice readers to consider a problem – as opposed to banging them over the head with it – are particularly compelling. This entry is an example. It's entertaining but at the same time asks all readers – not just specific groups – to take responsibility for contributing something to solve a crisis.

### **Daily Newspapers News Column or Commentary**

**Winner:** *The Beacon News*, "Teen Drinking – Lessons Unlearned," Denise Crosby

Judges' comments: This was a tough category. It was hard enough with 31 entries to read over, but there was scant separation between the winning entries and the entries which reluctantly had to be tossed aside. So Denise Crosby should feel especially proud. Crosby took a local tragedy and turned it into a crusade. The problem of teenage drinking and driving is not new. But if more teenagers and parents read Crosby's numerous columns on the subject, the tragic statistics of teenage drinking might take a turn for the better.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Tribune*, "From Here to Excellence," Cornelia Grumman and John McCormick

No comments

*Chicago Tribune*, "When World's Ceiling Fell in on Debra," Dawn Trice

No comments

### **Non-Daily News Column or Commentary**

**Winner:** *Chicago Reader*, "The Works," Ben Joravsky

Judges' comments: Superb job reporting and writing on the abuse of tax increment financing; makes a complicated financial process compelling.

**Finalists:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, Columns, Greg Hinz

Judges' comments: interesting topics, written with wit, insight and command of the facts.

*Journal and Topics Newspapers*, "Taxes Will Never Die," Todd Wessell

Judges' comments: Passionate and fact-filled arguments against city tax increases.

### **Sports**

**Winner:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, "Shame of the NFL," Rick Telander

Judges' comments: Telander writes powerfully about a sordid underbelly of the National Football League, where repeatedly injured former players turn up in constant suffering, almost hopelessly in debt for medical bills and sometimes homeless. His series of

columns details bad blood between the NFL Players Association and a charitable group called The Gridiron Greats headed by former stars Mike Ditka and others. As commentary, it takes the side of the Gridiron Greats, with strong quotes and color. It is compelling reading.

**Finalists:** *The Post-Tribune*, Series about the battle over East Chicago High School trophies, Mike Hutton

*Chicago Tribune*, “Spurred by tragedy, making a difference,” Rick Morrissey  
Judges’ comments: There were a number of strong entries in this category. Both runners-up were outstanding reads. We don’t often read such an offbeat and entertaining story as Hutton’s about the battle over trophies in East Chicago High School hall of fame. Morrissey’s entry also is a little outside the normal scope of sports reporting, writing in dramatic detail about a former Northwestern free safety’s campaign for a defibrillator initiative that might have saved the life of a former teammate.

#### **News Bureau, Wire Service, Online**

**Winner:** *Tribune Media Services*, “New Orleans: 2 Years Later,” Ilyce Glink  
Judges’ comments: Terrific writing. Glink doesn’t just rely on numbers or facts to tell the story of a diminished city, but takes the reader to the heart of the story, the people. Editors made a wise decision assigning Glink this task.

**Finalists:** *MSNBC.com*, Sports Columns, Bob Cook

No comments

*Bloomberg News*, “It’s Not Just Money,” John Wasik

No comments

#### **Television Commentary**

Insufficient number of entries

#### **Radio Commentary**

Insufficient number of entries

#### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

A photograph by a single photographer, a series of photographs on a single subject by one or more photographers, or a video sequence of up to 10 minutes on a single subject. Judges valued enterprise, technical mastery and impact.

#### **News Bureau, Wire Service or Online News Photography**

**Winner:** *The Associated Press*, “Baseball Fight,” Nam Y. Huh

Judges’ comments: It’s a great catch of the pitcher’s extended arm with fist attached, with the player just getting out of the way! Crisp, colorful, clear expressions. Too bad sports has to be so emotionally violent.

**Finalists:** *The Associated Press*, “Iraq Grief,” Charles Rex Arbogast

Judges’ comments: Great composition.

*The Associated Press*, “Obama in Iowa,” Michael S. Green

Judges' comments: Lots of different compositions, angles, and expressions. Any of these would be great to use on a day to day coverage of a political candidate. I really like the bumper car shot.

### **Videography**

**Winner:** *CBS 2 WBBM-TV*, "Winter Solstice," Nathan Delack

Judges' comments: We saw winter in Chicagoland. That was the goal. A great job of getting the tight shot and the wide shots of winter; we saw winter up-close and from the other side of the pond. This was winter.

**Finalist:** *WTTW11*, "The Foods of Chicago: A Delicious History," Tim Boyd

No comments

### **Daily Newspaper Sports Photography**

**Winner:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, "Throwing Error," Richard A. Chapman

Judges' comments: Great catch ... for the photographer! More than just two eyes and a ball. Good timing for the expression and the ball. Nice exposure for sharpness and light.

**Finalist:** *Chicago Tribune*, "Cubs," Phil Velasquez

Judges' comments: Fun to look at this photograph. Great depth of field. Thank you for letting us see the crowd's reaction as well as the team's while player crosses home plate. Would have liked to see more at the bottom.

### **Magazine**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune Magazine*, "Good As Gold," Abel Uribe

Judges' comments: An easy first place choice. It was easy to discover Abel's love for the craft of photojournalism. His careful use of light with the occasional blending of natural and strobe light was extremely appealing. His compilation of both detail and general informational photos clearly told the story through the visual medium. Additionally, the design of the package enhanced the photos with the appropriate use of white space on several of the pages. This is a rare, but needed, benefit in displaying fine photos. The careful camera-to-subject view was refreshing and enhanced the over-all composition of the photos.

**Finalists:** *The Chicago Reporter*, "Invisible Victims," Jon Lowenstein, Joe Gallo and Jason Reblando

Judges' comments: Original visual appeal was widespread. A well-rounded visual production that was presented with diverse photo opportunities that seemed to be missed in the over-all package. There was an abundance of "portrait-type" photos that could have been more appealing with relevant "found" photo circumstances that clearly showed what the text of the stories were conveying. Basically, a nice package that missed going deeper visually.

*Smart Business Chicago*, "Attitude Adjustment," Michael Monar

No comments

### **Non-daily Newspaper**

**Winner:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, "40 Under 40," Stephen J. Serio and Erik Unger  
Judges' comments: This category was a highly competitive category with several fine entries. A lot of discussion took place to reveal "40 Under 40" by Serio and Unger as the clear-cut, first-place winner. The double truck lead photo presentation was a unique, clear and creative effort in what presents cliché visual productions. The individual portraits were refreshing, and cleverly composed. Additionally, they showed clear evidence of the photographers' efforts to get to know their subjects before photographing them. A rare effort. Lighting in each photo was produced with technical excellence. With 40 subjects the photographic team paid careful attention to stay away from redundancy. Again, a tribute to knowing their subjects' roles before visually recording for publication.

**Finalists:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, "Focus: Brazil," Erik Unger

Judges' comments: Appealing camera-to-subject view made this a very strong competitor with the winner. In some cases with regards to photo packages, less is more. However, this story and the minimal number of photos cried out for more. The over-all visual report was sound, but needing more informative photos to round out the package.

*Star Newspapers*, "Beating the Throw," Brett Roseman

No comments

### **Daily Newspaper News Photography**

**Winner:** *Daily Southtown*, "Winter Fire," Joseph P. Meier

Judges' comments: Excellent contrast drawing the eye to the fire! Interesting, informative, and intense. The bird's eye view fills the frame quite well.

**Finalists:** *Daily Herald*, "Lightning and Firefighting," Steve Lundy

Judges' comments: A strike of luck or experienced timed exposure? Either way the lightning definitely brings a striking element to the photograph. Pardon the pun.

*Chicago Sun-Times*, "The Quizno's Coyote," Scott Stewart

Judges' comments: Jaws dropped on this one. Beautiful shot!

### **Daily Newspaper Feature Photography**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, "Our Hidden Poor," Kuni Takahashi

Judges' comments: Photojournalism at its finest. A job well done in bringing life to a story about life. Takahashi's talent shines with natural light and composition. It takes more than time and dedication to accomplish this art of work, it takes understanding.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Tribune*, "Inside the Surge," Kuni Takahashi"

Judges' comments: Takahashi has gone beyond the call of duty to bring us first class photographs from places not many would dare go. Takahashi is that fly on the wall we all think about being at time or another. His courage stands out with his compelling photojournalism.

*Daily Southtown*, "Prayers," Joseph P. Meier

Judges' comments: This is one photograph we don't mind the subject staring into the camera.

## BUSINESS AND CONSUMER REPORTING

A story or series on a single subject, by a reporter or reporting team. Judges examined enterprise, style and impact.

### **News Bureau, Wire Service or Online**

**Winner:** *The Associated Press*, “Homeowner Nightmares,” Dave Carpenter and Janna Elphinstone

Judges’ comments: The housing crisis is well known, but this story really shows the impact of the lives of those most affected – the families. It also gives great insight into the tactics lenders use to entice people into a bad loan. Well worth the read.

**Finalists:** *Bloomberg News*, “Solv-Ex Chief Who Scammed Investors Says He’s Outsmarted Exxon,” Joe Carroll

No comments

*The Associated Press*, “Buttery Hazard” stories, Sharon Cohen

No comments

### **Daily Newspaper Business Reporting**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, “Keeping the Oil Flowing,” David Greising

No comments

**Finalists:** *The Wall Street Journal*, Series on the Restaurant Industry, Janet Adamy and Thomas M. Burton

No comments

*Daily Herald*, “2007,” Michael Sean Comerford

No comments

### **Daily Newspaper Consumer Reporting**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, “Hidden Hazards,” Staff

Judges’ comments: This is journalism at its finest. This series is well researched, well written and well worth the time reading through it. The stories are alarming, showing the deadly flaws in products ranging from the toys we buy our kids to the seats we drive them to the store in to the beds we put them to sleep in. But even more disturbing is how the Tribune staff detailed the government's inability to do anything about it. We certainly hope the Tribune doesn't have to write a series like this again, but we take comfort in knowing the Tribune will there to let us know.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, “Fish Fraud,” Janet Rausa Fuller

No comments

*Daily Herald*, “The Dream Foreclosed,” Anna Marie Kukec, Deborah Donovan and Tim Broderick

No comments

### **Business Magazine or Newspaper**

**Winner:** *BusinessWeek*, Motorola Stories, Roger Crockett

No comments

**Finalists:** *Crain's Chicago Business*, "Is Kraft Crossing the Line?," Julie Jargon

No comments

*Crain's Chicago Business*, "McD's Brewing Beverage Blitz," David Sterrett

No comments

### **Trade or Specialty Magazine, Newspaper or Newsletter**

**Winner:** *The Chicago Reporter*, "The High Price of Homeownership," Kimbriell Kelly and Alden Loury

No comments

**Finalists:** *Hospitals & Health Networks*, "Can Big Business Save Health Care?," Phil Dunn

No comments

*Realtor® magazine*, "Frontlines: Real Estate's Wild Card," Robert Freedman

No comments

### **General-Interest Publication**

**Winner:** *Chicago magazine*, "South Loop Rising," Dennis Rodkin

Judges' comments: Solid reporting, good writing, package put together well with graphics, photos, illustrations, charts and sidebars.

**Finalists:** *Chicago magazine*, "The Seven Habits of a Highly Effective Restaurateur," Jonathan Black

Judges' comments: Very readable, well-written, fun, good color obviously gleaned during a considerable amount of reporting

*Chicago Tribune Magazine*, " 'Superwoman' Returns," Greg Burns

Judges' comments: Important topic, well executed.

### **Television**

**Winner:** *CBS 2 WBBM-TV*, "Filthy Food," Dave Savini and Michele Youngerman

Judges' comments: Judges were very impressed on the depth the crew went to tell the story. Literally tailing a vehicle to another state. This is a great story that has not been done over and over. It was good story, then became a great story exposing the lack of food inspectors for the state of Illinois.

**Finalists:** *Fox News Chicago*, "House Today, Gone Tomorrow," Mark Saxenmeyer, Dartise Johnson and David Tresnowski

No comments

*Fox News Chicago*, "Internet Insecurity," Larry Yellen, Diane Carbonara and Tim Smith

No comments

## **Radio**

**Winner:** *Chicago Public Radio WBEZ-FM*, “The New Timeshare: Luxury Cars,” Alex Helmick and Tinku Ray

Judges’ comments: An entertaining reports on a new segment of the luxury car market, mixed with audio of exhilarated drivers and engine exhaust. Wish I was in the Ferrari with them. Great public radio feature.

**Finalists:** *WGN Radio*, “Lamb Chops,” Rob Hart

No comments

*WBBM Newsradio 780*, “Noon Business Hour – Subprime Loan Crisis,” Sherman Kaplan, Kris Kridel and Andrew Giersher

No comments

## **Community Newspaper**

No award

## FEATURES

A story or series on a single subject, by a reporter or reporting team. Judges looked for enterprise, precision, scope, style and impact.

### **Daily Newspaper Lifestyle Reporting**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, “The Hoaks Sisters,” Jason George

Judges’ comments: Fascinating story, well worth a two-part series.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, “Going Green,” Janet Rausa Fuller, Lori Rackl and Monifa Thomas

No comments

*Daily Herald*, “Sex Ed,” Jamie Sotonoff

No comments

### **Non-daily Lifestyle Reporting**

**Winner:** *Pioneer Press*, “Greener” Series, Northwest Group

Judges’ comments: Important subject matter, well executed. A lot of time obviously went into this project.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Tribune Magazine*, “I’m Calling You Out, Bobby Flay,” Mark Caro, Chicago Tribune Magazine

No comments

*Chicago Reader*, “Resourceful Renters: Eight Chicagoans Who’ve Transformed Their Apartments,” Heather Kenny and Martha Bayne

Judges’ comments: Love this project. Fun, creative, great photos and details in the writing. We wish we had photos of the renters.

### **Radio Lifestyle Reporting**

**Winner:** *Chicago Public Radio WBEZ-FM*, “Mary Todd,” Gianofer Fields, Aurora Aguilar and Staff

Judges’ comments: A thoroughly enjoyable and interesting piece on the life of a troubled former first lady, as documented by lively reporting and through the eyes of a new exhibit at the Lincoln Museum in Springfield. A lot was learned about Mary Todd Lincoln's life and troubles post-Abe, and it was an entertaining listen.

**Finalists:** *WLS-AM 890*, “355 Extension,” Jennifer Keiper

No comments

*WBBM Newsradio 780*, “Made in Chicago, Aug. 20, 2007,” Bob Roberts

No comments

### **Television Soft News Feature**

**Winner:** *NBC5 WMAQ-TV*, “The Right Direction,” Phil Rogers, Mark Ringo and Suzanne Richter

Judges’ comments: This story had all of the elements. Good storytelling, good shooting, good editing, and good takeaway. Judges were happy to see the reporter tried the theory of the story twice, not just once.

**Finalists:** *WGN-TV*, “Façade Project,” Steve Sanders, Pam Grimes and Mike D'Angelo

No comments

*Fox News Chicago*, “The Perfect Match,” Mark Saxenmeyer, Lou Hinkhouse and Nathan Halder

No comments

### **Daily Newspaper Sports Reporting**

**Winner:** *Daily Herald*, “From Glory Days to the Meltdown,” John Dietz

Judges’ comments: A nice piece of reporting with stories, photos and graphics packaged well to give the reader a full picture of a dynasty in decline.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Tribune*, “Oh Truly Means King,” David Haugh

No comments

*Chicago Sun-Times*, “A Foundation of Dignity and Respect,” Jim O'Donnell

No comments

### **Non-daily Sports Reporting**

**Winner:** *Chicago magazine*, “Stone in Exile,” Josh Schollmeyer

Judges’ comments: A strong, engaging and intelligent piece. "Stone in Exile" is a well constructed, compelling narrative that conveys an emotional understanding of a psychologically complex individual.

**Finalist:** *Chicago magazine*, “Bull Buster,” Bryan Smith

No comments

### **Television Sports Reporting**

**Winner:** *WTTW11*, “Chicago Tonight – African-American Skateboards,” Christian Farr  
Judges’ comments: A great job of showing a story that has not been seen before. The judges enjoyed seeing reporter setting-up the story, but let characters tell the story and add the flavor. A story worth watching.

**Finalists:** *NBC5 WMAQ-TV*, “Prince of a Player,” Peggy Kusinski and Tony Vitale  
No comments  
*WTTW11*, “Chicago Tonight – Winter Surfing,” Jay Shefsky  
No comments

### **Radio Sports Reporting**

**Winner:** *WBBM Newsradio 780*, Super Bowl Coverage. Jeff Joniak, Tom Thayer, Ron Gleason and sports department  
Judges comments: This is good, old-fashioned sports radio at its best. The Bears broadcast crew seamlessly analyzes the Bears' first Super Bowl appearance in 21 years, capturing the excitement of the big game while interjecting interviews from key players. A well-rounded, well-produced montage of pre-game events broadcast back to listeners in Chicago, from Super Bowl 41 in Miami.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Public Radio WBEZ-FM*, “Runners Blast Marathon Officials,”  
Ammad Omar, Ben Calhoun and staff  
No comments

### **News Bureau, Wire Service or Online Features or Sports Reporting**

**Winner:** *The Associated Press*, “Inside the Burn Unit,” Sharon Cohen  
Judges comments: Every word of this lengthy piece is worth reading. There is emotion and insight in every paragraph. The section on Dr. Chung alone was worth first place in this category.

**Finalists:** *The Associated Press*, “Mom’s Long Goodbye,” Martha Irvine  
No comments  
*The Associated Press*, “Gene Therapy,” Carla Johnson and Lindsey Tanner  
No comments

### **Non-daily Arts Reporting and Criticism**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune magazine*, “‘Life’ Goes On,” Stevenson Swanson  
Judges’ comments: An amusing, delightful, insightful story about Ira Glass, the man behind the voice making a transition into TV, who is as equally as interesting as his subjects.

**Finalists:** *Time Out Chicago*, “Signs of Trouble,” Christopher Piatt and Kris Vire  
Judges’ comments: A provocative, in-depth look at the phenomenon of cities losing their cultural souls for the sake of Broadway money at the expense of regional theater.  
*Chicago magazine*, “Word Star,” Bryan Smith  
Judges’ comments: This article made the judges wish to be in the Range Rover with Lupe, driving through his hood and listening to his music.

### **Daily Newspaper Arts Reporting and Criticism**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, “Riccardo is One Truly Great Trattoria,” Phil Vettel  
Judges’ comments: What a wonderfully written and engaging restaurant review. One judge said: “As someone very familiar with tripe, I appreciated the writer’s take on this little known delicacy.”

**Finalists:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, “A Beautiful Noise,” Miriam Di Nunzio  
Judges’ comments: Great writing and a provocative lead just sucked the reader right in to this piece. It helps that the writer had a worthy and candid subject for the interview.

*Chicago Sun-Times*, “Confessions of a Harry-Come-Lately,” Kevin Nance  
Judges’ comments: This was a nice departure from Pottermania we see in so many other publications. The lede was perfect and makes you laugh out loud.

### **Radio Arts Reporting and Criticism**

**Winner:** *WBBM Newsradio 780*, “The Carillon,” Lisa Fielding  
Judges’ comments: A reporter takes us on an audio tour of a Chicago landmark and paints the word picture very well, culminating with the sounds of the massive instrument and an explanation as to why it needs renovation. The only complaint is that this feature wasn't given more time.

**Finalist:** *Chicago Public Radio WBEZ-FM*, “Hip Hop Panel: Race and Rap in the Wake of Imus,” Jim De Rogatis, Greg Kot and Robin Linn  
No comments

### **MEDIA COLLABORATION**

A story or series involving the joint efforts of two or more media organizations, or employing any combination of newspaper, magazine, radio, television, online or disk media within a single organization. Work may be entered in other categories.

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune and chicagotribune.com*, “2007 Illinois School Report Card,” Staff  
Judges’ comments: The Tribune’s reporters took the best parts of shoe-leather journalism – digging for facts, hunting down answers and laborious records finding – narrated several stories and created a searchable database for public school comparison in Illinois that efficiently illustrates school scores, performance, assessment and data bits and filters them through a ranking system broken down to valuable criteria. Wonderful collaboration that matches multi-disciplinary talents and manufacturers an indispensable watchdog tool for taxpayers.

**Finalists:** *CBS2 WBBM-TV and Sun Publications*, “Out of Order,” Dave Savini, Michele Youngerman and Louise Brass  
No comments

*vocalo.org* 89.5 FM WBEW Chesterton and The Marshfield Tattler, “Back of the Yards: Shootings and Shadings,” Dan Weissmann, Francisco Gonzalez and Maritza  
No comments

## DEADLINE REPORTING

Coverage of a news event published in a single edition or aired within 24 hours by a reporter or reporting team. Judges looked for enterprise, precision, style and impact.

### **Daily Newspaper, circulation more than 300,000**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, “Activist Arrested in LA,” Staff

Judges’ comments: Though the staff had some heads up on the possibility of an arrest, this story fits the concept of “breaking news” better than the other entries. In all cases, editors had some previous reporting on the story and were ready for the latest news to break; in this case, there was probably not much warning and the story was filed from LA in time to make the next day’s edition – plus valuable local reporting and color added by staff in Chicago. Though I would have liked to see entries dealing with completely unprepared or unforeseen news events – true “breaking” news – this story best fits the concept of meeting the challenge of writing on deadline. Good team effort in print the next day.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, “Murder on the No. 3 Bus,” Staff

Judges’ comments: This package might have fared better in the "Criminal justice and social issues" category of in-depth reporting. The content is balanced, thorough, vivid, painful and real, and the inclusion of many viewpoints and a commentary truly bring the reader to the scene in several different ways. Well-written and reported; however, since the tragedy happened on Thursday, and this package was published on Tuesday, this does not quite meet the challenge of writing on deadline in the same way as the winning entry does. I would have preferred seeing what coverage the Sun-Times did online or the next day in print, or as the story developed with the investigation and arrests.

*Chicago Tribune*, “Missing for 2 Days, Girl Found Alive,” Staff

Judges’ comments: Again, reporters for this story had some lead time to prepare and investigate before the news event finally happened; however, they showed good work in getting the - in this case, both good and bad - news ready for print the next day. The writing is well balanced between the irony and sadness of the death of a longtime river rat and the joy of finding a young child alive and well after all feared she had drowned. Well done.

### **Daily Newspaper, circulation less than 300,000**

**Winner:** *Daily Herald*, “Luna Guilty,” Stacy St. Clair, Joseph Ryan and staff

Judges’ comments: Excellent preparation by the writers and editors for a verdict on a multiple murder that scarred the community for many years. Riveting reporting and tremendous detail.

**Finalist:** *Daily Herald*, “Region Fights a Flood,” Lisa Smith and staff

Judges' comment: Coverage of the flooding and catastrophic weather events that increased in intensity each day was handled thoughtfully and thoroughly, thinking about how the issues would develop for the communities as water rose. Each day submitted could have stood by itself.

### **News Bureau, Wire Service or Online**

**Winner:** *The Associated Press*, "Ryan Heads to Prison," Staff

Judges' comments: Excellent package of stories, well written and compelling. Each story did exactly what team coverage of an event should do, bring in as many angles and facts without trampling over each other's story.

**Finalist:** *The Associated Press*, "Missing Girl," Carla Johnson and Lindsey Tanner

### **Non-daily**

**Winner:** *Modern Healthcare*, "Finding Victory in Legal Defeat," Gregg Blesch

Judges' comments: Blesch thoroughly hashes out the implications of an FTC decision contrasting proclamation of a victory by Northwestern Healthcare with the broader implications for health care in general. The article fares particularly well in describing the power of hospital networks vs. managed care.

**Finalist:** *Pioneer Press*, "Brown's Chicken Murder Trial," Northwest Group

Judges' comments: A great example of team reporting. The May 17 report was comprehensive in looking at the verdicts from all angles.

### **Television**

**Winner:** *WGN-TV*, "First Day of School," Pam Grimes and Steve Scheuer

Judges' comments: A superior job of telling an everyday story in an amazing way. Great characters, great shooting, great writing. All the judges were amazed after watching this story. This is storytelling done right. All reporters, editors and photographers should watch this story. We dare you to not be in a good mood after watching this story.

**Finalists:** *CBS 2 WBBM-TV*, Storm Coverage, CBS 2 News Team

No comments

*NBC5 WMAQ-TV*, "Bears vs. Colts Fans," Phil Rogers

No comments

### **Radio**

**Winner:** *WBBM Newsradio 780*, Aug. 23 Storm Coverage, Steve Grzanich and staff

**Finalist:** *WBBM Newsradio 780*, Amtrak Accident Coverage, Bob Roberts, John Cody, Mary Frances Bragiel and staff

### **IN-DEPTH REPORTING**

#### **Radio Documentary**

**Winner:** *Chicago Public Radio WBEZ-FM*, "Divided Families: The Hidden Cost of Migration," Catrin Einhorn, Linda Lutton and Julia McEvoy

Judges' comments: A well-produced look through the eyes and ears of immigrants on the difficult plight they face when leaving their families for greener pastures in the U.S. Audio is strong, as are sceners between voiceover and actualities.

**Finalist:** *vocalo.org*, "Ghosts of Gary," Robin Amer  
No comments

### **Television Documentary**

**Winner:** *CLTV Chicagoland's Television*, "Deadly Lessons," Tonya Francisco  
Judges' comments: Judges saw a good story with some good points. We believed the storytelling could have been quicker to get to some solutions. But, overall a good job.

**Finalists:** *WTTW11*, "The Foods of Chicago: A Delicious History," Dan Protes and Geoffrey Baer

*WTTW11*, "Chicago Tonight – Manuel Perez," Rich Samuels

Judges' comments: Judges believe some other entries were a quality of being a finalist due to the overall journalism, but the story presentation did not fit the definition of a "documentary" so the submissions were not judged to be a finalist.

### **Politics and Government, circulation more than 300,000**

**Winner:** *Chicago Sun-Times*, "Obama and His Slumlord Patron," Tim Novak  
Judges' comments: Excellent piece. Every detail of the Obama-Rezko relationship is exposed with easy to follow along graphics and profiles of the key players involved in the story. The investigation weaves through every fiber of how one man not only influenced state politics, but is now the center of a presidential campaign. The stories not only detail the relationship between Obama and Rezko, but all of Rezko dealings with politicians as well as Rezko's sorry-ass landlord skills. The letters written by Obama supporting Rezko obtained by the Sun-Times reveal a much deeper relationship than just donor to candidate. Again, an excellent piece.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Tribune*, "Clout in Chicago," Laurie Cohen and Todd Lighty  
No comments

*Chicago Tribune*, "Blagojevich Investigation," David Kidwell, John Chase and Ray Long  
No comments

### **Politics and Government, circulation less than 300,000**

**Winner:** *The Beacon News*, "Landfill Controversy," Heather Gillers  
Judges' comments: Gillers' reports on a landfill proposal in Yorkville, kept secret from builders, demonstrated the kind of digging we see too little of and wrote the results clearly.

**Finalists:** *Daily Southtown*, "Humbugging and Scheming," Kim Janssen

Judges' comments: Janssen's Humbugging and Scheming entry is a fascinating and colorfully reported story of scheming in the Markham Police and Fire Commission office, including a plot to fire a female officer.

*The Herald News*, "Bus Barn Bungle," Catherine Ann Velasco

Judges' comments: Velasco also demonstrated a stern refusal to back off in the face of official stonewalling to report on plans to build a huge school bus parking site and related facilities in Plainfield Township.

#### **Education, circulation more than 300,000**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, "The Toughest Assignment," Stephanie Banchemo

Judges' comments: Banchemo's information-rich, yet quickly paced accounts of a crucial test year in a reopened school and the implications on 34 students and their teacher engage and move without stooping to sentimentality. Her compelling storytelling made me smile, cry and root for these students and the educator who ultimately took another job, partly for her own health. A powerful portrait of the challenges – for both students and teachers – within struggling inner-city schools. Bravo.

**Finalist:** *Chicago Tribune*, "Chicago State University Scandal," Jodi S. Cohen

Judges' comments: Clear, concise pieces delineate Chicago State officials' questionable practices in recommending student loan providers and the university president's sketchily documented expenditures on taxpayers' dimes. The words detailing the administrator's cruises, accompanied by family members, hung with me long after reading, and evidentially with Cohen's audience as well -- as the president and university implemented changes in their reimbursement documentation process. Excellent, compelling writing. A tie for first, if that had been possible.

#### **Education, circulation less than 300,000**

**Winner:** *Daily Herald*, "School Finance 101," Emily Krone, Tim Sheil and staff

Judges' comments: An ambitious, in-depth series tackling the ins and outs of school finance. The exhaustive pieces culminate in a look into students' achievement in the classroom, asking readers to decide whether – or in what way – funding is the problem in public education struggles. Numbers-thick stories like these can overwhelm, but you provided useful intro summaries and graphics to help guide readers along the way. My only request would have been more use of these engagingly stated summaries throughout. Congratulations.

**Finalist:** *Daily Herald*, "U46 Superintendent's pay," Emily Krone

Judges' comments: Krone traced a seemingly small incident – a school board member's resignation in protest over giving a bonus to the district's superintendent – to said administrator's atypically large salary and retirement benefits, which had apparently been assumed consistent with similar districts elsewhere by the board and community. Nice job in pushing for more information as the story unfolded in a dogged effort to keep readers informed.

#### **Science, Health, Technology or Environment, circulation more than 300,000**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, "The Great Nuclear Giveaway," Sam Roe

Judges' comments: A great narrative piece. Writer shows both excellent research skills matched with terrific writing. The story is fascinating and keeps the reader interested through to the last paragraph. The writer captures the drama of secret meetings and relays the high stakes involved for the planet in an easy to understand narrative.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Tribune*, “Overheated Planet: Seeking Solutions,” David Greising  
No comments

*Chicago Tribune*, “The Story of Jamie,” Rex W. Huppke  
No comments

**Science, Health, Technology or Environment, circulation less than 300,000**

**Winner:** *Daily Herald*, “In the Shadow of Huntington’s” Susan Stevens

Judges’ comments: This was a great category with all of the entries providing valuable information. But Susan Stevens’ story stood out for one simple reason – tell me a story. Not only could the reader learn a great deal about Huntington’s Disease, but the story of the Jackowski family and the toll Huntington’s Disease has taken on them gives the story great impact.

**Finalists:** *The Courier News*, Water Series, Steven Ross Johnson and Nicole Brooks  
No comments

*SouthtownStar*, “Patient Denied: SouthtownStar efforts help man get insurance for chemo,” Clare Walters

No comments

**Criminal Justice and Social Issues, circulation more than 300,000**

**Winner:** *Chicago Tribune*, “Family Secrets,” Jeff Coen

Judges’ comments: Riveting coverage of a mob trial, with extensive backgrounding. Reporter obviously immersed himself in this case to be able to turn his court stories with such precision and knowledge. The top entry in a brutally tough field.

**Finalists:** *Chicago Tribune*, “Police Misconduct,” David Heinzmann

Judges’ comments: Another terrific series of stories — exposing police misconduct in great detail. Great job shining the sun on these rogue police officers.

*Chicago Tribune*, “A Great Migration,” Charles Leroux

Judges’ comments: Leroux took what could be a routine numbers story and humanized it. Nice research and use of the history of one house to illustrate the migration outward of each family.

**Criminal Justice and Social Issues, circulation less than 300,000**

**Winner:** *The Beacon News*, “Cold Cases,” Matt Hanley

Judges’ comments: Lots of cops reporters do cold case reporting, but not like Matt Hanley. Exceptional attention to detail made this series stand out. Hanley’s writing is consistently strong.

**Finalists:** *The Beacon News*, “Ex-cons: Life after a Life of Crime,” Matt Hanley, Justina Wang and Dave Garby

Judges’ comments: This series of stories illustrates exactly why recidivism back to the world of crime is as high as it is. Great subject, examined well. Society makes it tough to live any kind of normal life after an inmate is released from prison. Excellent writing helped push this over the top.

*Daily Southtown*, “Police Department in Disarray,” William Lee, Lauren FitzPatrick and Jean Hodges

Judges’ comments: Great coverage of corruption from the top down. These reporters dogged the stories and exposed deep fissures in municipal government and the police department.

### **News Bureau, Wire Service, Online Report or Series**

**Winner:** *The Associated Press*, “Youth on Trial,” Sharon Cohen

Judges’ comments: Terrific job of exploring every angle and revealing how a well-intended

effort backfired. Reporter does an excellent job of research and using numerous sources. Well written for the reader to easily understand the problem and the attempted solutions which are now causing even more problems.

**Finalists:** *The Associated Press*, “Teacher Sex Abuse,” Martha Irvine and Robert Tanner  
No comments

*Creating Community Connections and The Beachwood Reporter*, “Public Payroll, Family Affairs: Aldermen Keep It Relative,” Allison Riggio, Hunter Clauss and Suzanne McBride

No comments

### **Business Magazine or Newspaper**

**Winner:** *Pensions & Investments*, “What did we Learn?,” Jay Cooper and Barry B. Burr

Judges’ comments: All too often, Wall Street’s activities are reported in a vacuum, devoid of stock market history that might help readers better understand its movements.

This story provides that history and comments from those who can put it into the most meaningful context in a very readable format. Their comments also personalize a financial story that often is told using numbers and referencing trends only.

**Finalists:** *Crain’s Chicago Business*, “Shifting Fortunes,” Greg Hinz

Judges’ comments: As a rare analysis of a city’s economic data over a significant period of time, this entry provides an important assessment of where it has gained and lost. Even though it is research and numbers-driven, the story emphasizes the people experiencing those gains and losses and reports its conclusions in an easy-to-understand format that is jargon-free. The graphic gives readers a quick, but comprehensive look at where the city’s varying industries have stood and expect to stand in the future.

*BusinessWeek*, “The CEO of City Hall,” Joseph Weber and Bob Reed

Judges’ comments: This entry serves as an example of how profiles should be reported, organized and written. It draws readers in using personal details, tells them why they should want to know about Daley, provides context – including the issues he faces and the analysis of his performance from those in his orbit. The brief but targeted sidebar shows a broad take on Daley’s performance using benchmarks readers would relate to.

### **General-interest Publication**

**Winner:** *Vibe*, “The Trial of R. Kelly,” Abdon M. Pallasch

Judges' comments: This well-researched explicit and balanced report provides insight into the artist turned defendant. This report reflects on society's love of cultural heroes and does an outstanding job of outlining Kelly's importance as an artist while bluntly chronicling his personal travails. Pallasch also provides insight into the creaky wheels of justice and how a once high-profile case can sink into legal muck.

*Chicago magazine*, "Two soldiers," Bryan Smith

Judges' comments: A poignant look at two childhood friends who died serving their country in Iraq. The article provides heart-rending details of the agony of two sets of parents. This article gains power by eschewing political rhetoric and focusing on the horrible tragedy.

**Finalists:** *Chicago magazine*, "The Speech," David Bernstein

Judges' comments: Bernstein captures a seminal event in recent U.S. political history and provides a fly-on-the-wall look at how Barack Obama's 2004 Democratic convention keynote speech was fashioned. The reader feels like he or she is watching the speech come together piece by piece.

### **Community Newspaper**

**Winner:** *Pioneer Press*, "No Place to Call Home: Homelessness in the Northwest Suburbs," Northwest Group

Judges' comments: A thoughtful, thorough look at a tough subject with some crisp detailed writing and obvious effort on the part of reporters.

**Finalist:** *Pioneer Press*, "Many Routes – One Destination," Niles Herald-Spectator Staff

Judges' comments: An exhaustive look at a topic central to Chicago area's identity with good collaboration and solid reporting.

### **Trade or Specialty Magazine, Newspaper or Newsletter**

**Winner:** *The Chicago Reporter*, "Where the Jobs Are" Series, Kimbriell Kelly, Jeff Kelly Lowenstein and Angelica Herrera

Judges' comments: "Wow!" about all the entries. Chicago readers are well served by this city's talented and dedicated journalists. "Where the Jobs Are" is an impressive body of work. Authoritative and definitive analysis of massive amounts of data paints an irrefutable picture of what is happening in Chicago's lower-tier workforce. The data is made more relevant through the eyes of those living the numbers. Kimbriell Kelly, Jeff Kelly Lowenstein and Angelica Herrera flex some serious reporting and writing muscles.

**Finalists:** *Catalyst Chicago*, "Safe Haven?," Sharon Karp

Judges' comments: Associate Editor Sarah Karp drills down deep into what has to be one of the most critical issues facing Chicago and every other American school. The package is comprehensive and striking in its detail of the realities of the Chicago Public Schools system. Karp's balance is unique in that it illustrates not just the problem-makers but the problem-solvers as well.

*The Chicago Reporter*, “Work It,” Kimbriell Kelly and Casey Sanchez  
Judges’ comments: Incredible data mining and analysis. This laid the reporting groundwork to nail the practice of employee campaign coffer lining through the heart. Sharp reporting drives the story and gives readers the info to determine for themselves if city workers are expected to buy job longevity. I am shocked that Illinois doesn’t cap campaign contributions. Serious research chops by Kimbriell Kelly and Casey Sanchez.

### **Hard Television News**

**Winner:** *CBS 2 WBBM-TV*, “Fly at Your Own Risk,” Dave Savini and Michele Youngerman

Judges’ comments: Judges believe this is journalism and investigative journalism as what it is supposed to be. A great story. This story grew legs because there were so many problems. The tenacious journalism poked a hole in the dam and a flood of problems came out.

**Finalists:** *CBS 2 WBBM-TV*, “Exposing Blagojevich,” Mike Flannery and Ed Marshall  
No comments

*NBC5 WMAQ-TV*, “No Accident,” Robin Green, Lisa Parker and Mark Ringo  
No comments

### **Radio Report or Series**

**Winner:** *WGN Radio*, “Why Not Me?,” Judy Pielach

Judges’ comments: This was by far the hardest and most competitive of all radio categories. There were many deserving submissions, but Judy Pielach’s poignant personal journey, bravely doing her job while fighting the ravages of breast cancer and the double mastectomy that followed, beat them all. The reporter documents the toughest time of her life by being open and keeping the issue in perspective. Many in her situation would simply have shut the door, but following her journalistic instincts, Pielach makes this compelling radio. Well done.

**Finalists:** *WGN Radio*, “Voices of War,” Jim Gudas  
No comments

*Chicago Public Radio WBEZ-FM*, “Lake Michigan in the Age of Climate Change,”  
Sandy Hausman, Julia McEvoy and Sally Eisele  
No comments

ALL MEDIA

### **Spanish-language Print, Wire-Service or Online Report**

No entries

### **Spanish-language Broadcast**

No entries