

Recognizing excellence in
news reporting, photojournalism & news design.

2011^{ed.}

The MDDC Press Editorial Contest for NEWSPAPERS

The deadline for electronic
entries is 11:59 p.m. on
January 25, 2012.

Designated mail-in entries must
be post-marked by Jan. 25.

FIND INSIDE:

- General info
- Contest rules
- Category descriptions
- Entry form for mail in categories
- Declaration of Originality
- BNC instructions
- Entry prep instructions & FAQs

All New! All Digital!
Enter at BetterBNC.com.



General Information

2011 MDDC Editorial Contest

General Information:

The MDDC Editorial Contest recognizes editorial excellence in the newspapers of Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia. The contest features 47 categories in each of six circulation divisions, plus a special special Freedom of Information award. Each publisher or editor must certify the originality of all work submitted.

Deadline for Entries:

All entries must be uploaded to via the BetterNewspaperContest.com online contest entry platform by 11:59 p.m. on **Wednesday, January 25, 2012** with the exception of designated mail-in entries. Designated mail-in entries must be post-marked by January 25, 2012 and addressed to the MDDC Headquarters located at the Capital-Gazette Buidling, 2000 Annapolis Drive, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Eligibility:

The contest is open to all staff members and freelancers of full/active member newspapers. Members joining in 2011 may only submit entries published following the newspaper's membership date. Affiliate members may enter categories E32-E38 only.

Judging:

The entries will be judged by newspaper professionals from the Montana Press Association.

BNC Temporary Password:

The initial password for all newspapers is **bnc**. You will be prompted to change it on your initial login. This password will not work if someone at your newspaper has already accessed the site and changed it. Contact Jen Thornberry at 855-721-6332 x2 or jthornberry@mddcpress.com if you need to gain access.

Awards:

The 2011 Editorial Contest awards will be presented at the MDDC Annual Awards Luncheon, scheduled for April 19-20, 2012. Certificates will be presented to first and second place winners. In addition, one **Best of Show** award is presented in each category, regardless of circulation size. There is also an overall **Newspaper of the Year** award presented to the newspaper in each circulation division that accumulates the most points in the contest. First place earns three points and second place earns two points. In a tie, the number of first place wins will be the determining factor. Prior to the Luncheon, the names of winning staff members will be disclosed to newspapers and posted on the MDDC website at www.mddcpress.com. Complete details of contest wins, including first and second place winners, will only be revealed at the Awards Luncheon.

Fees:

The fee is \$15 per entry. **There are no per-newspaper participation fees.**

Circulation Divisions:

Circulation divisions for the contest are based on each newspaper's circulation, as reported to MDDC for dues in 2011. (Note that these are called **categories** within the BetterNewspaperContest.com platform.) For the purpose of the Editorial Contest, the circulation divisions are as follows:

Division A: Dailies over 75,000 circulation
 Division B: Dailies from 30,000 to 75,000
 Division C: Dailies under 30,000

Division D: Non-dailies over 20,000
 Division F: Non-dailies under 10,000
 Division E: Non-dailies from 10,000 to 20,000

Contest Rules

2011 MDDC Editorial Contest

1. A signed Declaration of Originality, a printout of the “**Manage Entries**” page from the BNC platform, and payment for all entries must be mailed to the MDDC office. The mailing address is MDDC Press Association, Capital-Gazette Building, 2000 Capital Drive, Annapolis, MD 21401.
2. Entries must be original, must not have appeared previously in other publications, and must have been published between January 1 and December 31, 2011. Entries must include publication date.
3. Mailed entries must be submitted as full-page tear sheets, photocopies (no smaller than $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$, including continuations), or printouts from PDFs (100% size, no glossy paper). No clipped items will be accepted. Entry forms should be stapled to the upper left corner on the front of each mailed entry. Tear sheets should be marked clearly and neatly for ease of identification. **Printed versions of stories will not be accepted.**
4. Mailed entries will not be returned. Please keep a record and/or copies of entries in case they are lost in transit.
5. Affiliate member publications of MDDC are eligible to participate in online categories E32-E38.
6. Entries to the online categories (E32-E38) may be submitted in up to two (2) categories.
7. All entries to the online categories (E32-E38) are to be judged “live” online and must be made available to the judges as such, even if they are no longer available to the public. Judging will take place between February 1 and March 7, 2012. Entries need to be accessible during that time.
8. Entry forms may list a maximum of **three (3)** individual names. Entries involving more than three staffers must be listed as a group or department. For example: “News Staff,” “Art Department,” or “Sports Staff.”
9. Participating newspapers must have paid their Association membership dues for the contest year (2011) and be paid up for 2012 by the time of the Editorial Contest Awards Luncheon. A newspaper must be a full/active member of the MDDC Press Association to participate in the Editorial Contest, with the exception of online categories E32-E38 which are also open to affiliate members.
10. Entries submitted in the incorrect division, if detected prior to judging, will be moved to the correct division. Otherwise, they are subject to disqualification. For contest purposes, non-daily divisions include papers published less than five times a week. Divisions are based on the circulation figures filed by the publisher with the MDDC Press Association.
11. The decisions of the judges are final. Judges may declare “no contest” if the category has insufficient entries. Fees will not be returned for categories deemed no contest.
12. **Individuals may submit only one entry per category in each division, even if entries appeared in different newspapers.** Team entries by one newspaper are limited to three in any one category. Team reporters are eligible to enter an additional single entry in the same category.
13. Series that overlap two years in publication dates must be entered in the year the series concluded.
14. Additional copies of certificates may be purchased after the Luncheon for \$5.00 each.

Contest Categories

2011 MDDC Editorial Contest

E01 EDITORIAL

Limit one entry per writer per division.



E02 LOCAL COLUMN: CRITICAL THINKING

Limit one entry per writer per division. Includes commentary, news-related or political columns.



E03 LOCAL COLUMN: FEATURE OR HUMOR

Limit one entry per writer per division. Includes advice, humor or feature-type columns.



E04 SPOT NEWS

Coverage of a single news event that is unplanned and unexpected. Submit one story or a group of stories that were published in the same issue, written under deadline pressure.



E05 GENERAL NEWS STORY

Coverage of a planned news event or any stories that do not fit into one of the specialty categories (such as education, business, etc.). Submit one story or a group of stories in the same issue.



E06 CONTINUING COVERAGE

Multiple stories on a single issue or news event published in more than one issue. Not planned or labeled as a series.



E07 INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

A distinguished example of investigative reporting; emphasizing the originality of the subject, depth of reporting and clarity of writing. May be one or more stories. Supporting documents or a cover letter may be submitted.



E08 FEATURE STORY: PROFILE

A single story.



E09 FEATURE STORY: NON-PROFILE

A single story.



E10 LOCAL GOVERNMENT

May be a single story or designated series that explains the impact of local government.



E11 STATE GOVERNMENT

May be a single story or designated series that explains the impact of state government.



E12 PUBLIC SERVICE

May be a single story or a series intended to spur action from the community. Supporting documents may be uploaded.



E13 WEATHER OR NATURAL DISASTERS

May be a single story or ongoing coverage of the impact of severe weather or other natural disaster on communities.



E14 GENERAL NEWS PHOTO

A photo or group of photos in the same issue of a planned event, or any assigned photo or group of photos other than sports.



ICON LEGEND

Electronic Entry Upload Required	Submit Site or Page URL
Designated Mail-In Entry	May be a Single Story or Series of Stories (as indicated)
May be a Single Photo or Group of Photos	Include Supporting Documents (Optional)

Contest Categories (continued)

Mail-in entries require either a written entry form or the printed entry label from BNC.



E15 SPOT NEWS PHOTO

A photo or group of photos published in the same issue, covering a single news event that is unplanned and unexpected, under deadline pressure.



E16 FEATURE PHOTO

A single photo.



E17 PHOTO SERIES

A group of photos published in the same issue on a single subject.



E18 SPORTS PHOTO

A single photo.



E19 SPORTS STORY

Spot news event coverage. May be a single story or group of stories.



E20 SPORTS FEATURE STORY

A single story.



E21 DAILY SPORTS COLUMN

Limit one entry per daily circulation sports writer.



E22 BUSINESS REPORTING

May be a single story or a designated series.



E23 MEDICAL/SCIENCE REPORTING

May be a single story or a designated series.



E24 EDUCATION REPORTING

May be a single story or designated series.



E25 ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

May be a single story or a designated series.



E26 ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING

May be a single story or a designated series.



E27 RELIGION REPORTING

May be a single story or a designated series.



E28 SPECIAL SECTION

A section of predominantly local copy on a single topic or theme, published no more than once year (not advertorial) that is distributed with the newspaper. One entry per newspaper. Judged for writing, editing, photography, graphics and design.



E29 HEADLINE

One per writer. Submit story with the headline.



E30 PAGE 1 DESIGN

Submit the front page of the newspaper. No section fronts.









E31 FEATURE PAGE DESIGN

Includes any lifestyles, entertainment, or feature-style pages.



ICON LEGEND

	Electronic Entry Upload Required		Submit Site or Page URL
	Designated Mail-In Entry		May be a Single Story or Series of Stories (as indicated)
	May be a Single Photo or Group of Photos		Include Supporting Documents (Optional)

Contest Categories (continued)

Affiliate members may enter the Online Categories, which are Categories E32-E38.



E32 MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING (NEWS)

Presentation that supports the telling of and enhances the impact of a single news story. May include but is not limited to audio, video, animation, slide shows and sound bites.



E33 MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING (FEATURE)

Presentation that supports the telling of and enhances the impact of a single feature story. May include but is not limited to audio, video, animation, slide shows and sound bites.



E34 MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING (SPORTS)

Presentation that supports the telling of and enhances the impact a single sports story. May include but is not limited to audio, video, animation, slide shows and sound bites.



E35 BEST USE OF INTERACTIVE MEDIA

Presentation of a special project, series or continuing coverage or a topic that uses digital media and cutting edge technology in innovative ways to reach and engage the audience. May include video, interactive maps, podcasting, photo and slide shows, article archives, polls, transcripts, PDFs, blogs and community feedback.



E36 ONLINE COMMENTARY OR BLOG

May be staff or citizen created.



E37 COMMUNITY SERVICE AND CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Presentation that uses digital media and the web site to bring an important community issue into focus, allowing citizens to comment and/or be moved into action.



E38 GENERAL WEB SITE EXCELLENCE

Judges will visit the site and evaluate it according to the following criteria: Content—quality of news and editorial matter; Navigation—ease of finding and retrieving information from the web site; Visual/Design—layout and use of graphics, photographs, animation, color and other visuals; Advertising—innovative strategies and/or evidence of revenue generation; Community—demonstration that the web site fulfills a "community gatekeeper" role.



Categories 39-46 will be judged per circulation type—daily or nondaily—and not per circulation volume.

E39 NON-DAILY SPORTS COLUMN

Limit one entry per non-daily sports writer.



E40 SERIES

Must be planned and designated as part one, part two, etc., and must have run in a planned sequence.



E41 GROWTH & LAND USE REPORTING

May be a single story or designated series.



E42 EDITORIAL CARTOON

A single cartoon.



ICON LEGEND



Electronic Entry Upload Required



Designated Mail-In Entry



May be a Single Photo or Group of Photos



Submit Site or Page URL



May be a Single Story or Series of Stories (as indicated)



Include Supporting Documents (Optional)

Contest Categories (continued)

Don't forget the Declaration of Originality. Each newspaper must submit one.



E43 NEWS PAGE DESIGN

Includes lifestyles, entertainment or feature-style pages. Double-truck layouts are accepted.



E44 SPORTS PAGE DESIGN

Double-truck layouts are accepted.



E45 INFORMATIONAL GRAPHICS

General or sports-related informational graphics such as graphs, charts, maps, diagrams, etc.



E46 ART OR ILLUSTRATION



E47 JAMES S. KEAT FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AWARD

News stories, columns, editorials, or documents that show a newspaper's efforts to 1) gain access to public records; 2) pursue open meetings; or 3) address other FOI issues. Resources available to each entrant shall be considered by the judges. One award will be given across all divisions.



ICON LEGEND	Designated Mail-In Entry	Submit Site or Page URL	Include Supporting Documents (Optional)
	May be a Single Photo or Group of Photos	May be a Single Story or Series of Stories (as indicated)	Electronic Entry Upload Required

Ready to Get Started? Here's a quick run-down:

1. Confirm your newspaper's membership is current.

All contest participants must be current with their 2011 membership dues for entries to be judged and must pay for 2012 membership by the Annual Awards Conference in April.

2. Log into BetterBNC.com and submit your electronic entries.

If you have your electronic entries already prepared and in one folder on your computer, this step will go much faster. Login instructions begin on page 10.

3. Prepare the mail-in entries.

Mail-in entries are only accepted for categories E28 and E47. Use the enclosed hard-copy entry form on page 8 or print out the label from from the BNC platform.

4. Complete the Declaration of Originality.

One is needed for each newspaper and must be mailed to MDDC Headquarters with your payment. It's found on page 9. Mail it to 2000 Capital Drive, Annapolis, MD 21401.

5. Complete all of your entries before January 25, 2012.

Entries must be uploaded by 11:59 p.m., and mail-in entries must be postmarked by 1/25/12.

Contest Entry Form

2011 MDDC Editorial Contest

Duplicate as necessary and attach to each individual entry.

This form is for use only with categories E28 (Special Section) and E47 (Freedom of Information), which are the only designated mail-in categories. All other categories of the Editorial Contest must be entered electronically via the BetterNewspaperContest.com platform (BNC). The online entry process will generate the requisite entry form for all categories entered electronically. Entry labels for categories E28 and E47 created in BNC may be used in lieu of this hard-copy form. The label forms should be printed out from BNC and attached to the entry/ies. **Mail-in entries must be postmarked by January 25, 2012.**

Please type or print legibly

Publication Name: _____

Staff Member's Name(s)*: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

- Entry forms may list a maximum of three individual's names. Entries that are the work of more than three staffers must be listed as a group or by department.

Title of Entry: _____

Date of Publication: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Circulation Division: (Circle one) A B C D E F

Entry Category: E28 – Special Section

E47 – Freedom of Information

Declaration of Originality & Payment Information

2011 MDDC Editorial Contest

All entries submitted are by staff members or subcontractors engaged by this firm.

Entries are original and were first published during the 2011 calendar year.

Authorized Signature of Publisher/Manager/Editor

Date

Please type or print legibly

Name: _____

Title: _____

Newspaper: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Please type or print legibly

_____ **ENTRIES** submitted at \$15 each = **TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: \$** _____

Check # _____ is enclosed.

Bill to Credit Card below:

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Cardholder Name: _____ CV#: _____

Billing Address and Zip Code: _____

Signature: _____

NO PARTICIPATION FEES!

Make checks payable to
MDDC Press Association and mail to
2000 Capital Drive,
Annapolis, MD 21401.

Using the BNC Site

2011 MDDC Editorial Contest

Entries for MDDC's 2011 Advertising & Editorial Contest are submitted via the Better Newspaper Contest website. Access the site at BetterBNC.com.

Please make sure to use a recent version of Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer for making contest entries.

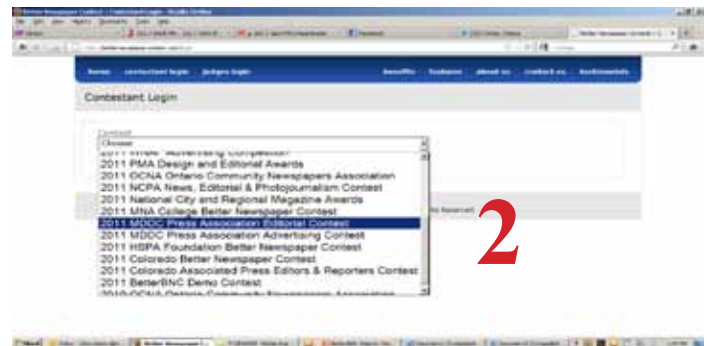
Access the Contest at
www.betterbnc.com

GETTING STARTED

1



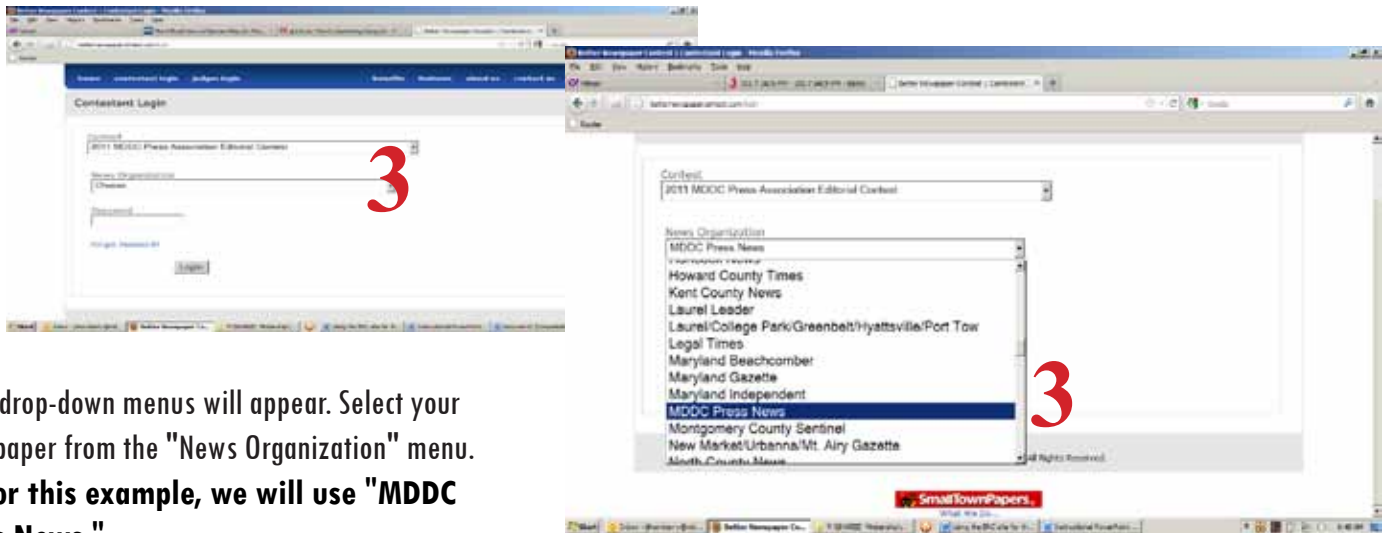
Go to the BNC site. At the left top of the home page, click on "contestant login." (1)



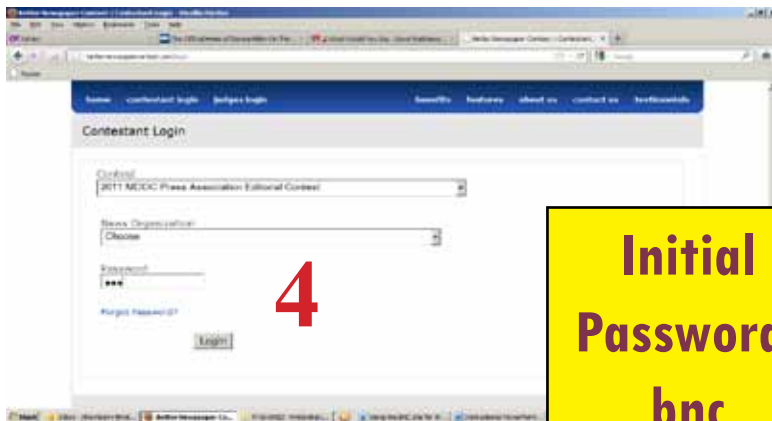
The next page contains a drop-down menu from which you should select our contest. Choose "2011 MDDC Press Association (Editorial / Advertising) Contest". (2)

Using the BNC Site (continued)

GETTING STARTED (continued)



More drop-down menus will appear. Select your newspaper from the "News Organization" menu. **(3)** For this example, we will use "MDDC Press News."

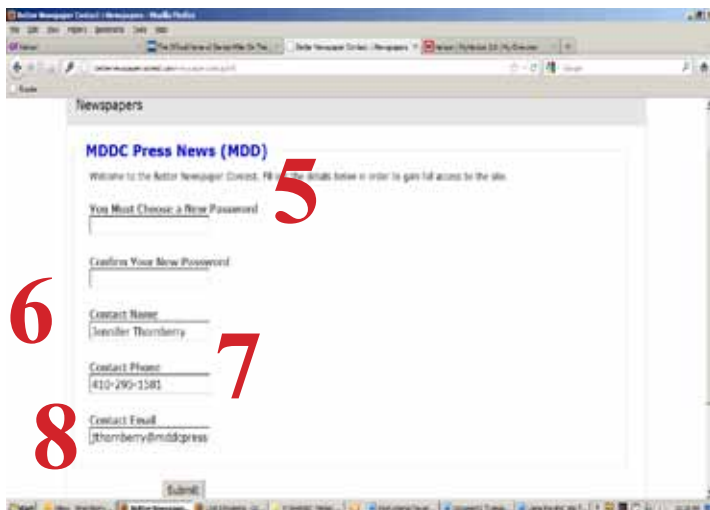


YOUR INITIAL PASSWORD

On your first visit, you will need to enter your start-up password. **(4)** Your initial password is "bnc".

If your password does not work, it means someone else has already signed into the site under your newspaper's name. Contact Membership Services Coordinator Jen Thornberry at 855-721-6332 x2 or jthornberry@mddcpress.com for further assistance.

SETTING UP YOUR ACCOUNT



Once you have first entered the site using the initial password, you'll be prompted to choose a new password. **(5)**

NOTE: Each newspaper has only one password. The system will not accept passwords for individuals.

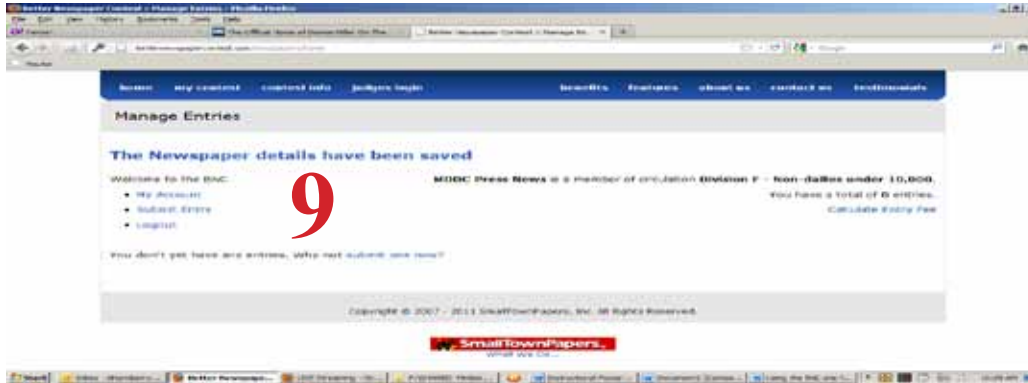
On this page, you will also be asked to provide the name of a contact person for your newspaper. **(6)** This is the person whom we will contact with any questions or problems with your newspaper's entries. Please also provide a telephone number **(7)** and email **(8)** for this person.

Click "Submit" to continue.

You will now be directed to the "Manage Entries" page.

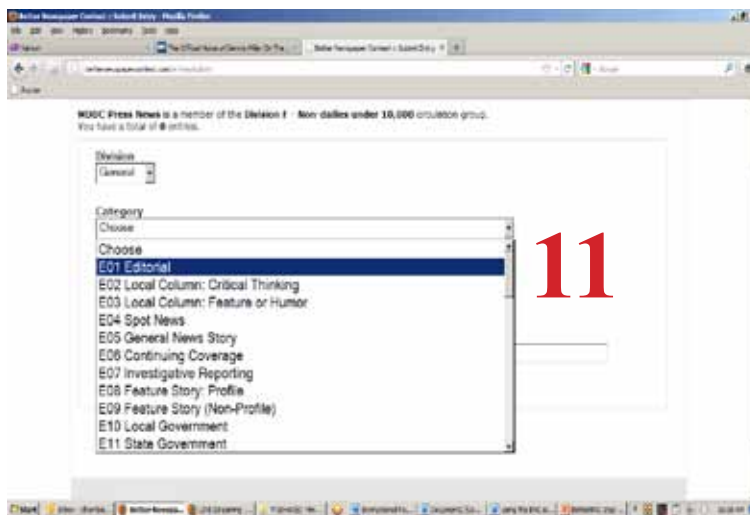
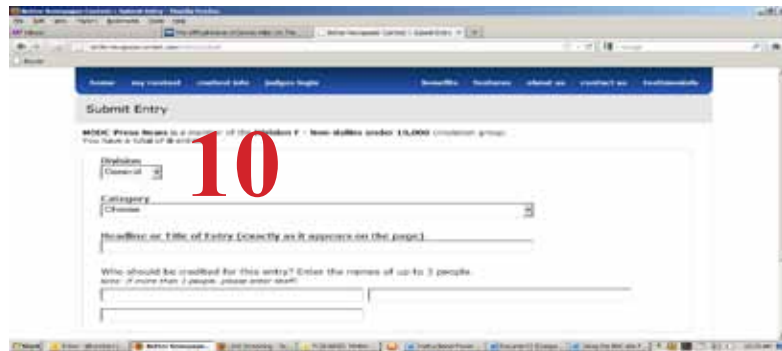
Using the BNC Site (continued)

UPLOADING YOUR ENTRIES



Click on the “Submit Entry” link (9).
The window below will appear.

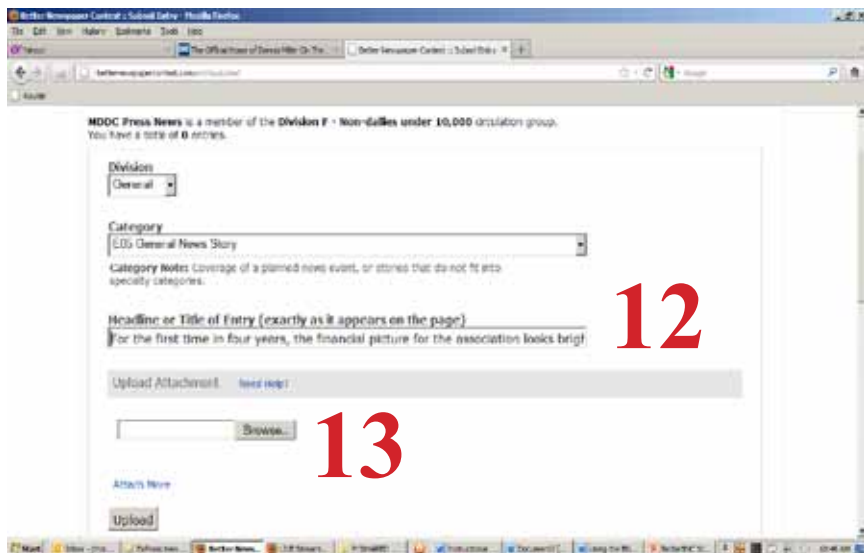
NOTE: Division will always be defaulted to “General”. There is no other option. (10)



Use the drop-down menu to select a category for this entry. (11)

Using the BNC Site (continued)

UPLOADING YOUR ENTRIES (continued)



Upon selection of a category, a description of the category will appear below the drop-down menu.

Type in the headline of the entry exactly as it appears on the Page. **(12)** Separate multiple headlines with semi-colons.

Upload an attachment first by clicking on the “Browse” button to find your file. Allowable file types are **PDF, TXT, DOC, JPG, PNG and GIF**. **(13)** Then click on the “Upload” button. If your entry consists of more than one PDF or digital file, repeat the instruction in the previous paragraph.



Enter the names of your staff members getting the credit for the entry. **(14)**

NOTE: Please make sure all names are spelled correctly and the right people are listed. Use the names as typed in this form for certificates and award listings.

When all fields have been completed, click on the “Submit” button.

NEXT STEPS



You'll be taken to a Label window. If the entry is in a category that requires uploading digital files only, there is no need to print out this page.

However, if the category requires a printed product be mailed to MDDC, you must print this page and attach it to your entry.

At the bottom of the page, you are offered three choices: Submit Another Entry, go to the Manage Entries page, or Logout of the system. **(15)**

Submit Another Entry takes you back to a blank entry form.

Disable deselects an entry from the contest so it will not be judged.

Manage Entries takes you to a listing of all the entries under your newspaper (as shown on the next page). **(16)**

Using the BNC Site (continued)

NEXT STEPS (continued)

Manage Entries takes you to a listing of all the entries under your newspaper (as shown on the next page). (16) From this page, you are able to print another Label, Edit the information on each entry, Disable it or Delete it from the system. Disabled entries will not be judged. (17)



Instructions for Preparing Entries & FAQs

Please submit all entries online unless otherwise noted.

Categories that must be mailed to MDDC as a hard copy are:

- Special Section (Editorial & Advertising)
- The James S. Keat Freedom of Information Award (Editorial)
- Special Section, Vendor Supported (Advertising)
- Niche Publication (Advertising)

All entries must be full-page tear sheets and unaltered in any way. The date each entry was published must appear on the tear sheet.

NOTE: The BNC website is compatible with Internet Explorer (6+) and Firefox (2+) on the PC, and Firefox (2+) on the Macintosh.

How will electronic files be submitted?

You'll submit electronic entries by uploading the files from within the online contest registration system at betterbnc.com. You will not submit them separately (e.g., via email or on a CD). The online contest registration system for MDDC's contests is hosted on the web servers of SmallTownPapers in Washington.

You must submit files of complete newspaper pages, even if the entry-related content doesn't fill the page.

Requirements:

1. Only submit pages that contain entry-related content. Many categories require more than one item per entry. For example, a single entry in the "Investigative Reporting" category may include more than one story. For each example the entire page(s) must be included for judging.
2. Make PDF files as small as possible. (See below for specific instructions.) Each file **must** be under **15 MB** to be accepted by the system. Fewer files and smaller files mean judges aren't waiting around to download your entries. When possible merge multiple pages into one file. Also when art isn't primary to what is being judged; lower the dpi resolution of the PDFs. They will be viewed on computer monitors with resolutions around 72 dpi.

What file formats are accepted for uploading?

File types are PDF, JPG, GIF, and PNG — so, if for some reason, you don't have a PDF of the tear sheet you wish to submit, it would be easy to snap a photo and submit the resulting photo file.

How can I make my PDF files smaller?

Most newspaper PDFs include high-resolution (200-300 dpi) grayscale or CMYK images for printing. However, PDF contest entries will be viewed and judged on a computer monitor; which displays at low resolution (72-96 dpi) in RGB color: Changes in the resolution and color mode of images are the most effective ways to reduce size without sacrificing quality.

1. **Resolution.** In PDFs, text is always clear regardless of resolution. Resolution relates only to photos and rasterized graphics. Reducing resolution by half reduces image file size by 75%. The recommended maximum resolution of 96 dpi can be enforced by Distiller settings.
2. **Color mode.** Converting from CMYK to RGB color will reduce image file size by another 25%. This color conversion can again be enforced by Distiller settings. If you reduce image resolution and/or convert color mode in your entry PDFs with a PDF editor (e.g. Enfocus, Pitstop or Quite A Box of Tricks) or use the native profiling/editing tools in Acrobat 6 or later, YOU WILL NOT GAIN THE EXPECTED REDUCTION IN FILE SIZE unless you redistill the PDF afterward.

Instructions for Preparing Entries & FAQs (continued)

What is the most efficient way to collect entry files?

Collect copies of all PDF files that contain entry-related pages into one place. These may be full-issue, full-section, or individual-page PDFs that you sent to your printer or that you saved from your page layout program for other reasons. The sizes, resolutions, color modes, and other characteristics of those PDF files can be ignored at this point.

Extract entry-related pages from any multi-page PDFs, or delete non-entry pages. Give each resulting file a clearly descriptive name. Combine into a single PDF file pages that comprise each entry. Instructions for extracting and combining PDFs are provided below. Distill. Once you've created all your entry PDFs, re-still each one as explained above to reduce it to the smallest practical size. It's not productive to try to reduce the sizes of individual files before combining them into complete entries. Like all changes, combining pages can increase file size.

How do I extract pages from a full-issue or full section PDF?

In Acrobat, open the PDF file, then choose "Extract Pages..." from the Document menu and follow the instructions. This will allow you to save individual or sequential pages in separate files anywhere on your system.



Instructions for Preparing Entries & FAQs (continued)

How do I combine PDF pages or files into a single entry?

Open the PDF file that is to appear first in the entry, choose "Save As..." from the File menu, and save that file with the name you'd like to give the final PDF entry. Choose "Insert Pages..." from the Document menu, choose the file that is to appear next in the entry, then specify where that file should be inserted. When all insertions have been made, save and close the PDF file. You'll need to redistill the final PDFs.

How will MDDC prevent fraud?

We prefer to trust our member publishers not to submit embellished or edited entries. It is true that ads and articles can be re-edited, photos can be retouched or replaced, and page layouts can be changed. However, major deception probably would be noticed, if only because winning PDFs will be available to the public and MDDC members on the MDDC website. If fraud is suspected with any entries, a full investigation will follow.

How do I submit payment?

MDDC accepts payment by check or credit card. Credit card payments can be made on MDDC's website after submitting your entries. Checks should be made payable to MDDC Press Association and sent along with a copy of your Summary of Entries Form and any mailed entries by **January 18, 2012, for Advertising contest and January 25, 2012, for Editorial contest** to:

MDDC Press Association
Capital-Gazette Building
2000 Capital Drive
Annapolis, MD 21401

What if my info is wrong or my paper is not listed?

We have worked very hard to make sure the division for each member are as accurate as possible, however if you note that your division is listed incorrectly, please contact MDDC at 855-721-6332 x 2 or jthornberry@mddcpress.com and it will be fixed ASAP!

Where can I get more help for anything I can't find here?

Call MDDC at 855-721-6332 x2 or email jthornberry@mddcpress.com.

That's it. (That's enough, don't you think?)
You have everything you need to enter the Editorial Contest.

Ready? Set... **GO!**