

SUCCESS IN PRESS

COUNTRY PRESS SA 2021 AWARDS



February 25, 2022
Adelaide Convention Centre





2021 Country Press SA Awards - Adelaide Convention Centre

The 110th Annual gathering of Country Press SA officially commenced on Friday, February 25 2022 at the Adelaide Convention Centre.

Guests filed through the doors of the well-positioned venue to provide a COVID-safe check-in before making their way to a beautifully appointed function room that was ready to deliver a night of celebration and delight.

This year's celebration provided an opportunity for more than 110 attendees to reacquaint with local and interstate friends.

Country Press SA has been very fortunate to enjoy successive events in recent years, despite heavy restrictions and state-wide lockdowns.

The timing of our events has been critical each year. Despite the changing circumstances relevant to the time, we've still be able to facilitate this cherished celebration each year.

Upon reflection, I am extremely relieved with this however it is

important that we also acknowledge that other state Associations have had to deal with significant implications resulting in cancelled events.

As elected President and MC, it was a great honour to welcome all of the guests and take the opportunity to again highlight the importance of our industry to a highly-engaged audience.

I spoke about the foundation of trust and the significant roles that our newspapers continue to play in helping to connect our communities.

I then detailed the investment that our members are pouring into new and existing titles to better serve the readers and I ended with the belief that we'll be printing newspapers for many more years to come.

The eight award for the night was titled, "Best Community Advertising Promotion" – a new award named in John Barnet's honour and sponsored by Tony Piccolo MP.

It's very pleasing to enjoy a healthy regard for our annual celebration with new awards considered as

valuable additions to our existing categories.

It was an honour to welcome Steven Marshall, Premier of South Australia and the Hon. Peter Malinauskas MP (now Premier) to speak throughout the evening before presenting their awards.

Life Member, Margaret Manuel was invited to the stage for a very special presentation.

Margaret was provided the honour of presenting her son, Andrew, with Life Membership of Country Press SA as a result of his dedication to our industry and Association.

It was indeed a very special moment for Andrew and the Manual family but, also for the guests to witness.

The vibe quickly changed again as local vocal group "The 60 four" dazzled us with a remarkable 60s tribute show.

Another successful event was achieved and a lot of this credit can be attributed to the work that Trevor McAuliffe has managed.

This annual gathering is the glue that connects the members, staff

and guests in the most unique way. This connection is so valuable as we all strive for the continued success of our industry.

It also presents us with a terrific opportunity to celebrate the emerging superstars of our industry as we again witnessed at this year's event.

I wish everyone well as we continue to collectively achieve greatness within our industry.

Darren Robinson,
President
Country Press S.A.



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BEST NEWSPAPER - CIRCULATION OVER 4,000

THE BORDER WATCH



Peter and Kathy Gandolf; with Paul Salter, SA Power Networks.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS BOB YEATES

Looking at and judging the best country press SA Newspaper with a circulation of over 4,000, it was heartening to see local newspapers covering nearly all parts of life in a country town. That is the job of the local paper, to report faithfully the goings on in our communities. No other medium holds a candle to the local newspaper when it comes to reporting and recording the life and times of country life.

Part of our charter is to educate and capture young readers to develop the habit of buying the local newspaper for our future success.

Getting on with life with Covid still with us has affected businesses across Australia and in turn the local newspapers of country Australia. Despite that I congratulate all the entrants in this year's SA awards.

The newspapers I have looked at are of a very good standard with reporters doing their jobs well, writing local news and sport for an

interested local reading audience.

This year *The Border Watch* was placed first in the award, with consistently engaging clean, bold headlines, picture and a main story with a couple of lead-in stories on the front page. Also on the front page was a very soft line underneath the paper banner pointing to regular sections within the paper without making the front page messy. *The Border Watch* produce weekly, a consistently clean newspaper with most stories having a bold headline to alert the reader as well as a picture relating to the story. Local general news is well covered and the sports section outstanding. There is also consistent space throughout the publication and body type size of editorial does not change.

The paper is a well finished off product although I did note the pictures may be able to be adjusted to suit the dull newsprint as some looked a little cold and a tad flat.

Second place this year went to the *Murray Pioneer* that consistently has a good headline on the front page with a couple of their stories leading the reader inside the paper. It is

most important to engage the local newspaper market with one or two or three topics on the front page.

One big picture with a caption as a decoration simply does not cut it for me or I believe the interested, considered local newspaper reader. In the past other judges have nudged this point.

The Murray Pioneer like most other country SA newspapers is well laid out, and a clean presentation for its readers in print and design. The sports section in the *Pioneer* touches the young and older reader covering sports played in the region. The consistent double page spread headed "Opinion" including an editorial comment by the paper, demonstrates the connectedness of the paper to the community and the value of the locally produced product. Congratulations to the production and print department for producing clean and bright photographs to accompany orderly well written local editorial.

Yorke Peninsula Country Times was placed third this year and was noted for its neat layout, well printed stand out headlines throughout the

publication. The sports section is extensive and detailed like many other country papers, although the sports sections of most papers starts generally from back to front, some SA papers seem to mix advertising at the back of the paper prior to sport starting, this is obviously a marketer decision which does not do for orderly uninterrupted reading of sport.

All papers submitted were well printed with little or no marking or excessive folder nip wheel pressure. The reproduction of some black and white halftones was very good in some publications and generally the colour pictures were well produced but perhaps the *Murray Pioneer* had the photographs with the most life.

Again, congratulations to all entrants this year and I hope entering makes all look critically at what we produce.

We must strive to produce a product that is well received in all markets to maintain a vital local news service to country communities, as well as a market audience for any advertiser to engage with in confidence.

BEST NEWSPAPER - CIRCULATION UNDER 4,000

THE PLAINS PRODUCER



Jack Hudson, Renee Bennett from The Plains Producer and Paul Salter, SA Power Networks.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS CHRIS COOTE

Entries were up in the category this year, which was pleasing, but it would be nice to see all eligible papers enter next year.

The standard of the entries was good and one improved a lot from the start of the year to the last paper in the judging.

The runner-up in this year is the *Southern Argus* and the winner is the *Plains Producer*

The Producer won last year and continued to provide good content in an appealing format again this year.

Again it had a good local story count and plenty of local faces in each edition.

Plains Producer

The Producer is a solid, well rounded paper that serves its many communities well. Its paging ranged from 56 to 64 pages and it feels weighty in one's hands.

There are a high number of local news stories covering the various

local issues, and a good amount of sport. The general sports coverage is extensive and has been moved to the back of the paper, which I find flows better for readers and the paper in general. There were a good number of junior sports photos in a couple of the issues, which is always well received by the children, parents and grandparents and is good for readership.

I do find the cricket results in particular a little hard to follow, but the rest of the sport is well written for any country community.

News photographs were well thought out and didn't always have people 'looking down the barrel', which gives a different angle and doesn't mean they all look the same.

The front pages were of a high quality, with large, interesting photographs to get a reader's attention.

The paper is well laid out and the colour that was behind some of the articles last year had gone from the issues presented to me, so this was a positive move.

The advertising content was good,

including healthy advertising features, good EGN and a pleasing number of classified ads, as well as real estate, particularly earlier in the year.

This is a very good newspaper that reflects an obviously passionate group of people involved in its production. Well done to all involved.

The Southern Argus

The Argus has improved out of site since I last saw an issue, which no doubt came about from new owners and staff.

As the year went along there were many improvements made to the paper, the advertising content increased as did the number of local stories and photographs. I like the use of bylines as readers can get to know journalists and they were well used in the papers presented to me.

The Argus always had a healthy sports section, which has continued and there were lots of local names and faces for readers.

The ad content increased as the year went on, including features, which always bolster revenue and pages.

As a traditionalist, colour behind stories and headlines should be avoided where possible as it makes text harder to read and can make pages look a little bit like fruit salad.

Apart from that, the papers should be well received by the local community.

The Border Times

The local story count again was high in the paper despite the page numbers being smaller than the others in the category.

Journalist Deirdre Graham works hard to cover as many local issues as possible. The stories and photographs feature local people and local issues, including the traditional 'parish pump' that local newspapers have relied on for years.

Sports coverage was good for the small communities and the number of advertisements looked to have increased over last year

Working with low page numbers can often be difficult but the story count in general was high, and most photographs were named, which gives them more relevance for readers.

BEST COMMUNITY PROFILE

MEL JAUNAY, THE LEADER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS JOHN DAWKINS MLC

Judge's verdict: All entries were of a high standard, but these four entries were particularly impressive and there was very little distance between them.

FIRST - Mel Jaunay, *The Leader*
'On eating giraffes'

Judge's comments: This piece is very well-written and entertaining to read, capturing the challenges that subject Melissa Whyte has faced across her lifetime. The piece tells the story of Nuriootpa artist and author Melissa Whyte and the struggles she has overcome since a car accident left her seriously injured when she was 16. The writer Mel Jaunay uses bright and evocative language which works to effectively convey the positive spirit of her subject. From the piece it is clear that Melissa Whyte has lived a difficult life, but Jaunay focuses on Whyte's resilience and optimism, leaving the reader with an uplifting message.

SECOND - Stephanie Thompson, *The Murray Pioneer*

'Justice 33 years in the making'

Judge's comments: This is a well-

written and impactful piece which treats a very difficult issue with dignity and respect. The writer Stephanie Thompson covers the issue in depth, conveying the shame and trauma experienced by subject Heather Wynands and the reasons why sexual assault survivors including Wynands are discouraged from reporting their abuse. The piece had a notable impact, with another alleged victim of the perpetrator reaching out to Wynands and other sexual assault victims approaching her for help on how to report their abusers.

THIRD - Elisa Rose, *The Mount Barker Courier*

'Dying on your own terms'

Judge's comments: Elisa Rose's piece is a moving and topical account of a terminally ill woman who chose to access assisted dying in Switzerland. Rose captures the traumatic experience of subject Jen Turner and her sense of feeling 'trapped' with an incurable degenerative disease. The piece is eloquent and well-structured, exploring Turner's reasons for accessing AD and the impact the decision had for herself and her family. Rose discusses the South Australian Assisted Dying Bill, which was being debated in Parliament at the time, and its significance for families like the Turners.



Tony Robinson from *The Leader* and Hon. John Dawkins MLC.

SPECIAL MENTION - Sara Gilligan, *The Southern Argus*

'Gentle, loved and greatly missed'

Judge's comments: This is a very moving piece about former Strathalbyn resident E.mlyn Lewis, who died from bowel cancer just eight weeks after he was diagnosed. The piece was particularly personal

for writer Sara Gilligan - it came about after Emlyn's mother reached out to Sara when the editor shared her own diagnosis of bowel cancer with *Argus* readers. Gilligan's piece is well-written and emotionally engaging, informing readers of the symptoms to look out for and encouraging readers to monitor their own health.

YOUNG JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

JOSH BRINE, THE MURRAY PIONEER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS LEIGH RADFORD OAM

I've finally got through the entries and it seemed to require more effort this year, principally because the competition was good and I've been challenged to pick the right winner!

So in short, it came down to a choice between Josh Brine from the Murray Pioneer and Isabella Carbone from the Plains Producer.

I've selected Josh Brine as the winner because he really seems quite accomplished and writes well. I was impressed with the diversity of his stories and with his obvious versatility as a reporter. Josh has a real enthusiasm for the job, a strong news sense and has a clear appreciation of knowing what issues matter to his local community. Josh's accumulated experience shows in his writing and story selection, placing him ahead of the rest of the field and he is doubtless a strong asset for Murray Pioneer.

Isabella is doing quality work and clearly has plenty of potential. She



Murray Pioneer journalist Josh Brine.

seems quite fearless in taking on challenges and clearly impresses her Editor with her editorial strength. Isabella writes well and has an engaging style. Assuming she is still eligible to enter next year, I could easily see her winning.

Also of note was Ebony Raymond from the SE Voice. Her work is not quite the same calibre as Josh and Isabella, but if I was giving out an award for encouragement of to recognise clear potential, Ebony would be an easy choice. Beyond that, Georgina McKay is doing some great work and I was impressed with Brandi Miller as a brand new reporter.

LIFE MEMBER

ANDREW MANUEL



Merridy, Andrew and Margaret Manuel.

BEST SPORT PHOTO

ROD PENNA, YORKE PENINSULA COUNTRY TIMES

JUDGE'S COMMENTS SEAN MCGOWAN

FIRST PLACE:

Yorke Peninsula Country Times,
Rod Penna

Penna's image of dirt-karter Gary Duff's crash provokes an array of emotions in the viewer; shock, amazement, curiosity and awe to name a few.

This crash was a defining moment in the race, causing a massive pile-up of karts, but was also a critical moment in the life of the driver with the possibility of severe injury, permanent disablement or even death. The defining moment of the crash itself was this split second when the kart flipped upside down, exactly horizontal to the ground, crumpling the driver beneath. There is also a wonderful visual incongruity in the published cropped image as Duff's kart seems inexplicably inverted beside his competitors.

A perfectly timed capture by Penna.

SECOND PLACE:

The Mt Barker Courier,
Daniel Cazzolato

This year we saw an abundance of excellent entries featuring great speckies and attempted hangers but Cazzolato's was literally head-and-shoulders above the rest. Although not captured at the height of his leap (which must have been extraordinary) the player's feet are still level with other players' faces, his eyes are firmly on the ball and the focus is crisp. Great footy shot!

THIRD PLACE:

The Southern Argus, Rowan Sims

Sims captured a bone-crunching moment with his photo of two football players meeting head-on in a marking contest, featuring great action and interesting symmetry. A longer lens or a higher-resolution camera may allow for the sort of crop required by the editor, in this case, to be crisper.

JUDGES NOTE:

Thank you to those photographers who took the time to enter imagery from soccer, basketball, baseball and hockey. These sports may not yet have the same popularity in the bush as footy, netball, cricket and tennis but there are opportunities out there for great and interesting sports photographs your readers will appreciate. Keep shooting!



Rhiannon Koch from YP Country Times.

BEST SPORT STORY

PAUL MITCHELL & STEPHANIE THOMPSON, MURRAY PIONEER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS IAN SHUTTLEWORTH

FIRST PLACE - MURRAY PIONEER- Paul Mitchell & Stephanie Thompson

An informative piece which leaves the reader questioning whether the local council was effectively spending ratepayers' money when it came to sports facilities in Loxton. Importantly, the opening few paragraphs present what is a strong news angle in a succinct yet easy to understand manner, and leave the reader quickly turning the front page in search of the rest of the story. Not only does the article hold the council to account but it provides you with an appropriate amount of historical information and carefully chosen quotes, while the supporting imagery is helpful. Overall it is a quality piece of journalism that serves the best interests of the local community. It should be noted the supporting background information and comments were useful as they provided context to the newsgathering, and other mastheads are encouraged to take advantage of this section on the entry form going forward.

SECOND PLACE - PLAINS PRODUCER- Gabrielle Hall

A great example of local reporting

which takes an international event like the Olympics and makes it relevant to a regional community. The article is an entertaining and inspiring read that captures the emotion of a proud grandfather, who paints a picture of his granddaughter's rise to competing on the world stage. The story flows nicely with the reader carried along by descriptive and well-chosen quotes from what appears to have been extensive interviews. In particular, the quotes relating to childhood notes or letters, which are depicted among other imagery, add a level of nostalgia that is sure to evoke emotion among any reader who is a parent.

THIRD PLACE - YORKE PENINSULA COUNTRY TIMES- Jess Liddy

A good piece of journalism which highlights the efforts of a once local resident who has gone on to compete internationally at the CrossFit Games. It is an interesting article which is well structured and finishes on an uplifting note. Importantly, it appropriately explains what is arguably a non-mainstream sport and competition, which in turn gives context to the enormity of the athlete's achievement. This was effortless to read and an enjoyable story among what was a high quality selection of entries. Well done.



Ben Taylor from The Murray Pioneer and Chris Tierney

BEST ROAD SAFETY REPORTING

CELESTE NEWBERY, THE LEADER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS BRAD KEIGHRAN

Comment: Country newspapers are a staple of the communities they serve. What is communicated within those sheets of paper requires not only good journalistic skills, but also a genuine understanding of what actually matters to the community. This award and the winners are a great example of how good writing, a clear perspective and persistence can bring about positive change.

WINNER - *The Leader*,
Celeste Newbery

This was a wonderful example of a newspaper and journalist understanding the needs of the community and persisting with stories to drive change. Key to this

was covering a range of opinions from residents and commercial operators to back up the need for change. As a set of stories, it was very compelling and there is no doubt the change in signs will save lives.

SECOND - *The Mt Barker Courier*,
Elisa Rose

I really admired the perspective of the article which supported concerned residents. Another great outcome for road safety.

THIRD - *The Bunyip*,
Brendan Simpkins

Another strong example of how being part of the local community opens doors. The engagement of the emergency services provided a positive local perspective around road safety messaging.



Brad Keighran, Celeste Newbery from *The Leader* and the Hon. Steven Marshall, MP.

BEST ADVERTISEMENT - PRICED PRODUCT

THE COURIER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS MARK CLEMOW

WINNER - *The Courier*.
Crafers Pizza Bar

This is a clear and bright layout that works in the simplest way by making the price the hero. The name and location of the business and the price of the offer are bold and unmissable and the layout carries the same branding as the website and store. The offer is accompanied by plenty of contact options and information.

SECOND - *The SE Voice*. Jens Hotel
An attractive layout that clearly conveys the product and the offer as the heroes. Nothing missing from the easy contact information and good brand reinforcement with the image of the hotel an important component.

THIRD - *The Leader*.
That's Furniture & Bedding

A well designed and informative launch advertisement for a new business, with a very catchy headline and image and discounted prices.

Simple to understand the purpose of the advertisement and to navigate all of the information to the call to action. Reassuring to learn it contributed to the business selling all the stock featured.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

The Courier. Irrigation Pump Depot
An appealing layout with good use of mostly cool colours, with some brighter colours in context. Clear product images, pricing and description. Pleasing to look at and very easy to review and find the call to action. As a full page, it would have really stood out in the paper.

The Advocate. Ceduna Foreshore Hotel Motel

An informative and well laid out advertisement that provides a comprehensive directory of events and offers at the Hotel. Perhaps the branding at the top could have been stronger, either by bordering the page, or simply giving it more size or colour. It seemed to be lost in all the information on the page.

OTHER ENTRIES (IN NO ORDER)

The Plains Producer. Steinborner
It was good to see a departure from the usual car style of car advertising into a slightly frivolous and fun theme. Four clear and informative offers are supported by an engaging and humorous photo of the sales team. Bold phone number, both others means to engage (such as a website) could have been considered.

The Plains Producer. Clare Valley Toyota

An engaging advertisement, with a fun and appealing theme and image. Nicely personalised with the photos of the dealer and the sales team. A nice way to combine the power of a respected international brand with a local one.

The Yorke Peninsula Country Times. Enfield Furnishers

These advertisements are always well done, with the personality of the owner the hero image and by surrounding him with offers, there is a strong personal guarantee. Great colours that look good on the page and very easy to find call to action and information. Good to see that the "less is more" approach is working.

The SE Voice. OG Roberts

It is difficult to be innovative with car advertising, but this one has



Elisa Rose from *The Courier* and Mark Clemow.

used modern fonts, colour and background to turn a regular style into something quite appealing. It perhaps would have been better at the top of the page, as the Mitsubishi advertisement blends in and you have to look closely to see it is for a different dealer. Good contact options and information.

The Border Watch. Bi-Rite

A simple advertisement that succeeds by focusing on two offers. The yellow makes the offer and the pricing prominent and prompts interest in the who, what and where. Perhaps a few more contact details and business hours would be helpful.

The Murray Pioneer. Grower Services

Nice and simple product offer ads that have a straightforward design, featuring the product, with clear price and information. Perhaps a few more contact options and trading

hours would help the reader.

The Bunyip. Uleybury Wines

A simple advertisement that uses space and image effectively to look nice on the page. The nature of the offer is supported by the image and conveys an urgency for action (due to the sale). Plenty of contact options. Be careful to proof read for upper/lower case inconsistencies (Fri/sat/sun).

The Yorke Peninsula Country Times. Battery Solar Solutions

There is a good strategy behind this visually pleasing and informative advertisement. Cool and calming colours, clear offer and plenty of contact details. I could see why you should feel proud of this advertisement, the versatility it demonstrates and the relationship you developed with the "out of town" business.

BEST NEWS PHOTO

JACK HUDSON, THE BUNYIP

JUDGE'S COMMENTS SEAN MCGOWAN

FIRST PLACE:

The Bunyip, Jack Hudson, "Dreams Shattered"

Hudson's image of Virginia grower Phuong Vo amidst the wreckage of his hail-damaged glasshouse is dramatic. The hailstorm and subsequent damage to the northern Adelaide food bowl were big news and, to illustrate the story, both subject and photographer have knelt to bring the smashed glass and damaged fruit into frame whilst also providing a view of the broken ceiling overhead. The subject's face is sharp and the composition uses the Instagram-style rule-of-thirds, placing the face dead centre of frame on the top third line. While not normally a recommended composition for newspaper imagery as editors often use negative space for titles and captions, in this instance, surrounding the farmer with his now-useless crop conveys the overwhelming hardship of his situation.

SECOND PLACE:

The Mt Barker Courier, Elisa Rose, "Field of Dreams"

A "good news story" filled with the bright gold of canola flowers and a happy, yet pensive farmer looking to the heavens for a little mercy. Rose's composition uses the dead-centre rule-of-thirds alignment but the editor has been able to neatly place titles and captions around the image so that it balanced well on the front page.

Notable here is Rose's use of lighting. The subject is positioned with the sun behind him which creates a slight edge-light and helps to pop him out of the background. An off-camera flash was used to excellent effect to light the subject's face, angled to create facial shadows which in turn convey three-dimensionality to the image.

THIRD PLACE:

The Southern Argus, Sara Gilligan, "Beef with Rate Rises"

Gilligan has found a terrific subject for her story. The craggy faced farmer staring down the camera, scowling unhappily and with his arms crossed defiantly is well posed and imposing on the front page. Behind him, all the cattle

are looking to camera as well, indicating good animal photography skills. The image rates highly in rural newsworthiness and impact. It would have benefitted from a squirt of off-camera flash, allowing the background to be slightly underexposed and popping the subject out of the page at the viewer.



Jack Hudson from *The Bunyip* and Josh Zugajev.

EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

STEPHANIE THOMPSON, THE MURRAY PIONEER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS KYM TILBROOK

There were nine entries in this category, the same as last year. The calibre of entries was very high, with journalists showcasing their skills in day-to-day reporting and investigative reporting.

Criteria for the award states: "A local news or human-interest story – must be breaking news, delving into an issue in the entrant newspaper's community."

Once again, this year's entries reveal that communities are well-served by their local newspapers. The hard issues, such as health, ambulance staff shortages, homelessness, suicide and the chaos of Covid were all put under the spotlight.

Stories were hard hitting, well-researched and with the community interest at heart.

Picking a winner was not easy. There was some excellent journalism and there could have been three winners...however, I could only pick one. It was so hard it took me two days to make my final decision.

Because of the strength of the entries, I gave two honourable mentions.

They were to:

Lechelle Earl of *The SE Voice* for coverage of a spate of suicides in the Mount Gambier area. Suicide is a difficult issue to report, but Lechelle did an excellent job. The interview with the wife of a suicide victim was well-written and heartbreaking.

Rhiannon Koch of the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times* for her series of stories over six months on the medical crisis facing the Yorke Peninsula towns of Minlaton and Maitland. Rhiannon was awarded third place in last year's judging and she has continued her high standard of reporting. The articles were well-written and researched and shows how a newspaper can back its community.

I awarded first place to Stephanie Thompson of *The Murray Pioneer* for her excellent work to tell the story of rape victim Heather Wynands. Heather was raped when she was just 16 by a former local chiropractor Robert Linke in 1988. He was sentenced to five years jail in May last year.

It is very rare for a sexual assault victim to speak out in the media, and Stephanie worked hard

over several months to gain Heather's trust.

The story was headed: Justice 33 years in the making. It was a compelling, harrowing read that Heather hopes will inspire other victims of sexual assault to come forward and report the assault to police.

"Let's stop protecting these predators," she told Sophie. As a result of the article a version of it was done by ABC online and a national women's magazine also followed it up. In addition, the story resulted in Heather being given a special Citizen of Courage Award by the local council.

Stephanie's work certainly met all the criteria for the award.

SECOND – Elisa Rose, *The Courier*, for an excellent series on ambulance issues, including long wait times and ramping, in the Adelaide Hills. The series included two in-depth interviews with victims of lengthy wait times – the "human faces" of the crisis.

Elisa's work is of a consistently high standard – she received an honourable mention in last year's awards for a series on the devastating Cudlee Creek bushfires.

Over the last few months of last year, Elisa developed



Paul Salter, Ben Taylor from *The Murray Pioneer* and Kym Tilbrook.

relationships and trust with local paramedics who had experience of the issues and were willing to share their stories. The result of developing good contacts, always a must for any journalist, was a hard-hitting series which will make sure the issue is on the political agenda for the State election in three weeks.

THIRD – Sara Gilligan, *The Southern Argus*. Through a four-part series, Sara shone a light on the region's homelessness crisis, as demand for affordable housing and emergency accommodation rises.

Her features revealed a rise of people sleeping rough across the Fleurieu Peninsula, particularly in vehicles and tents.

The wide-ranging,

informative and well-researched series unearthed a growing trend for locals seeking housing support and a need for more social housing in remote areas like Milang. It also examined the role of volunteers who offer referrals and the need for early intervention.

Sara also put a "human face" to what is a major issue when she interviewed a local widow on her experience facing homelessness.

Each article included valuable information for people seeking support.

Sara is passionate about reporting social issues and received an honourable mention in last year's awards for a series of articles raising awareness about domestic violence.

BEST EDITORIAL WRITING

TONY ROBINSON, THE LEADER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS SHAUNA BLACK

It is a pleasure to note an increase in the number of entries in this category this year and the appearance of some new contenders - and even new mastheads - as our country newspapers stabilise and thrive after the shock and damage of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is not that all pandemic issues have passed. The number of entries addressing the ongoing fallout of the pandemic attest to this. Whether it is the flagging fortunes of local business, the threats to local health and ambulance services, or the staffing shortages that have plagued regional services and businesses; local papers have re-emerged to tackle these issues for their communities.

Judging is made easier and more satisfying where entrants have taken the time to write explanatory notes about their editorials. It is especially heartening when the entrant can attest to change that has come from their campaign or position.

The editorial of a newspaper is a powerful tool when used well.

The standard of the nine entries was high. There are some senior and well-respected journalists at the helms of our country papers, and our young leaders are proving themselves.

Just the usual gentle reminders:

- Opinion pieces are not editorials, which must appear under the masthead name and reflect the newspaper's position, not the journalist's.

- There should not be a name or a byline on the editorial. Some will see this as a purist's nit-picking but the editorial reflects the opinion of the masthead, not the individual. This does not prohibit the entry form including the name of the author - credit where it is due after all.

THIRD PLACE: Paul Mitchell, *The Murray Pioneer*.

Welcome back Paul! Your gritty, forthright style serves your readers well. Holding local government to account is at the core of a local newspaper's duty and you do it well.

SECOND PLACE: Sara Gilligan, *The Southern Argus*.

Last year's winner serves up a variety of challenges to local and State Government and starts to see the rewards flow. As part of the pressure



Graham Raw from Manroland/Goss and Tony Robinson from *The Leader*.

lobby for better ambulance and health services, Sara has helped to achieve better outcomes for her community.

FIRST PLACE: Tony Robinson, *The Leader*.

Tony showcases the best attributes of the editorial in all of its power. He campaigned relentlessly for changes to road signage with a clear goal of saving lives and his work achieved an excellent outcome for his regional community.

BEST HEADLINE

"SHOW US YOUR TICKS", THE SOUTHERN ARGUS

JUDGE'S COMMENTS ROSS MCPHERSON AM

The pun is a trusty weapon in the armoury of headline writers in a hurry and can provoke a strong response and engage the reader when cleverly used.

Response is what we want, of course, but we prefer the right kind: a weak or laboured pun can produce a slight curl of the reader's lip and be underwhelming. The better response is a smile, a delighted chuckle or a nod of appreciation.

In this year's strong field of entries we had both. The most effective simple puns are often supported by a well-chosen image; best are those where a double meaning or a play on words powers the pun to greater heights.

FIRST - *The Southern Argus*, "Show Us Your Ticks."

This edgy headline was embraced by both the paper and a local pub in a mini-campaign to urge patrons to bring their proof of vaccination after plain-clothes police started visiting hospitality venues. It was a provocative but fun way to deliver an important message - and it is the kind of headline that people laugh and talk about!



Sara Gilligan from *The Southern Argus*, Phil Le Petit QLD and Giorgina McKay and Tara Nash from *The Southern Argus*.

SECOND - *The Mount Barker Courier*, "Testing times."

The Courier's bold headline instantly conveyed its double meaning, accompanied by a telling image of a long, desultory line of people awaiting their Covid PCR tests. It was in no way funny and nor was it meant to be: it captured perfectly both the inconvenience faced by readers along with their patient resilience - a headline for our times.

THIRD - *The Bunyip*, "Ready to Rook 'n' Roll."

This is a fine example of how a simple pun can work nicely, supported by a lovely image of a local lad at a chess board, announcing the formation of a chess club. And the fact that he holds the knight rather than the rook is of no consequence at all!

Special mentions

Other strong contenders included the *YP Country Times'* For some, FOGO has bin wheelie confusing - heading a story about the roll-out of the lime-green lidded bins; *New Day Spawning* heading the *Eyre Peninsular Advocate's* story about the welcome arrival of triploid oysters; and the *SE Voice's* Ex-Demon blessed with AFL Saints deal, on the drafting of Mt Gambier's Oscar Adams to St Kilda.

BEST PHOTO

PETE THORNTON, THE LEADER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS BRUCE MORGAN

It is pleasing to see the determination of the photographers in planning and executing some very fine work for this year's awards. Because it "isn't serious news or sport" the task was made a little easier, with the hard-news aspect removed.

Nevertheless, it is always tough to separate well-constructed photos, and separating 1st from 2nd was

particularly difficult in this case.

FIRST - Pete Thornton, *The Leader*

Once again, Pete shows excellent photo planning and execution, and this contribution to the Barossa Unearthed series had all the right ingredients. Firstly, I had to know what it was about, and there certainly was a story being told in this image. It drew me straight to the words and was satisfying to match up. This was a fun picture too, just right for a feelgood story.

SECOND - Peter Gandolfi, *The Border Watch*

What isn't there to like about this photo! And the headline "Look at Me" said it all. Nicely framed, and presented on the front page, Meg the Italian greyhound is an instant hit, and doesn't she know it.

THIRD - Lechelle Earl, *The SE Voice*

There was something about the colour and the posing of this photo that immediately draws the viewer in, wanting to know what, where and why. It worked well in construction and particularly with the creative use of the filtered light. A well thought out photo.



Tony Robinson from *The Leader* and Bruce Morgan.

BEST COMMUNITY ADVERTISING PROMOTION

THE MURRAY PIONEER, RIVERLAND ROSE AND GARDEN FESTIVAL

JUDGE'S COMMENTS WANDA DUNNET

There were 10 entries in this new category for the 2021 Country Press SA newspaper awards.

There was a high standard throughout with entries demonstrating close engagement with their communities and a strong commitment to events and business promotion.

The standout winner was the *Murray Pioneer's* Riverland Rose and Garden Festival promotion. It set a benchmark with the feature reflecting the status of "Australia's largest garden festival". The 36

page glossy official program was beautifully designed and printed with comprehensive information about the festival. I believe the feature would have exceeded the festival organisers' expectations. The newspaper coverage in conjunction with the flyer and program gave the occasion complete coverage. It was a generous sponsorship and a magnificent promotion of this event and has formed the basis of a long-lasting relationship. The various elements of the feature gave the community a clear idea of what they could look forward to. The paper took a strong initiative and delivered an informative and entertaining promotion demonstrating

community involvement, leadership, initiative and support. The judge was clearly informed of the intention, execution and the results of the promotion. Congratulations to the team at the *Murray Pioneer* on an innovative and well presented promotion.

In second place is *The SE Voice's* 16 page stand alone Football and Netball Grand Final feature. This was an informative and comprehensive publication leading up to the competition final for these two community sports. It will be a keepsake and valued memento of the grand final participants with lots of photos, articles and information on the teams and was well supported



Ben Taylor from *The Murray Pioneer* with Tony Piccolo MP.

by advertising. A true community promotion.

In third place is the *Yorke Peninsula Country Times'* Christmas in Kadina feature promoting Christmas events in Kadina. Newspaper coverage and the production of the program gave comprehensive coverage.

BEST FRONT PAGE

THE MURRAY PIONEER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS BRUCE MORGAN

There are limited opportunities for variety with tabloid newspapers which have 7 col advertisements, nevertheless there was, in this section, some good attempts at originality, particularly using the photo as the main tool to capture reader attention.

Some front pages over-used screen and reverse type which has its place, but is a blunt instrument when over-used and proven to be more difficult to read.

Nevertheless, there is enough fine work here to be a good example to all about getting the front right to help attract casual readers.

FIRST - *Murray Pioneer*

It was the picture that really worked for this: what's with the QR Codes and the Pies? And, it was a topical

and legitimate story, well laid out.

The lead also attracted attention with the use of the \$ for the S, and this was a worthy hard news story. The whole presentation was complimented by the simple, but high-quality ad, which due to its size, could have wrecked the page.

SECOND - *The Border Watch*

It might be a good lead story but it is Meg the Italian greyhound who stars on this page, and no doubt helped the day's casual buy. The layout also has been well worked with the advertisement, noting the colour co-ordination.

THIRD - *The Courier*

It is simply the bluntness of this front page that captures the attention. This is a dramatic, political story and is treated as such. And while the use of multiple headline colours is not ideal, the whole page is then further lifted with the pointer to the fast rail proposal.



Ben Taylor from *The Murray Pioneer* and Bruce Morgan.

BEST SUPPLEMENT

YORKE PENINSULA FIELD DAYS OFFICIAL SOUVENIR GUIDE, YORKE PENINSULA COUNTRY TIMES

JUDGE'S COMMENTS ANDREW SCHREYER

General comments:

An extremely difficult task this year. This category attracted many high quality entries with very little separating those in the running. In judging the award I put myself in the position of the reader – what would I like to pick up and read and what would I get the most use out of as a consumer. The best entries used modern and crisp layout styles, strong photography, interesting editorials and plenty of well designed ads. Quality stock was also a feature of many of the entries.

FIRST - Yorke Peninsula Field Days Official Souvenir Guide (Yorke Peninsula Country Times)

This highly impressive 96-page official guide to the Yorke Peninsula Field Days is a publication that people would certainly keep as a souvenir. The publication is printed on extremely high-quality heavy gloss stock which adds to the shelf life of the product – adding value to advertisers and the event it promotes. The editorials and photography are excellent and all target the intended audience. Everything you need to know about the field days is contained in this guide. The well-designed layout makes the publication very easy to read. Advertising is strong but not

overbearing as it would appeal to the reader's interests. An extremely well produced publication. Well done to the team at *Yorke Peninsula Country Times*.

SECOND - The Barossa Mag (*The Leader*)

A top quality publication that would be of strong interest to locals and tourists in and around the Barossa Valley and further afield. The 76-page Spring 2021 edition is filled with information on local events, stories on local people, well used large photos, strong advertising, recipes, local weddings, a book review and of course a wine review section. The publication uses white space extremely well and its modern layouts make the content very easy to consume. The publication is also supported by its own website, social media, EDM offering and now an e-Newsletter adding value for advertisers. Congratulations to the team at *The Leader*.

THIRD - Valley Magazine/Flinders Magazine (*Plains Producer*)

A massive effort by the team at Plains Producer to produce this back to back Valley and Flinders Magazine all in one. This 80-page combined magazine features modern layouts, strong editorial, creative and well used photography all backed up by strong advertising. The quality gloss stock makes the publication easy to read and adds to the shelf life of the magazine. The testimonials



Daryl Irwin, Michael Ellis and Andrew Schreyer.

received by the publishers show this magazine has been well received by the communities it serves. I note a lot of passion and wine was required to produce this magazine and I can see why. Well done to the team at *Plains Producer*.

Special Mention: South Australia's Limestone Coast & South West Victoria 2021 Tourist Magazine (*The Border Watch*)

Printed on top quality gloss stock

this 100-page publication would be a 'bible' for tourists visiting the area. The publication features large, detailed maps for towns in the area and interesting editorials to keep the reader informed. There are many things to see and do in the region and these are well covered in short, sharp paragraphs throughout the magazine. The magazine is well laid out and extremely well supported by advertisers. Great work by the team at *The Border Watch*.

BEST HOUSE AD THE SOUTHERN ARGUS

JUDGE'S COMMENTS GREG HERRICK

This year there was an excellent number of entries for the Best House advertisement for 2021, the quality of house advertisements was of a very high standard and judging a winner wasn't an easy task and I congratulate all newspapers that entered the awards.

However there can only be one winner and that winner is...

The Southern Argus.

"Yes! Advertising in The Argus Works!"

There is nothing better than having a strong testimonial from a business advertiser that thanks you for helping their business grow together with the positive feedback the business had received from the many new and existing customers, all of them mentioning that they had seen the photo and advertisement in the local newspaper.

The strong point of the advertisement is the happy photo of the proprietors, who wouldn't want to meet the big fella Craig, to the customers new and existing this portrays a friendly customer orientated business that you want to buy your fresh seafood from.

The content of the advertisement is short sharp and straight to the point, when you receive positive feedback from new and existing customers saying that they had actually seen the advertisement in The Southern Argus newspaper it gives you great confidence that every dollar you spend on your advertising and marketing it is reaching the consumer you are seeking and shows that the local newspaper has a strong presence within the community.

Also they mention that the staff at The Southern Argus are super friendly and helpful...what a great compliment.

Congratulations to The Southern Argus team for producing a great

house advertisement that ticks all the boxes.

Second Murray Pioneer.

Murraypioneer.com.au

Terrific full page house advertisement promoting the new Murray Pioneer website, nice big clear heading and the word "FREE" attracts a lot of attention, also the ease of read to access to new website makes it simple, friendly even to someone like me.

Judging The Murray Pioneer house advertisement and following the criteria point system it was extremely close to the eventual winner, the only small difference I would suggest is to have included a photo shot of a family of all ages from young to old enjoying the murraypioneer.com.au website as to show that people can experience the new technology without fear... Pictures of people/families in advertisements do attract immediate notice.

Third SE Voice.



Sara De Paulis and Sara Gilligan from The Southern Argus.

Online Footy Tipping

Half page advertisement that has a clear and relevant simple headline targeting the footy loving public, promoting their online Footy Tipping for season 2021, the graphic of the Football also creates the attention factor and it guides you to go the online website www.sevioce.com.au/ footytips for further details, from there it is up to do you on whether you would want to participate or not...driving extra traffic to your website has great benefits, especially if they are going to be new customers.

BEST ADVERTISEMENT - IMAGE/BRANDING

THE LEADER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS MARK CLEMOW

WINNER - *The Leader*. Three 75 Bar

This is a stunning advertisement that simply conveys so much about the client and their product. Beautifully staged and lit, the food is the star and the epicurean desire it prompts is motivation to check the contact details to book a table. Few readers would turn the page without dwelling for a time to take in the delectable images and checking who is presenting them.

SECOND - *Yorke Peninsula Country Times*. Kadina Freight. "Sometimes even Santa needs a little help"

This is a very effective advertisement for building a brand with different seasonal messages revolving around a consistent hero image. The advertisement entered for the award builds on a very good brand campaign to take fun advantage of the Christmas season. The service is well targeted and described, with friendly typography and a bold call to action.

THIRD - *The Bunyip*. Travel Planner.

This is a colourful, imaginative and informative advertisement that speaks to the desire and frustration of many people who have felt restricted by COVID. The recognisable images, with a local focus perfectly match the pitch about "ideas for taking tours ex Gawler". It also conveys that a travel agent isn't necessarily about the big trip, but can help with the short and local ones too.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

The Plains Producer.
Mid North Pest & Weed

I liked this advertisement because it was fun and simple, with images that appeal to the phobias and irritations that prompt the need to engage the advertiser. Playful language, emotional images and a nice corporate colour palette make it a great looking advertisement.

The Bunyip. Flower Delights

This is a simple and attractive advertisement with a lovely and heart-warming message. Whilst the image and text is appropriate to



Dorothy Staruchowicz, Mark Clemow with Peter, Angela and Tony Robinson from *The Leader*.

Valentines Day, it is a concept that can be adapted for other occasions. The association with the business is very strong and contact details are easy to find, including social media to build the ongoing relationship.

The Advocate. Upper Eyre Peninsula Councils

This full page advertisement very

effectively branded the events of the region and conveyed a sense of unity and co-operation between local governments. A bright and celebratory hero image introduces a directory of information, with strong links back to the sponsoring councils. I liked it as an idea that was well executed in a simple, but effective, way.

BEST ADVERTISING FEATURE

ARTISANS OF THE BAROSSA GRAND OPENING, THE LEADER

JUDGE'S COMMENTS ROB DUFFIELD

1st- THE LEADER 'ARTISANS OF THE BAROSSA' GRAND OPENING FEATURE.

Beautifully laid out, designed grand opening feature with stunning high-quality photography that would have captured many thousands of locals fervent about what's best in Barossa food and wine.

The dominant use of photography in this feature was outstanding and suited the feature subject. The many advertisements were creative and matched the feature layout well. Editorial content was short, sharp and to the point. The Meet the Artisans section effectively enhanced this quality feature as well. A worthy winner of this year's award.

2nd- THE COURIER 'WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE'.

Innovative feature which proudly espouses national, international and more particularly local women making their decided marks in community life.

The question-and-answer format used in the editorial area is really good and the layout creative used also aligned with the feature well. The powerful statement at the front of the feature clearly stated the newspapers support for the equality

for women across the board. A strong feature. Really well done!

3rd- THE SOUTHERN ARGUS 'COMMEMORATING ANZAC'.

A powerful, really well researched and written feature which captured the raw local emotion around this important occasion. The biographical stories of Brenton Smith and Clive Henry Giles made this an absolute must read. Excellent use of very appropriate colour. Good front of issue photo, as well.

Nice little feature. Great effort Argus team...

Highly commended- THE LEADER 'THE CLUBHOUSE 'CELEBRATING 130 YEARS'

Another very engaging feature illuminating the 130-year history of The Clubhouse, a local institution. Loved the 130 reasons to celebrate double page spread. Beautifully laid out, well researched. Nice effort.

Highly commended- THE BORDER TIMES 'THE YEAR THAT WAS'

Very interesting and engaging editorials and good use of colour. Pity, press config's negated full colour throughout. Nice local feature. Well done Border Times team.

- MENTIONS TO THE PLAINS PRODUCER for the special client features for local smash repair and machinery clients. One even came with client feedback.



Chris Raynor and Tony Robinson from *The Leader*.