

2026 NEW ENGLAND NEWSPAPER AWARDS

Newsrooms and journalists: *Submit your best work of the year!*



NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Readers will identify the **region's best** daily, weekly, specialty and online newspapers!

PUBLIC OCCURRENCES AWARDS

Recognizing your **very best work of the year** - individual or team stories, series, spot news coverage, columns or photojournalism

A-MARK PRIZES

Rewarding outstanding **investigative journalism** that reveals hidden truths, holds power to account, or drives public awareness or reform.

NEW ENGLAND FIRST AMENDMENT AWARD

Recognizes a New England newspaper for its exceptional work in upholding the **First Amendment** and/or educating the public about it.

ALLAN B. ROGERS EDITORIAL AWARD

Recognizes the **best editorial** on a local subject that ran in New England in the past year.

THE CORNERSTONE AWARD

This award is designed to recognize and honor **unsung heroes** in our news organizations.

BOB WALLACK COMMUNITY JOURNALISM AWARD

Recognizes an individual who has an exceptional record of **commitment to community journalism**.

AP SEVELLON BROWN NEW ENGLAND JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Recognizes an individual for producing **journalism of distinction** in New England this past year.



Recognizing and honoring
New England's finest journalism!



Learn more at www.nenpa.com

NENPA
NEWSPAPER & PRESS

2026 NEW ENGLAND NEWSPAPER AWARDS



NEWSPAPERS OF THE YEAR

Once again, this year, the New England Newspaper & Press Association will identify our region's best daily, weekly, specialty and online newspapers, and recognize them with the prestigious "New England Newspaper of the Year" award. Winners will be named in a range of circulation categories. **To be considered, editors simply fill out the entry form and brief summary and upload them along with two editions from the contest year (June 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026). See below for information on eligible published edition(s).**

This is a one-of-a-kind competition – it is the only distinction of its kind in the newspaper industry that is judged by *audience* members. New England newspaper readers will be appointed to evaluate the entries from a news consumer point of view and decide which deserve the honor of being named *Newspaper of the Year*.

Readers will evaluate your paper's relative strengths and weaknesses, including:

- ◆ quality of reporting and writing
- ◆ use of photos
- ◆ design and presentation
- ◆ digital offering
- ◆ overall utility and value
- ◆ General impressions, such as: Does the newspaper inform, educate, entertain, inspire, motivate, lead? Does it reflect and care about the community it serves? Does it put the interests of the reader first? Is it unique or special in some way?

NENPA-member newspapers are invited to enter in five categories: Weekday newspapers, Sunday newspapers, Weekly community newspapers, Specialty Publications, and Online News Sites. Entries will be assigned to a competitive division within their category after all entries are received (i.e., small and large weeklies, small and large dailies, small and large Sunday/weekend publications, local and regional news sites.)

Eligible editions

Entry fees

Weekday –

One issue from the week of February 23-28, 2026 **and**
One issue from any weekday June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2026

Circulation 15,000 and under	\$199
Circulation 15,001 or more	\$299

Sunday –

Issue from March 1, 2026 **and**
One issue from any Sunday between June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2026

Circulation 15,000 and under	\$199
Circulation 15,001 or more	\$299

Weekly and Specialty Publications –

One issue from the month of February 2026 **and**
One issue from anytime between June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2026

All circulation sizes	\$199
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Online News Sites –

One link to an article or work from the month of February 2026 **and**
One link to an article or work any day June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2026

Community news site (limited geographic area)	\$199
Regional/State news site (broader coverage/multi-community)	\$299

All submissions and supporting material should be uploaded on the NENPA website. Please submit each entire edition as one pdf file (do not upload each page as a separate file).

[CLICK HERE to see previous Newspaper of the Year Winners](#)

PUBLICK OCCURRENCES

Editors are invited to enter their paper's best reporting and/or photojournalism from the past year. This award recognizes individual or team stories, series, spot news coverage, columns or photojournalism that ran in print and/or online. Editors should view this entry as their **"very best work of the year"** (June 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026).

This competition is open to all members of NENPA. Up to 16 Publick Occurrences awards will be presented.

These awards were established in 1990 to mark the 300th anniversary of the founding of Publick Occurrences, the first newspaper published in America. Four days after it appeared in 1690 in Boston, Publick Occurrences was suppressed by the royal governor. All materials should be uploaded on the NENPA website. **Entry fee \$125**

[CLICK HERE to see previous Publick Occurrences Award Winners](#)

ALLAN B. ROGERS EDITORIAL AWARD

This award recognizes the best editorial on a local subject that ran in New England in the past year (June 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026). The award honors the editor of The Eagle-Tribune (North Andover, MA) who died in 1964 at the age of 31.

This an open competition, so editorials from a wide variety of member newspapers in New England, regardless of circulation size and frequency of publication, are welcome to enter. All editorials should be uploaded on the NENPA website. **Entry fee \$125**

[CLICK HERE to see previous Rogers Editorial Award Winners](#)

NEW ENGLAND FIRST AMENDMENT AWARD

This award will recognize a New England newspaper for its exceptional work in upholding the First Amendment and/or educating the public about it. The award honors the association's record of leadership on First Amendment issues.

Entrants will be judged for the quality of reporting, editorials, commentary and/or legal challenges that illuminate or uphold the First Amendment.

NENPA-member newspapers, regardless of circulation size and frequency of publication, are invited to submit work published during the past year, June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2026. All materials should be uploaded on the NENPA website. **Entry fee \$125**

[CLICK HERE to see previous First Amendment Award Winners](#)

BOB WALLACK COMMUNITY JOURNALISM AWARD

This special award, which is named in honor of longtime New England journalist and former New England Press Association Executive Director Bob Wallack, recognizes an individual who has an exceptional record of commitment to community journalism. This award celebrates the accomplishments of someone who, over a sustained period of time, has faithfully served the community for which they are responsible and has played an active, constructive role in contributing to its quality of life.

Anyone may nominate a colleague, co-worker, subordinate, superior, mentor, retiree, etc., who works or worked in our six-state region and truly exemplifies the ideal of a community journalist, just as Bob Wallack did. Please complete the entry form and upload a letter of nomination that describes your nominee's contributions and make a case for why he/she should be chosen for this prestigious distinction. You may also upload examples of their work. All materials should be uploaded on the NENPA website.

Entry fee \$60

[CLICK HERE to see previous Award Winners](#)

AP **Sevellon Brown** **NEW ENGLAND JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR**

Presented by:

**New England Society
of
News Editors**

This award is bestowed by the New England Society of News Editors, and it recognizes an individual for producing journalism of distinction in New England this past year. The award is named in honor of Sevellon Brown, the late editor and publisher of The Providence Journal-Bulletin, founder of the American Press Institute, fellow of the Academy of New England Journalists, and past president and founder of New England Associated Press News Editors Association (NEAPNEA).

The competition is open to New England journalists of any kind; whether working for a daily, weekly or specialty print publication, broadcast outlet or online media.

Editors or news directors may submit one nomination of a journalist for a compelling story/series published or broadcast between June 1, 2025 and May 31, 2026.

Nominations should consist of a brief cover letter, supported by digital tearsheets or links to the text, photos, audio, video or other elements of the story/series. All materials should be uploaded on the NENPA website.

Entry fee \$60

[CLICK HERE to see previous Award Winners](#)



THE CORNERSTONE AWARD

Do you have a dedicated team member who works behind the scenes, ensuring the success of your operation? Perhaps the person is the go-to source for history or relationships in your community or a star production, administration or circulation member. We regularly champion the achievement of our journalists, but there are many others who daily make invaluable contributions to our organizations.

The Cornerstone Award is designed to recognize and honor unsung heroes in our news organizations who meaningfully and significantly contribute to the accomplishments of our publications without recognition. About these folks, we ask the question: “Where would we be without them?” These individuals are the lifeblood of our operations, consistently providing the support and commitment needed to keep our departments and publications thriving.

Submit a nomination letter detailing why your candidate deserves this prestigious recognition. Highlight the person’s dedication, service and the impact the individual has made on your team and organization.

All employees are eligible. There are no specific requirements other than demonstrating dedicated service and unwavering support. While a journalist may be recognized with this honor, the intent of the award is to bring attention to someone working in the background.

Entry fee \$50

[CLICK HERE to see previous Award Recipients](#)

NEW ENGLAND JOURNALISM EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



The award recognizes a professor at a university or college in our six-state region who is doing outstanding work in preparing the aspiring journalists that will lead our newspaper organizations into the future. Each college in New England is eligible to submit nominations for the award.

Simply write a letter in support of someone at a New England college who is doing extraordinary work with journalism students. Please explain why you think your nominee merits special recognition, and feel free to provide examples or supporting material if appropriate. Also, please provide contact information for your nominee, so that we can follow-up with questions and a notification if he/she is selected.

Nominations will be judged by the board of directors of our Journalism Education Foundation of New England. All materials should be uploaded on the NENPA website.

No entry fee

[CLICK HERE to see previous Award Recipients](#)

Celebrating journalism in New England!

We're proud to launch the **second year of the A-Mark Awards**, recognizing and celebrating outstanding investigative journalism that uncovers hidden truths, holds power to account, and drives meaningful public awareness or reform.

Building on a strong inaugural year, the awards continue to honor ambitious, deeply reported journalism that exposes wrongdoing, examines complex issues, and creates real impact in the communities we serve.

Cash Prizes • Regional Recognition • Professional Impact

In addition to professional recognition, winners will receive **monetary prizes** and have their work prominently **featured on our website**. Select entries may also be used in promotional campaigns across our digital platforms and publications, shining a spotlight on your reporting far beyond your newsroom.

This contest is open to **journalists based in New England** whose primary medium is the **written word**—including reporters, columnists, and investigative journalists working in newspapers and online news sites.

This is your opportunity to inspire others, raise your profile, and be recognized for outstanding work.

Help Define the Future of Investigative Journalism

The A-Mark Awards are quickly becoming a distinguished honor for courageous, clear, and compelling reporting. We invite journalists across the region to submit their best work and help continue building a tradition that celebrates journalism with impact.

Submit your best work by July 10, 2026. Claim your place in New England journalism history.

Please see the next page for details and guidelines.

All Publick Occurrences and First Amendment entries will automatically be entered for consideration in the A-Mark Awards.

GUIDELINES FOR A-MARK AWARDS

1. Purpose

To recognize and honor outstanding investigative journalism that reveals hidden truths, holds power to account, or drives public awareness or reform.

The Prize will reward ambitious, well-researched reporting that may expose a wrong, hold powerful individuals accountable, or explore a complex problem, issue, or subject.

2. Eligibility

This contest is open to all news media organizations based in New England whose primary medium is the written word, including their staff members. Freelance journalists based in New England, whose reporting is published by a New England news media organization, are also eligible to enter. The work must have been published in print and/or online within **June 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026**.

3. Judging Criteria

Entries will be judged on:

- **Originality:** Reporting must uncover information that was not previously known or was actively concealed.
- **Journalistic Effort:** initiative, commitment, overcoming obstacles, legal battles (e.g., FOIA).
- **Public Importance/Impact:** topics that matter to the community or democracy or influence community awareness, reform, debate, or public policy.
- **Quality of Work:** clarity, organization, engagement, graphic presentation, reader-friendly format, multiple points of entry
- **Research Depth:** Use of multiple credible sources, public records, document analysis

4. Prizes

We will award up to \$15,000 in each New England state. If there are not enough entries in a state, or the judges determine that no entry is prize-worthy, we reserve the right to reduce the number of awards in any state, or not give any awards. The prizes in each state are as follows:

- **1st Place:** \$5,000 to journalist(s), \$2,500 to the outlet
- **2nd Place:** \$3,000 to journalist(s), \$1,500 to the outlet
- **3rd Place:** \$2,000 to journalist(s), \$1,000 to the outlet

If a winning entry was produced by multiple reporters, the prize amount will be split evenly among them.

5. Submission Requirements

Submit published story (PDF, URL, video, etc.), along with:

One-page summary of the work's impact and context

Supporting materials (e.g., FOIA requests, data sets, letters)

Deadline: July 10, 2026

Entry platform: Online Form / NENPA website

This competition is open to both member and non-member newspapers and online news publications.

There is no entry fee for these awards. **All Publick Occurrences and First Amendment submissions will automatically be entered for A-Mark Prize consideration.**

6. Judging Panel

There will be a separate judging panel for each of the six New England states, comprised of veteran journalists, editors, journalism educators, and investigative specialists. Judges must recuse themselves from reviewing entries when there are conflicts of interest.

7. Announcement and Presentation

Winners will be announced and recognized at the NENPA Fall Conference, scheduled for October 9, 2026, at the Publick House in Sturbridge, MA.

Winning entries will be featured on the NENPA website and may be used in promotional materials to showcase the outstanding work recognized by the contest. By entering, participants grant permission for their submissions to be published online and shared in future publicity efforts to celebrate excellence and inspire others.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

2026 NEW ENGLAND NEWSPAPER AWARDS

WHERE DO I FIND THE CONTEST INFORMATION?

Go to the NENPA website -- www.nenpa.com/newspaper-of-the-year-entry-form/

This page includes instructions and an online entry form. All entries should be uploaded using the links on the entry form. Please do not mail hard copies.

HOW DO I ENTER THE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR?

All Newspaper of the Year submissions require two editions (one is a date that NENPA specifies, the other is a date that you choose within the contest year.) Print publications should upload pdf files. Please combine all pages of an edition into a single file. When entering the Online News Site of the Year category, please submit one piece of work from the month of February 2026, and one from any day from June 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026.

WHAT FILE FORMATS ARE ACCEPTED FOR UPLOADING?

Acceptable formats include PDFs, URL links, and DOC (for cover letters). **Note that a PDF is preferred.** A URL bringing the judge directly to the item, without paywalls or registration required, is also accepted. If your site does have a paywall or required registration, you must include login information in the entry form.

HOW DO I COMBINE PDFS INTO A SINGLE FILE

Open the PDF that you want to appear first in the entry. Choose "Save As..." from the File menu and give it the name of the final entry. Choose "Insert Pages..." from the Document menu, choose the file that you want to appear next in the entry, then specify where that file should be inserted. When all insertions have been made, save & close the PDF. Make sure the final PDF is optimized for size/resolution.

HOW CAN I MAKE MY PDF SMALLER

We recommend optimizing the PDF through the PDF editor settings/tools - there is usually an "Optimize" option under File or Tools. There are also a number of online PDF compressors that allow you to quickly reduce the size of your PDF. We suggest www.pdfcompressor.com. Before submitting be sure to check the final entry PDF against the original (prior to compressing or changing resolution/color) to make sure you are satisfied with the results.

HOW DO I EXTRACT PAGES FROM FULL-ISSUE OR FULL-SECTION PDFs?

Open the PDF file in Acrobat and choose "Extract Pages..." from the Document menu. This will allow you to save individual or sequential pages in separate files anywhere on your computer. Alternatively, you can extract certain pages by going to File > Print and select Print to PDF under the printer option. Simply select the pages/page range to print to PDF.

HOW DO I PAY FOR MY ENTRIES?

Payment may be made with a check, ACH, or credit card. At the bottom of the online entry form you will see two options "Credit Card" and "Offline" - if you are paying by check, please click "offline" and mail your check to NENPA at PO Box 2505, Woburn, MA 01888.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS?

July 10, 2026