



4 August 2023

Press release: AVBOB FCJ Excellence Awards winners announced

The **AVBOB** FCJ Excellence Awards, hosted by the Forum of Community Journalists NPC (FCJ), has become a well-known event in the media industry with the number of individual entries almost doubling from last year.

The 2022 competition attracted 527 individual entries. Winners were announced at a prize-giving dinner at the Cape Sun in Cape Town on 04 August 2023 with top honours going to Estella Naicker from Northern Natal News and Newcastle Advertiser (Journalist of the Year), Emily Bain from Northcliff Melville Times (Alet Roux Award for Upcoming Journalist of the Year) and Wayne van der Walt from Highvelder who is the Photographer of the Year.

Hermanus Times received the **AVBOB** Best Community Involvement Award for its Nomzamo Educare Centre project.

AVBOB, through its financial investment in the Forum and industry and the ongoing support from Caxton and Media24 allowed the FCJ to further enrich its offering and support to

Directors

Marietta Lombard– Executive Director, Ben Burger – Deputy Executive Director,
Tobie van den Bergh, Lientjie Mentz, Hugo Redelinghuys, Roelien D’Amico, Joline Nash, Dustin Wetdewich,

About the FCJ:

The FCJ (Forum of Community Journalists) is an independent, voluntary non-profit company striving to promote and express the interests of all journalists employed on a permanent or freelance basis at regional community newspapers and online community publications in South Africa.

members – community journalists. Without this support, especially from **AVBOB**, the Forum will not be able to do this.

“This support enabled the Forum to re-introduce the industry to the No Guts, No Glory regional seminars kicking off with the Limpopo, Gauteng and Mpumalanga seminar to be held on August 17 and 18. The Western Cape will also host its seminar soon. We thank **AVBOB**, Media24 and Caxton for their support. The Forum has been able to contribute significantly to the upliftment of community journalism simply because of the trust in the work done by the Forum and community journalists,” said FCJ executive director Marietta Lombard.

In his address, **AVBOB** CEO, Carl van der Riet, said “As a business, **AVBOB** is deeply rooted in, and connected to the communities in which we operate. This is reflected in our support for community journalism. We applaud the work you do to keep our communities informed and empowered with information. According to the United Nations, without freedom of the press, there can be no “real democratic societies”. Your work is an essential contribution to the building of a transparent and free society.”

“Similarly, the relationship between the media and broader society is critical on many levels in giving marginalised communities a voice on issues that affect them and in empowering them with information and an understanding of the evolving social and political dynamic around them. The absence of media in marginalised communities, leads to a divergence between expectations and experience,” added van der Riet.

The Forum also hosted its national seminar prior to the gala dinner with guest speakers Max du Preez and Press Council executive director Latiefa Mobarra. The FCJ commends and thanks the judges’ panel and convener Andre Gouws for the phenomenal work in judging this year’s entries. “We commend and congratulate all the finalists and winners of the **AVBOB** FCJ Excellence Awards 2022,” says Lombard.

Winners and Finalists:

Journalist of the Year

Winner: Estella Naicker, Northern Natal News and Newcastle Advertiser

2nd place: Dave Savides, Zululand Observer

3rd place: Carina Roux, TygerBurger, and Helena Barnard, Noordkaap Bulletin

Remaining six finalists:

Andries van Zyl
Candice Bezuidenhout
Christiaan Cloete
Charné Kemp
Nettalie Viljoen
Gerhard Rheeder

Columns

Winner: Victor Mukwevho, Limpopo Mirror

2nd place: Lise Beyers, Paarl Post

3rd place: Eugene Gunning, George Herald

Remaining seven finalists:

Alet Engelbrecht, Mossel Bay Advertiser
Erica Pretorius, Bloemnuus
Zita Goldswain, Witbank News
Rick Marais, DistrictMail (DistriksPos)
Veronica Fourie, Kouga Express
David Rush, South Coast Herald
Samantha Lee-Jacobs, People's Post

Digital reporting

Winner: Helena Barnard, NoordkaapBulletin

2nd place: Alet Engelbrecht, Mossel Bay Advertiser

3rd place: Emily Bain, Northcliff Melville Times

Remaining seven finalists:

Christiaan Cloete, Vaalweekblad
Candice Bezuidenhout, PE Express
Nielen De Klerk, TygerBurger
Jannie du Plessis, Mossel Bay Advertiser
Daleen Naudé, Middelburg Observer
Gerhard Rheeder, Middelburg Observer
Nettalie Viljoen, People's Post

Editorial comment

Winner: Dave Savides, Zululand Observer

2nd place: Tobie van den Bergh, Middelburg Observer

3rd place: Ronelle Ramsamy, Zululand Observer

Remaining finalists:

Maryke Swart, Weslander
Helena Barnard, NoordkaapBulletin
Lise Beyers, Paarl Post
Mariette Strydom, Hermanus Times
Jamey Lakin Gordon, DistrictMail & Helderberg Gazette

Hard news

Winner: Andries van Zyl, Zoutpansberger

2nd place: Dave Savides, Zululand Observer

3rd place: Maanda Bele, Limpopo Mirror

Remaing seven finalists:

Christiaan Cloete, Vaalweekblad
 Elmon Tshikhudo, Limpopo Mirror
 Emily Bain, Northcliff Melville Times
 Linzetta Calitz, Lowvelder
 Chelsea Pieterse, Lowvelder
 Candice Bezuidenhout, PE Express
 Daleen Naudé, Middelburg Observer

Headlines

Winner: Kristy Kolberg George Herald
2nd place: Etienne van Rensburg, Vaalweekblad/Ster
3rd place: Carina Roux, TygerBurger

Remaining seven finalists:

Dave Savides, Zululand Observer
 Mark Kinnear, Lowvelder
 Britney Edwards, South Coast SUN
 Zita Goldswain, Witbank News
 Inge Strydom, Central24 / Sentraal24: Bloemnuus, Express, NoordKaap Bulletin, Vista
 Wouter Pienaar, Potchefstroom Herald
 Shirwan Newton, Bloem News, Express, Vista

Human interest

Winner: Liezl Scheepers, Parys Gazette
2nd place: Mariette Strydom, Hermanus Times
3rd place: Nielen de Klerk, TygerBurger

Remaining seven finalists:

Charné Kemp, Noordkaap Bulletin
 Liezl Davids, Paarl Post
 Jarryd Westerdale, Roodepoort Record / Roodepoort Northsider
 Helena Barnard, NoordkaapBulletin
 Noluvu Ludidi, Weslander
 Esmé Erasmus, TygerBurger
 Vuctor Mukwevho, Limpopo Mirror

Investigative

Winner: Estella Naicker, Northern Natal News and Newcastle Advertiser
2nd place: Anton van Zyl, Limpopo Mirror
3rd place: Andries van Zyl, Zoutpansberger

Remaing seven finalists:

Emily Bain, Northcliff Melville Times
 Nettalie Viljoen, People's Post
 Charné Kemp, Noordkaap Bulletin
 Jarryd Westerdale, Roodepoort Record / Roodepoort Northsider
 Nielen de Klerk, TygerBurger
 Esmé Erasmus, TygerBurger

Sport

Winner: Blake Linder, Knysna-Plett Herald
2nd place: Hugo Redelinghuys, Suid-Kaap Forum

3rd place: David Rush, South Coast Herald and Etienne van Rensburg ,
Vaalweekblad/Ster

Remaining six finalists:

Dave Savides, Zululand Observer
Lebohlang Pita, Benoni CityTimes
Wouer Pienaar, Potchefstroom Herald
Naidine Sibanda, Rosebank Killarney Gazette
Daleen Naudé, Middelburg Observer
Marti Will, Vista

Photography

Photography: General

Winner: Wayne van der Walt, Highvelder

2nd place: Taylum Meyer, The Village NEWS and Carina Roux, TygerBurger

Highly commended: Elsje Vermeulen, Vaalweekblad

Remaining six finalists:

Mitzi Buys, Hermanus Times
Daleen Naudé, Middelburg Observer
Lise Beyers, Paarl Post
Christiaan Cloete, Vaalweekblad/Ster North
Yaël Malgas, Weslander
Linzetta Calitz, Lowvelder

Photography: News

Winner: Wayne van der Walt, Highvelder

Highly commended: Christiaan Cloete, Vaalweekblad; Kristy Kolberg, George Herald

Remaining seven finalists:

Zita Goldswain, Witbank News
Setena Teboho, Express Bloemfontein
Daleen Naudé, Middelburg Observer
Helena Barnard, NoordkaapBulletin
Wouter Pienaar, Potchefstroom Herald
Charné Kemp, Noordkaap Bulletin
Elsje Vermeulen, Vaalweekblad

Photography: Sport

Winner: Wayne van der Walt, Highvelder

2nd place: Etienne van Rensburg, Vaalweekblad

Highly commended: Hugo Redelinghuys, Suid-Kaap Forum

Remaining seven finalists:

Christiaan Cloete, Vaalweekblad/Ster North
Elsje Vermeulen, Vaalweekblad
Carina Roux, TygerBurger
Blake Linder, Knysna-Plett Herald
Teboho Setena, Express Bloemfontein
Rashied Isaacs, People's Post
Daleen Naudé, Middelburg Observer

Photographer of the Year

Winner: Wayne van der Walt, Highvelder

2nd place: Etienne van Rensburg, Vaalweekblad

Highly commended: Elsje Vermeulen, Vaalweekblad

Remaining seven finalists:

Blake Linder, Knysna-Plett Herald

Christiaan Cloete, Vaalweekblad

Zita Goldswain, Witbank News

Carina Roux, TygerBurger

Chantélie Hartebeest, Paarl Post

Charné Kemp, Noordkaap Bulletin

Daleen Naude, Middelburg Observer

Newspaper of the Year

Any newspaper not belonging to a major media group

Winner: Limpopo Mirror

2nd place: Zoutpansberger

No third place

Corporate free, fewer than 24 pages

Winner: Northcliff Melville Times

2nd place: Roodepoort Northsider

3rd place: Potchefstroom Herald

Remaining finalists

Rekord Mamelodi

Polokwane Review

Rosebank Killarney Gazette

Parys Gazette

Sandton Chronicle

Rekord Centurion

Fourways Review

Randburg Sun

Eyethu Baywatch

Corporate free, more than 24 pages

Winner: Polokwane Observer

Highly commended

DistrictMail & Helderberg Gazette

Corporate paid circulation under 5000

Winner: Knysna-Plett Herald

2nd place: Bosveld

3rd place: Ladysmith Gazette

Remaining finalists:

Vaalweekblad

Dundee Courier

Estcourt News

Vryheid Herald

Corporate paid circulation over 5000

Winner: Paarl Post

2nd place: Lowvelder

3rd place: George Herald

Remaining seven finalists:

Zululand Observer

Worcester Standard

South Coast Herald

Weslander

Witbank News

Newcastle Advertiser

African Reporter

Best front page

Any newspaper not belonging to a major media group

Winner: Zoutpansberger

2nd place: Limpopo Mirror

3rd place: The Village NEWS

Remaining finalists:

Witzenberg Herald

Pondoland Times

Mangaung Issue

Corporate-owned, free

Winner: Rosebank Killarney Gazette

2nd place: Highvelder

3rd place: Bedfordview Edenvale News

Remaining seven finalists:

Potchefstroom Herald

Parys Gazette

Germiston City News

Southlands SUN

Lowvelder Express

South Coast SUN

DistrictMail & Helderberg Gazette

Corporate-owned, paid

Winner: Lowvelder

2nd place: Zululand Observer

3rd place: Knysna-Plett Herald

Remaining seven finalists:

Suid-Kaap Forum

Witbank News

South Coast Herald

George Herald

Mpumalanga News

Paarl Post

Vaalweekblad