

The AVBOB FCJ Excellence Awards – 2023

Presented by the Forum of Community Journalists NPC



24 June 2024

PRESS RELEASE

FCJ announces finalists of the AVBOB FCJ Excellence Awards for 2023

The Forum of Community Journalists is excited to announce the finalists of the AVBOB FCJ Excellence Awards for 2023 and this year many new names appear for the first time.

After almost six weeks of hard work and working through 531 entries, the panel of 24 judges, led by convenor André Gouws, selected the finalists in each category.

“While there were slightly fewer entries this year than last year, judges were impressed with the quality of work entered and the deep dedication shown by community journalists across the country,” says Gouws.

“Not only are community journalists the local watchdogs, but they help communities thrive by reporting on all that is happening, from sport to social events and supporting local businesses. Newsrooms are small and community journalists work very hard. We, as the judges, can see that. What is more important, however, is that people in your communities see and appreciate what you do for them. Never under-estimate the important roles that you play,” Gouws concluded.

“A huge word of thanks goes to André and his panel of adjudicators for this huge task that they faced. We are grateful to them. I also thank everyone who entered, because without your entries, we do not have a competition,” says Ben Burger, Executive Director of the FCJ.

FCJ Directors

Ben Burger – Executive Director, Marietta Lombard – Deputy Executive Director

Hugo Redelinghuys, Roelien D’Amico, Dustin Wetdewich,

Lientjie Mentz, Ronelle Ramsamy (co-opted), Wayne van der Walt

About the FCJ:

The FCJ (Forum of Community Journalists) is an independent, non-racial, 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, magazines and online community publications in South Africa.

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All finalists will be invited to the prestigious prize-giving gala dinner on Friday 2 August 2024 at the @Sandton Hotel in Sandton, Johannesburg. Expect your invitation from AVBOB soon. If you have not received your invitation by 28 June, please send an email to myfcjinfo@gmail.com.

The finalists – in alphabetical order by first name – in each category are:

Digital reporting

Chelsea Pieterse (Lowvelder)
Christiaan Cloete (Vaalweekblad / Ster North)
Helena Barnard (NoordkaapBulletin)
Jo Sekepane (TygerBurger)
Matthew Handley (Middelburg Observer)
Michelle Pienaar (George Herald)
Samantha Lee-Jacobs (People's Post)
Sibulele Kasa (Northern News)
Tiisetso Malunga (Middelburg Observer)
Zita Goldswain (Witbank News)

Writing: Editorial comment

Colin Hoffmann (Mossel Bay Advertiser)
Dave Savides (Zululand Observer)
Kaylynne Bantom (People's Post)
Linzetta Calitz (Mossel Bay Advertiser)
Lise Beyers (Paarl Post)
Louise Karsten (Mossel Bay Advertiser)
Matthew Handley (Middelburg Observer)
Nielen de Klerk (TygerBurger)

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Ronelle Ramsamy (Zululand Observer)
Thulani Magazi (City Vision)

Writing: Hard news

Andries van Zyl (Zoutpansberger)
Anton van Zyl (Limpopo Mirror & Zoutpansberger)
Christiaan Cloete (Vaalweekblad / Ster North)
Daleen Naude (Middelburg Observer)
Dave Savides (Zululand Observer)
Gerhard Rheeder (Middelburg Observer)
Kaizer Nengovhela (Limpopo Mirror)
Marti Will (Vista)
Michelle Pienaar (George Herald)
Zita Goldswain (Witbank News)

Writing: Headlines

Daleen Naude (Middelburg Observer)
Dave Savides (Zululand Observer)
Elaine Davie (The Village NEWS)
Fuad Esack (Plainsman & Constantiaberg Bulletin)
Inge Strydom (Bloemnuus Central24)
Liezl Scheepers (Parys Gazette)
Madré Marais (BloemNews, VrystaatKroon)
Mark Kinnear (Lowvelder)
Samantha Lee-Jacobs (People's Post)
Zita Goldswain (Witbank News)

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Writing: Human interest

Carina Roux (TygerBurger)
Chantéle Hartebeest (Paarl Post)
Christiaan Cloete (Vaalweekblad / Ster North)
Esmé Erasmus (TygerBurger)
Hugo Redelinghuys (Suid-Kaap Forum)
Jani de Beer (Benoni City Times)
Michelle Pienaar (George Herald)
Samantha Lee-Jacobs (People's Post)
Wouter Pienaar (Potchefstroom Herald)
Zita Goldswain (Witbank News)

Writing: Investigative reporting

Anton van Zyl (Limpopo Mirror & Zoutpansberger)
Daleen Naude (Middelburg Observer)
Christiaan Cloete (Vaalweekblad/Ster North)

Writing: Sport

Andries van Zyl (Zoutpansberger)
Blake Linder (Knysna-Plett Herald)
Carina Roux (TygerBurger)
Daleen Naude (Middelburg Observer)
Dave Savides (Zululand Observer)
Estella Naicker (Northern Natal News and Newcastle Advertiser)
Etienne van Rensburg (Vaalweekblad)
Hugo Redelinghuys (Suid-Kaap Forum)
Lebohang Pita (Benoni City Times)
Mark Kinnear (Lowvelder)

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Matthew Handley (Middelburg Observer)
Samantha Lee-Jacobs (People's Post)

Writing: Vernacular

Bulelani Matshoba (Pondoland Times)
Unathi Obose (City Vision)

Photography

General

Barbara van der Riet (The Village News)
Blake Linder (Knysna-Plett Herald)
Carina Roux (TygerBurger)
Ettienne van Rensburg (Vaalweekblad)
Gypseenia Lion (Bloemfontein Courant)
Helena Barnard (NoordkaapBulletin)
Jamey Gordon (DistrictMail & Helderberg Gazette)
Nielen de Klerk (TygerBurger)
Taylum Meyer (The Village NEWS)
Wayne Van der Walt (Highvelder)

News

Adele Louw (Carletonville en Fochville Herald)
Christiaan Cloete (Vaalweekblad / Ster North)
Daleen Naude (Middelburg Observer)
Elsje Vermeulen (Vaalweekblad)
Ettienne van Rensburg (Vaalweekblad)
Gypseenia Lion (Bloemfontein Courant)

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Helena Barnard (NoordkaapBulletin)
Jamey Gordon (DistrictMail & Helderberg Gazette)
Wayne Van der Walt (Highvelder)

Sport

Barbara van der Riet (The Village News)
Elsje Vermeulen (Vaalweekblad)
Ettienne van Rensburg (Vaalweekblad)
Frank Mavhungu (Limpopo Mirror)
Fuad Esack (Plainsman & Bulletin)
Hugo Redelinghuys (Suid-Kaap Forum)
Rashied Isaacs (People's Post)
Taylum Meyer (The Village NEWS)
Wayne Van der Walt (Highvelder)
Zita Goldswain (Witbank News)

Photographer of the Year

Barbara van der Riet (The Village News)
Ettienne van Rensburg (Vaalweekblad)
Gypseenia Lion (Bloemfontein Courant)
Jamey Gordon (DistrictMail & Helderberg Gazette)
Wayne van der Walt (Highvelder)

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Journalist of the Year

Daleen Naudé (Middelburg Observer)
Dave Savides (Zululand Observer)
Michelle Pienaar (George Herald)
Samantha Lee-Jacobs (People's Post)

Alet Roux Award for young Journalist of the Year

Barbara van der Riet (The Village News)
Jani de Beer (Benoni City Times)
Jo Sekepane (TygerBurger)
Linzetta Calitz (Mossel Bay Advertiser)
Matthew Handley (Middelburg Observer)

Newspapers

Best Front page

Bedfordview Edenvale News
City Vision
Middelburg Observer
Midrand Reporter
TygerBurger Brackenfell
TygerBurger Durbanville
TygerBurger Goodwood
TygerBurger Parow
TygerBurger Table View
TygerBurger Tygervallei

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Best Back page

City Vision
DistrictMail & Helderberg Gazette
George Herald
Knysna-Plett Herald
Lowvelder
Northcliff Melville Times
Roodepoort Northsider
South Coast Sun
Standard Breederivier Gazette
Zululand Observer

Free Newspaper of the Year

Bonus
Highvelder
NoordkaapBulletin
Randburg Sun
Roodepoort Northsider
Roodepoort Record
TygerBurger Bellville
TygerBurger Durbanville
TygerBurger Kraaifontein
TygerBurger Milnerton

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Paid Newspaper of the Year

Knysna-Plett Herald
Limpopo Mirror
Lowvelder
Mossel Bay Advertiser
Paarl Post
Suid-Kaap Forum
Talk of the Town
Vaalweekblad
Weslander
Zululand Observer

Panel of judges

As always, the panel of judges consisted of seasoned veterans of the community newspaper industry and some of the best academics in the field of journalism. They are André Gouws, Willem Kempen, Virginia Keppler-Young, Cornia Pretorius, Johann Maarman, Marlene Malan, Pieter Delport, Dewet Potgieter, Colin Hoffman, Buks Viljoen, Alé Steyn, Cyle Cowan, Bruce Stephenson, Tobie van den Bergh, Jacolette Kloppers, Elsabé Retief, Jana Smit, Mercy Kannemeyer, Roger Sedres, Yolanda van der Stoep, Mlungizi Louw, Johann Gresse, Zolani Sinxo, Neco Bokwe.

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For more information, send an email to myfcjinfo@gmail.com

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