

Caxton Excellence Awards acknowledges local talent

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Competition between the various Caxton Local Media's editorial, sales, advertising, management and support staff was stiff at the prestigious Caxton Excellence Awards. Judges were impressed with the top quality work that individuals dedicated to their papers and clients.



Held at the Empire Hill venue in Parktown on 15 March, over 400 'Caxonites' from across South Africa, dressed to impress at the annual awards ceremony that emphasises *excellence*.

"The event is in its 29th successive year and the work produced by individuals, and the papers themselves, gets better and better with each passing year," says Karen Geurtse, General Manager Caxton Local Media Regionals. "29 excellence awards, along with prize money totalling over R315,000, was presented to individuals and papers that truly impart this ethos of excellence."

Winners this year included *Lowvelder* (winning four categories) with editor De Wet Potgieter winning Best Sold Newspaper of the Year and Best Front Page; Jonothan Hen-Boisen for best Advertorial or Promotion with #Straatvark and Benno Stander in the Original Idea category.

Zululand Observer was another big winner on the night, with Benice Gertzen taking home Best Ad Designer of the Year; Benice Gertzen and Wannita Smith Best Written and Designed Advertisement; Theresa Botha and Mari Scott for Best Major Advertisement Feature/Supplement in Print and/or Digital and Gavin Anthony for Best Community Involvement.

Multimedia Journalist of the Year went to Jana Boshoff of *Middelburg Observer* winning R30,000 and a Macbook Air sponsored by Ekurhuleni City Council.

Other worthy winners were *Capital Media Pretoria's* Sunette Visser and Natalie Grobler for the Best Free Newspaper of the Year with Steve Thomas from *Highway Mail* receiving a special award for his service and dedication over decades with Caxton. "We wish Steve the absolute best in his retirement and know that he will leave the Durban group of papers in exceptional hands," comments Geurtse.

One of the best ways of capturing a moment is through pictures. This year, judges were presented with amazing news photographs that told entire stories in just one frame. In the Human Interest Photo category, Selogile Leshage from *Potch Herald* walked away a winner, with Ettienne van Rensburg from *Vaalweekblad* capturing Sport Photo of the Year and in another category, Best Headline Writing.

Photographer of the Year however went to Zita Goldswain from *Witbank News*. In addition to her prize money she also won a Canon camera valued at nearly R24,000, sponsored by Canon. Best Get It Magazine went to Joburg North, edited by Michelle Brink and the best Get It journalist category was won by Lani Fouche from Bloemfontein. Siso Naile (*Joburg West*) won Most Promising Journalist while best Field Saleperson of the Year was won by Neil Jonker from *South Coast Sun*.

"Advertisers and marketers should never underestimate the power and potential of local media," says Joint CEO of SPARK Media, Gill Randall. "Our editorial and sales people live and breathe their community every day, which is why they have such an exceptional understanding of their areas. These awards demonstrate this, and the value that each and every one of these 'Caxonites' bring, not only to the local community, but to the advertisers looking to reach these valuable consumers

We congratulate all the winners and applaud the quality of entries from each individual and all our teams."

Engage and make contact with SPARK Media: call +27 10 492 8391 or email info@sparkmedia.co.za.

SPARK Media DNA

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