

BEST ENVIRONMENTAL STORY

Community newspaper reporters should remember that they — for lack of a better description — are at the coalface of reporting environmental issues in their regions. Local councils, residents and businesses need to be held accountable for decisions they make that impact the environment, many of which are made away from the scrutiny of larger media organizations. Without community newspapers, environmental issues and stories in small towns right across the country would largely go unreported and that can't be allowed to happen. It's important to recognize the key role community newspapers play in Canada's media landscape and if the quality and quantity of entries in this year is anything to go by, there is hope for their future in Quebec and Canada.

DANIEL J. ROWE

The Eastern Door

Every writer worth their salt should be able to answer one question of everything they write: Why should people care? Daniel J. Rowe answered that in the lede of his story and instantly humanized a story about a key water restoration project in his region. Rowe saw the human angle in what was potentially a boring procedural piece and used it to launch into his story that contained plenty of voices, a bit of humour and lots of personality. Rowe is a deserved winner in this packed field.

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STEVE BONSPIEL

The Eastern Door

As anyone who has worked community newspapers for any length of time will know, as detrimental to the environment as it is, illegal dumping is a fairly common practice. Often times it is overlooked as an issue and given short shrift, perhaps relegated to a brief. But Steve Bonspiel elevated that potential brief into something more comprehensive by looking not only at the environmental impact but the impact on the local community as a whole, including the volunteer fire brigade.

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TESS ALLEN

The Low Down to Hull & Back News

Reporter Tess Allen uses a quirky anecdote to draw readers into her story about a turtle population pilot project launched in the Outaouais region. Allen covered off all the bases in this piece, but this is a great example of why it's important to find that human voice to lift what was potentially a mundane story to another level.

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