

2026 Azbee Awards of Excellence Heartland Region Award Winners (Alphabetical by publication name)

American Fruit Grower (Meister Media Worldwide)

Category: Print - Special Issue or Supplement

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Inside the State of the Fruit Industry

Thomas Skernivitz, Senior Content Specialist; Melinda Taschetta-Millane, Group Editor;
Susan Duffy, Graphic Designer

American Vegetable Grower (Meister Media Worldwide)

Category: Print - State of the Industry

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Voices From the Field

Carol Miller, Content Lead; Michele Katsaris, Content Specialist; Susan Duffy, Graphic
Designer

Automotive News (Crain Communications)

Category: All Content - Case Study

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: How Damian Lillard Toyota rewrote the retail playbook and became
customer retention champ

Larry Vellequette, Reporter

Category: All Content - Enterprise News Story

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Hey, Siri: Why are in-vehicle voice assistants so bad?

Molly Boigon, Reporter; Jerry Hirsch, Managing Editor, Content

Category: All Content - Feature Series

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Software-defined vehicles

Molly Boigon, Reporter; Lois Jones, Reporter

Category: All Content - Government Coverage

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Trump tariffs erode U.S. auto trade reputation

John Irwin, Reporter; Molly Boigon, Reporter; Hans Greimel, Asia Editor

Category: All Content - Individual Profile

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Ralph Nader invented auto safety as we know it. He's not done yet

Molly Boigon, Reporter

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Automotive News (Crain Communications)

Category: All Content - Industry News Coverage

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Engine recalls, affordability and EV tax credits

Richard Truett, Reporter; Lindsay VanHulle, Reporter; Michael Martinez, Reporter; Molly Boigon, Reporter

Category: All Content - Technical Article

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Here come the EREVs

Richard Truett, Reporter

Category: Online - Online Single Topic Coverage, *Industry*

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Tariff coverage

John Irwin, Reporter

Category: Online - Podcast

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Daily Drive: GM CEO Mary Barra Interview Part 1

Jake Neher, Executive Producer, Audio; Kellen Walker, Podcast Host; Lindsay VanHulle, Reporter

Category: Online - Video

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Dodge Charger Scat Pack Road Trip Video

Rudy Schork, Social Media Editor

Category: Print - Special Issue or Supplement

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: A Century of Automotive News

Mary Beth Vander Schaaf, Senior Director Editorial Operations; Editorial Staff

Casting Source (American Foundry Society)

Category: All Content - Group or Company Profile

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Jeep Handle Revs Up Excitement

Jenel Stelton-Holtmeier, Contributing Editor, Casting Source Magazine

Chemical Processing (Endeavor Business Media)

Category: Online - Event Coverage

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: GlobalChem Conference Coverage 2025

Jonathan Katz, Executive Editor

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CoStar News Hotels (CoStar Group)

Category: All Content - Industry News Coverage

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: CoStar News Hotels' Hospitality Coverage
CoStar News Hotels Editorial Staff

Category: All Content - Innovation Article

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Hotels Start To Offer Guests Buy Now, Pay Later
Natalie Harms, Reporter

Category: Design - Web Article Design

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Renovations Revive The Grand Galvez
Natalie Harms, Reporter

Category: Online - Event Coverage

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Hotel Data Conference 2025
CoStar News Hotels Editorial Staff

Category: Online - Online Single Topic Coverage, *Industry*

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Inside Marriott's Breakup With Sonder
Bryan Wroten, Senior Reporter

Category: Online - Podcast

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Hoteliers Should Prepare for ICE Agents
Bryan Wroten, Senior Reporter

Category: Online - Podcast

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Tell Me More: Is This A Hotel-Specific Recession?
CoStar News Hotels Editorial Staff

CropLife (Meister Media Worldwide)

Category: Print - Special Issue or Supplement

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: ESA Technical Guide
Eric Sfiligoj, Editor; Lara Sowinski, Group Editor; Dan Jacobs, Senior Editor; Kim Henderson,
Art Director

2026 Azbee Awards of Excellence Heartland Region Award Winners (Alphabetical by publication name)

Design World (WTWH Media LLC)

Category: All Content - Thought Leadership

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Beware of the invisibility cloak

Paul J. Heney, VP, Editorial Director

Category: Design - Opening Page/Spread Design

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: 3 Strategies for Selecting the Right Electric Linear Actuator

Allison Washko, Art Director

FSR Magazine (WTWH Media LLC)

Category: Design - Front Cover Design

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Sumontita "Tammie" Disayawathana Cover

Erica Naftolowitz, Art Director, FSR; Callie Evergreen, Editor, FSR

Greenhouse Grower (Meister Media Worldwide)

Category: All Content - Group or Company Profile

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Wojo's Greenhouse Employees Go All in With Stock Ownership Plan

Brian Sparks, Editor; Taylor Hatch, Senior Graphic Designer

Greenhouse Management (GIE Media, Inc.)

Category: All Content - Feature Article, *Industry*

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Magic & Mystique: The story behind Firefly, a bioluminescent petunia

Kelli Rodda, Editorial Director

Category: All Content - Individual Profile

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: A dream manifested

Kelli Rodda, Editorial Director

Category: Design - Best Design for a Single Issue

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Greenhouse Management's October 2025 issue

Allison Krieg Art Director, GIE Media Inc.

Category: Design - Data Visualization

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Research Reports

Allison Krieg, Art Director

2026 Azbee Awards of Excellence Heartland Region Award Winners (Alphabetical by publication name)

HME Business (WTWH Media LLC)

Category: All Content - Thought Leadership

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Commentary: From One Caregiver to Many Others
Laurie Watanabe, Editor In Chief

Home Health Care News (WTWH Media LLC)

Category: Online - Online Single Topic Coverage, *Industry*

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Medi-Cal policies shape hospice, palliative care
Jim Parker, Senior Editor; Holly Vossel, Senior Reporter; Jennifer Murtoff, Contributing Reporter

Lawn & Landscape (GIE Media, Inc.)

Category: Design - Best Original Illustration

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Best Places to Work
Stephanie Antal, Art Director; Michael Crampton, Illustrator

Category: Design - Data Visualization

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Lawn and Landscape Data Visualization
Stephanie Antal, Art Director

Category: Design - Opening Page/Spread Design

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Great Risks on the Great Lakes
Stephanie Antal, Art Director

Mass Transit magazine (Endeavor Business Media)

Category: All Content - Industry News Coverage

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: North American public transit industry grapples with tariffs, fiscal cliffs, policy changes

Megan Perrero, Editor in Chief; Noah Kolenda, Associate Editor; Brandon Lewis, Associate Editor

Category: All Content - Sustainability Article

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: How Transit Agencies Across the U.S. are Adapting Infrastructure to be Climate Resilient

Noah Kolenda, Associate Editor

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Medical Design & Outsourcing (WTWH Media LLC)

Category: Design - Publication Design

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Medical Design & Outsourcing - Publication Design

Matt Claney, VP, Creative Director; Jim Hammerand, Managing Editor

Modern Casting (American Foundry Society)

Category: All Content - Group or Company Profile

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Tiny But Mighty

Kim Phelan, Editor, Modern Casting Magazine

Category: All Content - Original Research Article

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Beneficial Use: How to Think Outside the Landfill

Kim Phelan, Editor, Modern Casting Magazine

Category: Print - Special Section

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Safety Spotlight

Kim Phelan, Editor, Modern Casting Magazine

Nursery Management (GIE Media, Inc.)

Category: Design - Data Visualization

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Nursery Management Market Reports

Katelyn Mullen, Art Director

Category: Design - Print Article Design

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Nursery Management | Maverick

Katelyn Mullen, Art Director; Addison Geary, Photographer

Category: Online - Podcast

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: The Growth Industry Episode 7: Impact Washington, government shutdown and more with Matt Mika

Matt McClellan, Editor

Category: Online - Video

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Get to know Shelby Jackson of Carolina Native Nursery

Katie McDaniel, Associate Editor

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Pest Management Professional (North Coast Media)

Category: Design - Front Cover Design

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: What's Next for Ant Control

Tracie Martinez, Art Director

Category: Design - Front Cover Design

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Invasive Species Cover

Tracie Martinez, Art Director

Category: Design - Opening Page/Spread Design

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Invasive Species Cover Story

Tracie Martinez, Art Director; Heather Gooch, Editor-in-Chief

Category: Design - Print Article Design

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Tiny Pests, Enormous Risk

Tracie Martinez, Art Director

Category: Print - Single Topic Coverage

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Invasive Species

Heather Gooch, Editor-in-Chief; Diane Sofranec, Senior Editor

Category: Print - State of the Industry

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: State of the Industry Report

Marty Whitford, VP of Content; Heather Gooch, Editor-in-Chief; Diane Sofranec, Senior Editor

QSR magazine (WTWH Media LLC)

Category: Design - Publication Design

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: QSR magazine | #328 June 2025 / #329 July 2025

Tory Bartelt, Senior Art Director; Ben Coley, Editor

Seaside Retailer (Breakwall Publishing)

Category: All Content - Case Study

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Quiet Flight Surf Shop

Megan Smalley, Associate Editor

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Seaside Retailer (Breakwall Publishing)

Category: Design - Print Article Design

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Timelessly Original

Karen Carr, Publisher and Creative Director

Category: Design - Publication Design

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Seaside Retailer

Karen Carr, Publisher and Creative Director

Solar Power World (WTWH Media LLC)

Category: Design - Best Design for a Single Issue

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Solar Power World's 2025 Top Solar Contractors Issue

Allison Washko, Art Director

Souvenirs, Gifts & Novelties (Breakwall Publishing)

Category: All Content - Group or Company Profile

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Funny Business

Kristen Hampshire, Contributing Writer

Category: All Content - How-To Article

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: An Inviting Little Hiking Store

Megan Smalley, Associate Editor

Water Daily (Encore360)

Category: All Content - Enterprise News Story

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Avon Lake Regional Water nears completion on major plant upgrades that modernize systems, improve safety

Allison Gray, Senior Content Manager

Category: All Content - Innovation Article

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Akron's BioCEPT project: Real-time innovation in a high-stakes consent decree

Eric Sandy, Chief Content Officer