



National Newspaper Association  
309 S Providence Rd  
Columbia, MO 65203  
573.777.4980 Fax: 573.777.4985

**Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award  
2014  
NNA Checklist**

Nominee Name: Michael Smith

Newspaper Name & Location: The Carolina Forest Chronicle, Myrtle Beach, SC

Nominated by: Steve Robertson

Age: 39 40?

NNA Membership Information: Member through 7/31/2015; verified 5/1/2015  
~~7/31/2014; verified 5/12/2014~~

Year Nominated/Last Year Eligible for Award: 2014/2016

Completed Nomination Form?: Yes

Completed Nomination Letter?: Yes

Documentation Supporting Nomination Criteria to Support the Areas Below? -YES (Included in letters/form)

- Professional Achievement
- Community Leadership and Service
- NNA/National Involvement (Note: evidence of NNA service is not required)

Biographical Sketch of Nominee?: Yes

Three Letters of Reference?: Yes - 3: William C. Rogers, Bo Ives, Ed Henninger

Photo Included?: YES (digital pic on file)

# Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award

## 2014 Nomination Form

Nominee Name Michael Smith  
Position Editor  
Newspaper The Carolina Forest Chronicle  
Address P.O. Box 50308  
City, State Zip Myrtle Beach, SC 29579  
Phone 843-488-7259 Fax 843-448-4860  
E-mail michael.smith@myhorrynews.com  
Nominee's Age 39

Nominator's Name Steve Robertson  
Position Publisher  
Affiliation Waccamaw Publishers, Inc.  
Address P.O. Box 740  
City, State Zip Conway SC 29528  
Phone 843-248-6671 Fax 843-248-6024  
E-mail steve.robertson@myhorrynews.com

**Industry Leadership:** Describe the nominee's activities and achievements which illustrate how the nominee serves to strengthen the newspaper industry through his or her leadership in the state press association.

A past member of the S.C. Press Association, Smith serves on the SCPA FOI Committee and the SCPA Education Committee. He has been one of South Carolina's most ardent defenders of the public's right to know, having won the SCPA's FOI Award twice. The winner of many other journalism awards for writing, editing, photography and design, Smith has also judged other state press associations' contests. He has been SC's Journalist of the Year twice.

**Community Leadership and Character:** Describe and provide examples of how the nominee is well-respected in the community, of good reputation and integrity, and how he/she provides active leadership in serving the community on a local, state and/or regional level.

Through Smith's initiative, the community his paper serves formed a civic association that gives more than 13,000 homeowners a voice in government for the first time. (Please see attached letter.)

**NNA/National Leadership:** Describe nominee's involvement in national organizations, such as NNA, or other national/international service organizations or causes in which the nominee has been involved. (Evidence of NNA service is not required)

Smith has written two books providing insight into community journalism that have been circulated nationally, making him one of the foremost authorities on the subject.

Please return (1) this form and (2) letter of nomination by **May 1, 2014** to:

Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award  
National Newspaper Association  
PO Box 7540  
Columbia, MO 65205-7540



**NOTE:** If your nominee is among the top five candidates selected by the judges, you will be contacted and asked to submit the following documents: (1) Three [3] letters to support the nomination from community leaders and/or professional peers; (2) Documentation to support nomination criteria; (3) Biographical sketch of nominee; (4) Photo (if available).

# WACCAMAW PUBLISHERS

2510 Main St., Conway, S.C. 29526 843-248-6671

- *The Horry Independent*
- *The News & Shopper*
- *The Loris Scene*
- *The Carolina Forest Chronicle*
- *The Myrtle Beach Herald*

April 24, 2014

To members of the NNA Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award Committee,

I am so grateful that the NNA has an award like the Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award to present to young leaders in our community who help promote our industry and the audiences we serve. I am pleased to nominate Michael Smith, a professional who exemplifies the highest standards of leadership.

I am enclosing a brief list of Michael's accomplishments. It speaks well about his professional qualifications.

But that's not the reason I am nominating him.

I am putting Michael up for consideration because of the impact he has as editor of the Carolina Forest Chronicle on the community he serves.

Carolina Forest is thriving community located west of Myrtle Beach, S.C. in an unincorporated part of Horry County. In 2007, it was a hodgepodge of subdivisions containing 13,000 homes. Other than a few home owners associations, the area did not have an advocate in government.

Realizing the importance of have a strong presence at the local and state level, Smith reached out to members of the various Carolina Forest subdivisions and encouraged them to attend a series of meetings to discuss forming a civic association. He presided over nearly a dozen meetings, publicized the events in the Chronicle, and provided editorial support for the events. Thanks to his efforts, the civic association was formed in 2009.

Since then, the Carolina Forrest Civic Association has grown membership and become a force to deal with in county and state government. New roads, a new library and greater representation in the S.C. General Assembly are just a few of the accomplishments made since the association formed.

In typically modest form, Michael declined offers to be the civic association's first president. He did so to avoid any conflict of interests, since he reports on the association's monthly meetings. Nevertheless, Michael continues to support the organization's with stories and editorials.

Would a community of 13,000 homes eventually form a civic association anyway?

Perhaps. Irregardless, it takes someone with vision and leadership to get the ball rolling, Smith showed tremendous vision in seeing the need and then providing the leadership needed to get the job done!

For this reason, as well as his many other accomplishments as a journalist, I think Smith is the perfect candidates for the Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award.

Sincerely,



Steve Robertson  
Publisher



P.O. Box 11429  
Columbia, SC 29211  
(803) 750-9561  
scpress.org

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*News & Press, Darlington*

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*Free Times, Columbia*

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*Independent Mail  
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Assistant Director

RANDALL L. SAVELY  
Director of Operations

SHARON A. BAILEY  
Director of Finance

April 25, 2014

Dear NNA Selection Committee:

This letter is to strongly recommend Michael Smith of the Carolina Forest Chronicle for your Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award.

Michael was twice named the weekly journalist of the year in South Carolina in 2007 and 2009. He has also been named weekly photographer of the year (2011) and has won numerous writing, photography and design awards in our annual news contest.

In 2013, the National Newspaper Association (NNA) announced that the Carolina Forest Chronicle took home two national awards for investigative journalism.

He has been an active member of our state's Freedom of Information Committee for several years and has also served on the SCPA Executive Committee for a two-year term.

Perhaps his most notable achievement in our state is being named winner of the Reid Montgomery Freedom of Information Award in two different years, 2006 and 2013

He is also the author of two books on journalism: *Reporting and Community Journalism* and *Confessions of a Community Journalist*.

Michael has been in the forefront of his newspaper's adaption to the world of digital journalism, often beating the larger local daily newspaper by posting breaking news on his paper's website and social media sites. Readers in his community depend on his timely, breaking news posts for information.

I can attest that Michael Smith is well-respected as an aggressive and versatile community newspaper editor and reporter. I can think of no one more qualified for the Phillips Award than Michael.

Sincerely,

William C. Rogers  
Executive Director

## Awards

- Journalist of the Year (2006, 2008)
- Reid E. Montgomery FOIA award (2005, 2012)
- Photojournalist of the Year (2010)
- Employee of the Year (2004)
- 114 S.C. Press awards (as individual)
- 3 NNA reporting awards

## Books

- "Confessions of a Community Journalist," 2012;
- "Reporting & Community Journalism," 2013.

## Civic Endeavors

- S.C. Press Association Executive Committee (2011-2013)
- S.C. Press Association FOIA Committee (2010-present)
- Organized Carolina Forest Civic Association (2008-2009)
- gsSCENE young professional board member (2008-2009)

## Other

- Editor of Carolina Forest Chronicle (2007-present)
- Editor of Loris Scene (2003-2007)
- 11 years with Waccamaw Publishers
- 14 years in journalism field



Carolina Forest Civic Association  
P O Box 51033  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29579-0003

National Newspaper Association  
309 S Providence Road, Columbia, MO 65203  
PO Box 7540, Columbia, MO 65205-7540

May 16, 2014

RE: Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award nomination for Michael Smith

Dear Judges for the above indicated award,

Mr. Steve Robertson with Waccamaw Publishers Inc. informed me that he was nominating Michael Smith for distinguished service for the newspapers they publish. We concur on that nomination. I am delighted and excited to write this letter of recommendation for Michael Smith.

Michael is that rare individual who writes clear and concise copy, does excellent photography, and performs the role of editor admirably and with the utmost professional-ism.

Michael helped form our community association. He was instrumental in inviting key persons in the community to join forces to determine how to forge a force to speak for needed services in the area.

Today the Carolina Forest Civic Association speaks for some 20,000 residents of unincorporated Horry County. Now Michael covers the area and the work of the group he helped to found. Being a good newspaper person requires a keen sense of what information is important for readers to know as much as giving readers what they want to know. Michael has that sense and the ethics to know that he could not participate in the process of civic association business beyond its formation.

In short, I can think of no other person I would recommend higher than Michael. I unhesitatingly support the nomination of Michael Smith for the Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award.

Please look favorably on his nomination and grant this award to him.

Sincerely,  
Bo Ives

President



May 16, 2014

Sara Walsh  
Programs and Outreach Manager  
National Newspaper Assn.  
309 S Providence Road  
Columbia MO 65203

Sara:

It is with great delight that I support the nomination of Michael Smith for the Daniel M. Phillips Award.

I have know Michael for quite a few years now, having first met him when he and I were working on a design for the newspaper he edits, the Carolina Forest Chronicle.

Michaels editing and design skills are extraordinary and his work consistently earns him top honors among his peers here in South Carolina. I don't believe there's a better designed newspaper of his size in the state.

More than that, though, Michael has demonstrated strong leadership skills and a firm commitment to his craft and to the advancement of community journalism.

I believe we can expect much more from Michael in coming years. It will be exciting to watch him grow—and continue to be a leader among community newspaper editors.

Michael is exceptional. I continue to be impressed by his work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Henninger", is written over a light blue horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ed Henninger

**Ed Henninger, Director**

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